

Casco Bay Island Transit District Board of Directors Meeting Minutes -Draft Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 7:45 AM

This meeting will be an **in-person** meeting with remote participation option available
The public is invited to participate: Video Conference Link and Call-in number are available at:
<https://www.cascobaylines.com/about-us/board/>

Attendance

	Webex	In Person	Phone	Absent
Directors:				
Jen Lavanture (Pres)		X		
Joe Donovan (1 st VP)		X		
Max Pizey (2 nd VP)		X (7:50)		
Jean Hoffman (Treasurer)		X		
James Luedke (Clerk)		X		
Bud Higgins (Asst. Clrk)		X		
Nate Cooper	X (8:20)			
Paul Belesca	X			
Erik Winchester		X		
Dave Crowley		X		
Heather Moretti		X (7:54)		
Bill Geary				X

Staff:

C. Gildart		X		
Pottle	X			
Bishop		X		
Bryand		X		
Charette		X		
Bowie		X (7:52)		
Tracy		X (8:45)		

Public:

Ross Sneyd	X			
Lynn Heinemann				X
Mark Rogus	X			
Barring Coughlin	X			
Margaret Kelsey		X		
Call In User 1			X	
Call In User 3			X	

1. Call to Order
 - a. President Lavanture called the meeting to order at 7:46 a.m.
 - b. It was noted the meeting was being recorded.
 - c. Charette did roll call.



2. Approval of meeting minutes from January 22nd, 2026.
 - a. Lavanture notes minor administrative edits, asks for motion to approve. Hoffman moves to approve, Crowley seconds. No public comment. Unanimous approval of all present.
3. Old Business
 - a. No old business.
4. New Business
 - a. Approval of GM goals for 2026.
 - i. Lavanture introduces topic. Personnel Committee met earlier in the week to discuss GM goals. Had robust discussion, made some refinements, and was unanimously recommended by Personnel Committee for Board approval.
 - ii. Hoffman comments that some edits discussed at Personnel were not made on goals that were distributed. Gives example of specific wording not being included pertaining to electronic ticketing: developing plan, options, and budget for review with Operations and Finance, with a date in fall proposed.
 1. Dinsmore explains that bullet point: present strategic options to Board at April 20, 2026 meeting and obtain direction with focus on electronic ticketing, was in response to Board not yet voting on whether to officially take up electronic ticketing. Intends to present a layout and framework of what electronic ticketing might look like at which time Board could decide to vote on, but happy to re-word.
 2. Hoffman would like to see further wording on that as well as schedule analysis that includes multiple options for both.
 - iii. Donovan supports GM goals as currently presented. Contains all information needed to continue to move forward.
 - iv. Higgins sees goals as ambitious and Board should allow GM leeway under strategic planning to pursue goals. Electronic ticketing is under consideration as part of goals and is confident that how to proceed will be discussed.
 - v. Lavanture suggests compromise of 2-3 strategic priorities, which would include schedule analysis and electronic ticketing, which were both strong recommendations of Personnel Committee, and allow room for another priority to be added or considered.
 - vi. Hoffman notes scope of schedule analysis will be large and challenging. April for schedule analysis to be completed, even on preliminary basis, is ambitious.
 - vii. Donovan clarifies his interpretation of goals was that schedule analysis and electronic ticketing were not to be completed by April, but to collect data and options for presentation so that staff can have clear guidance moving forward. Supports wording.
 - viii. Hoffman would prefer thorough analysis of schedule data, including costs associated with various options as a starting point; ambitious for April presentation.
 - ix. Dinsmore clarifies language within GM goal: intent was for April presentation of projects for Board to vote on to give direction, not in-depth analysis. Can re-word however Board would like.
 - x. Hoffman comments if plan is for comprehensive review of full schedule for 2027, there will be lengthy process including many meetings, public hearing. If in-depth data review is not done by April, then when is the cut-off date for such data review, or is the 2027 overhaul of schedule no longer a priority.
 - xi. Luedke interprets wording as reviewing to propose a plan or focus priorities. In favor of moving forward with acceptance of wording and goals as-is.
 - xii. Lavanture suggests adding language for schedule analysis to include “by April” or more specific timeline can be considered at Executive Committee, if Board would prefer.



