

TO: Casco Bay Lines Board of Directors

FROM: Ben Dinsmore, GM

DATE: April 23, 2026

RE: April Update

April has been a busy and productive month for Casco Bay Lines. We celebrated a major milestone with the launch of the Battery Steele on April 8th, kicked off the new peak season on April 18th with the transition from blue to yellow tickets, and continue to monitor the implementation of the new large vehicle rate structure. Throughout the month, staff and I have been focused on connecting with passengers at the terminal and on the boats to make sure their questions and concerns are heard as we work through several significant operational changes. My thanks to the crew and shoreside staff for their professionalism and patience in managing so many moving pieces at once.

Drydocks:

The Maquoit and Wabanaki successfully completed their drydock periods this year and are back in service.

Training:

As we ramp up for the summer season, we have several new folks going through our training for both shoreside and deck positions. We will also start the process of training and review of prospective candidates for the open captain position.

Scheduling Review:

During this month's board meeting I will be presenting a review and lessons learned from the previous system-wide schedule and fleet analysis that was conducted back in 2017. The goal of this presentation is twofold: one, to show the amount of resources that go into such an endeavor; and two, to help establish goals and boundaries for any future review.

Proposed Passenger Rate Adjustments:

The Finance Committee conducted another workshop on April 13th and voted to recommend "Option B" to the board for adoption. The full proposal can be found in the rate change presentation deck that is posted on the website.

Vehicle Rate Impact Survey:

In December 2025, the Maine Public Utilities Commission directed Casco Bay Lines to identify Peaks Island residents who may be experiencing genuine financial hardship as a result of the passenger vehicle rate changes that took effect June 21, 2025, and who have not been able to reasonably address that hardship. This survey is designed specifically to identify those individuals. General feedback about the rate structure is not the purpose of this survey, that feedback can be sent directly to me or to comment@cascobaylines.com. Responses are voluntary and will be used only for this compliance purpose.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TNSB3L8>

Large Vehicle Implementation:

The roll-out of the new large vehicle rate structure continues to be very successful. I want to extend a huge shout-out, again, to the staff for the exceptional job they've been doing helping customers navigate through the new process. As the crew and passengers become more familiar with the process, we've decided to hold off on painting hashmarks on the curb as the process is becoming more routine. For more information on the changes and rules regarding vehicles of various lengths, please refer to the following poster that has been conspicuously displayed in the terminal waiting area:

<https://www.cascobaylines.com/uploads/Large-Vehicle-Poster-v1.0.pdf>

Off-Peak/Peak Ticket Policy:

Starting April 18th, blue tickets are no longer accepted to board Casco Bay Ferries as we transition to peak season rates, even if the blue tickets have not expired. I want to thank the staff for their patience and character while transitioning through this new policy. Unused blue tickets can be refunded (if not expired) or traded in towards the purchase of peak season (yellow) tickets. This is a major policy change that was voted on by the board last year, and staff has been extremely proactive in communicating this change. In addition to posters and signage that have been placed throughout the terminal, we will be sending text and E-News alerts the week prior to remind people of the policy change. For more information on the new policy and exchange options, we have prepared the following poster, which is also available on the Casco Bay website:

<https://www.cascobaylines.com/uploads/CBL-Peak-Season-Ticket-Policy.pdf>

Terminal:

Security remains a top priority at the terminal. Our improved signage and staggered security rounds have helped significantly. We're also pleased to see continued police

presence through Portland's constable program, which brings uniformed officers on roving patrols. While comments still remain mostly positive, I have personally witnessed lapses in the quality of the cleaning, particularly in the restrooms. I am working with our service providers to improve.

ABB was on site during the week of April 6th to complete some additional system work and to do pre-commissioning work for the contactor panel and the actual charger in preparation of the vessel being in Maine in June. They were able to finish all of their work, and the pre-commissioning checks worked well. They are working with staff to obtain the necessary system access so that they and the charger manufacturer (Stemmann) will be able to troubleshoot any issues that might arise during final commissioning and once the system is in operation, as part of the ongoing support package provided with the charger.

Battery Steele:

The vessel was successfully launched on April 8th with a small group from CBL in attendance. The shipyard continues with any final work items, and pre-commissioning work is well underway. Now with the vessel in the water, they are able to start checking some of the systems that depend on the vessel being in the water, like keel coolers and sea pumps. ABB is now starting on some of their hot commissioning work, which requires that certain things be operated for designated periods of time and utilizes the vessel's cooling system. Senesco will continue with any final finishing work and prepare for upcoming dock and sea trials. Our inspection team is now providing weekly punch lists for areas that either need finishing or correction/adjustment, and the Coast Guard is on site regularly as systems are tested. The design team is planning to have representatives on site for the sea trials to ensure that everything operates and performs as designed. Based on current commissioning progress, it looks like the vessel will be delivered in mid-June.

Down Bay Vessel:

The contract with BHGI has been signed and a notice to proceed issued. As they begin the next stages of the design process, staff will meet with them to discuss the process of obtaining and bringing an integrator on to ensure that CBL gets the propulsion system that is best for our operations and is supported by our maintenance team. We will also discuss timing of the design work and identify times when either advisory committee meetings or potential public meetings should be held.

MaineDOT Piers:

Nothing new to report. CBL did execute an agreement with MaineDOT on reimbursement for barge service during the painting of the Peaks Island transfer bridge tower. It is capped at \$100,000 and needs to cover up to 30 days.

On the Peaks Transfer Bridge Tower Painting Project, DOT has agreed to cover the cost of alternate vehicle service while the bridge is closed for up to 30 days, though their budget would only support roughly four to five barge round trips per day. We've requested additional funding, but DOT has not changed its position. The bridge closure window runs from mid-October through mid-May, with DOT imposing damages for overruns and offering incentives for an earlier completion. Staff continue to coordinate plan reviews for both this project and the Cliff Island Pier Replacement.

As always, I welcome any questions or feedback from the Board. Thank you for your continued support.

Regards,

Ben Dinsmore, GM