- xiii. Donovan notes there will be at least two more Operations meetings and two more Finance meetings prior to April Board meeting where discussion is possible and where Board members can be updated.
- xiv. Hoffman comments on several other wording edits within GM goals that were discussed at Personnel Committee. Pertaining to Battery Steele: “Optimize passenger experience and communicate operational changes” as currently stated, is not as clear as “plan for boarding and offloading on both sides, including residential priority boarding, and communicate to support on-time sailing and operations”. Battery Steele boarding will operationally be a large undertaking both on the mainland and on Peaks.
- xv. Lavanture clarifies that addition is priority boarding and loading/offloading on both sides.
- xvi. Donovan reiterates that wording that was approved at Personnel committee meeting is sufficient and should be approved as it has been presented.
- xvii. Higgins appreciates that GM presented ambitious goals with deadlines and has accepted the tasks, and they should be voted on as-is.
- xviii. Lavanture asks Hoffman to go through remaining edits from Personnel discussion without further Board discussion of individual items.
 - 1. Hoffman comments on loss of language from Personnel committee specific to Fiscal year 2027. Lavanture notes that language is present in goals, but in another bullet point. Also acknowledges that multiple bullet points for 2027 may be confusing. Suggests consolidation of language into single bullet point.
 - 2. Donovan reminds Board members that may have not been present, that current discussion is based on Personnel Committee on Tuesday of this week. Some additional wording and concepts to be added to goals were discussed and Dinsmore and Lavanture were tasked with making sure they were accurately represented in goals presented to Board. Satisfied with result. Recommendation did not include a vote on exact wording.
 - 3. Hoffman recognizes and praises goals overall and discussion between GM and Board. Suggests for future goals discussions, would like to see a draft come out of Personnel quickly that can be edited for language prior to Board meeting.
 - 4. Lavanture supports draft that came out of Personnel committee and is reflective of discussion. Reiterates support of consolidating 2027 goals for clarity but overall, the draft reflects what was discussed at Personnel. Moves that board to accept to goals as presented. Donovan seconds.
- xix. Public comment.
 - 1. Kelsey would like to see further clarification on strategy and as tactics as they pertain to goals. Asks about bullet point related to, “ensure full compliance with PUC directives...” being listed as a GM goal and whether that is now a GM responsibility whether it is still being discussed at Finance Committee.
 - a. Lavanture notes management and staff are always significantly involved in any rate change process, with oversight and governance from Board. If matters arise that need to be brought to the Finance Committee, that will be the case.
 - b. Kelsey asks about aspect of PUC request that detailed meeting with islanders.
 - c. Lavanture notes that work is underway to be fully responsive to PUC, and if deemed necessary, will be presented to Board and/or a committee.
- xx. Roll call vote to approve GM goals as presented by Personnel Committee. Unanimous approval of all present.



- b. Approval of Maquoit replacement vessel governance plan.
 - i. Lavanture reminds of process up to this point. At last Board meeting, Board voted to accept Maquoit replacement PDR. Discussion was had on possible governance plan but was not put into place at that time. Helpful to have clearly defined process and expectations for guidance and stage gates, both for final design stage and possibly construction phase of vessel. Board wanted time to consider. Dinsmore sent out governance plan to directors with opportunity for comments. Comments were received and integrated into current governance plan. Would like to implement current plan with while accepting that it will evolve and be versioned as project requires, but would like initial plan on how to oversee and proceed with final design phase.
 - ii. Dinsmore clarifies that comments received this week from Hoffman are not reflected in current version.
 - iii. Lavanture reads email from Hoffman with proposed edit. Checkpoint 2 addition: operating costs projected and analyzed in context of CBL then annual budget and deficit reduction goals. In bullet three, bid price within budget, or amount sufficient to meet estimate.
 - iv. Luedke questions bullet point 8: change orders over 75k requires board approval. Asks Dinsmore whether that is a reasonable number and could having to wait for another Board meeting for approval delay construction. Dinsmore notes that Belesca had previously flagged this as an issue. Does not see 75k figure as an issue, but Board should determine their own comfort level and should be reflected in document and parameters. Happy to move that number in whatever direction the Board would like.
 - v. Donovan confirms that changes will need to be made to document as time and project progresses; references timeline chart with estimated dates that can be compared against completion and actual dates to see how vessel and plan will be affected moving forward. Governance plan is excellent. Builds upon Pottle's document from previous years. Asks Dinsmore to make sure that Board understands current phase, contract and scope of final design from Bristol Harbor Group.
 1. Dinsmore reiterates GM note that final design phase is being reached with BHG. It is part of overall package that was contracted, follows PDR once it was accepted. Layout of vessel, including piping, wiring, safety systems, navigational equipment. Working with currently on what that will look like. Currently, there are internal discussions on working with an integrator, who will facilitate power and propulsion. Gives CBL more control over compatible engines that work with other vessels in the fleet for cost savings. Still awaiting BHG cost estimate for final design phase and comparing with internal expected costs.
 - vi. Donovan reminds that next 9-12 months crucially important and when timelines slide, everything is backed up and costs rise. Security of grant funding already in place will be equally important.
 - vii. Dinsmore confirms intent of governance plan was for it to be versioned, which is why there is a risk matrix associated with last section. Through each step, redo the risk matrix and update the PDR as needed to mitigate and plan.
 - viii. Lavanture confirms that while it will be versioned, those changes need to be approved by Board so all are aware of what stage the design is at.
 - ix. Hoffman asks if governance plan takes into account compliance obligations. Dinsmore responds that regulatory obligations are touched upon in document, noted as a potential risk, that associated contractors have appropriate certifications (DBE, Buy America).
 - x. Lavanture moves that Board approve Maquoit replacement governance plan as drafted including two updates that were provided by Hoffman, read out loud earlier as edits. Donovan seconds.
 - xi. Lavanture asks for public comment on the motion.



1. Rogus supports Hoffman's comment on putting the operating costs in. Suggests that language regarding Board approval of any potential changes be included in document.
 2. Rogus asks Dinsmore if incentives are part of contract and bid process as goal of achieving a deadline. Dinsmore confirms both bonuses and penalties are iterated throughout the course of building a vessel. Internally have been looking at various ways to structure the bid. Gives example of cost escalator around the price of steel that could both protect Senesco or benefit CBITD. Happy to discuss with Rogus and utilize his experience to see what other mechanisms can be put in bids to produce favorable results. Notes that if costs can be reduced for builder or contractor, they may also lower their bid.
 - xii. Roll call vote to approve Maquoit replacement vessel governance plan. Unanimous approval of all present.
5. Workshops – none.
6. General Information Reports-
 - a. Committee Reports –
 - i. Hoffman comments on Finance. Reminds of current discussion on incremental rate changes. After 15 year hiatus, plan was to implement more regular rate changes. Finance Committee met in February to discuss data compiled by GM Dinsmore. Interesting data in on ridership, finance, and pass data as for basis of incremental rate changes. Finance Committee will meet on March 11th to keep process moving forward.
 - b. Staff Reports - Dinsmore gives staff report. Maquoit in dry dock, back in a couple weeks. Wabanaki had fuel contamination issue, but was sea trialed and back in service January 28. Recognizes staff including Chris Gay. He revamped medical kits and has been training on new equipment. Narcan training took place and is continuing. Ridership data on website but can send out as well. Large vehicle rate change begins this weekend and have been trying to get information out via signage, a brochure, website. Lavanture commends signage that is clear and concise. Battery Steele progress saw no slippage this month. Senesco not planning a formal christening ceremony, but CBL will conduct a ceremony at shipyard and in discussion on a celebration for Portland. Launch planned for 1st week in April with staff members. Will invite others; Ross from Peaks Island News had expressed interest.
 - i. Higgins asks about police/constables that have been occasionally in terminal. Dinsmore speaks to city initiative to have presence of those officers roaming. Higgins commends pleasant demeanor.
7. General Announcements
 - a. Establish next meeting dates (all meetings at 7:45 AM unless indicated otherwise):
 - i. Executive Committee: Thursday, March 5, 2026
 - ii. Finance Committee: Wednesday, March 11, 2026
 - iii. Operations Committee: Thursday, March 12, 2026
 - iv. Board of Directors: Thursday, March 26, 2026
 - v. Personnel Committee: TBD
 - vi. Government Relations Committee: TBD
 - vii. Pension Committee: TBD
8. Public comment on any items not on the agenda.
 - a. Captain John Tracy suggests that the best way to streamline the boarding process is for staff to be once again empowered to handle priority boarding, as had previously been the case. Current system does not work for all scenarios and can lead to negative interactions from public towards deckhands. Gives anecdotal examples of situations where it was not necessary or where there



was confusion from the public on how it works. Bad optics as well. Would like the ability to write up adult passengers who are unruly or who take advantage of the system. Price also too low for the inconvenience it causes and would prefer \$5 per ride for priority boarding. Could be a better more streamlined way to board and starts with the crew.

- i. Dinsmore asks for elaboration on when and why priority boarding system was taken away from crew.
 - ii. Lavanture speaks to history behind change. Initially a crew decision as to when priority boarding was to take place, but led to confusion from islanders' perspective on when it was being implemented or when it was not in effect. Decision was made to make it active across all trips within certain dates and timeframes.
 - iii. Hoffman agrees with Tracy that crew face direct criticism from public and it can be a difficult job. Also supports Lavanture's statement that lack of consistency led to current process. Opportunity for better communication as to rules around program, especially with increased passengers and boarding processes around Battery Steele.
 - iv. Donovan thanks Tracy for raising the point and for feedback.
 - v. Dinsmore questions if residential pass system was a pilot program and whether it is helpful.
 1. Lavanture suggests that is a discussion for Operations.
 2. Donovan supports as part of a larger discussion on the passenger experience, potentially involving staff, crew, and islanders. Notes he is not familiar with complaints from both sides and would like to learn more.
 3. Hoffman mentions program is important to islanders and livability on Peaks, especially in the summer.
 - vi. Moretti asks if seasonality has been considered. Tracy confirms it is a summer program, Memorial Day through Indigenous People's Day, but it could be a shortened season.
 - vii. Luedke clarifies with Tracy if priority boarding is a daily occurrence for 20-week period. Tracy confirms it is 7 days a week from the 9:30 a.m. boat to the 7:15 p.m. boat. The majority of trips do not require it.
9. Directors comment on any items not on the agenda
- a. Donovan asks that text message notifications on possible weather cancellations of service be provided as early as possible, preferably 24-48 hours in advance. Website banner was up during past Monday storm, but would still like text utilization.
 - b. Donovan relays that 8am down bay boat cancellation on weekends has caused many unexpected problems. Initially Cliff Island had a petition in early January expressing concerns, decision at that time was to not overturn initial decision to cancel. Now Long Island has comments due to no inbound mid-morning boat. Would like to see the boat re-instituted earlier in the season than May 21st, ideally, immediately after daylight savings time, both for year-round and seasonal residents. Does not know what process would look like; asks staff to research financial costs of making such a change, including additional staff needed. Intends to bring up at Executive Committee to get to a vote as soon as possible. Target date would be week of March 22nd. Raising issue to gather Board opinion, then ideally get before Board for approval. Acknowledges personal vote history on matter, did not approve at Operations, ultimately approved at Board level.
10. Adjournment.
- a. Lavanture asks for motion to adjourn. Luedke moves to adjourn, Donovan seconds. Roll call. Unanimous of all present. Meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: _____

James Luedke, Clerk