

TO: Casco Bay Lines Board of Directors

FROM: Ben Dinsmore, GM

DATE: February 26, 2026

RE: February Update

Five months into this role, I want to take a moment to say how much I've enjoyed getting to know the Casco Bay Lines community. Our staff, our crew, the board, and the island residents and riders who depend on this service every day have all been welcoming and generous with their time and knowledge. I continue to be impressed by the professionalism and commitment I see across every level of this organization. Regardless of the challenges that come our way, this team shows up and gets the job done.

That was on full display once again during Monday's blizzard. Our staff and crew drew on their experience, skills, and professional judgment to minimize risk and ensure that operations were carried out efficiently and safely with minimal disruptions to service. The safety of our passengers and crew will always come first, and I'm proud of how the team handled a difficult situation with calm and confidence.

I also want to thank the executive committee for the clear guidance and support throughout the development of my 2026 General Manager goals. It's been encouraging to see the board working cohesively and leaning into the kind of strategic, big-picture thinking that will shape this organization for years to come. That collaborative process has given me a strong foundation to build on, and there is important work in front of us. I look forward to tackling it together.

Maquoit Drydock

The Maquoit's drydock service is progressing well, and we expect her back in service the third week of March. The Wabanaki returned to service on January 28th.

Training

It's been a busy month on the training front. Our staff and crew completed drug awareness and overdose treatment (Narcan) training through the City of Portland's Health Department. We also received enhanced medical training led by our very own Chris Gay, who took the initiative to outfit new medical bags that will be placed on each vessel. This

equipment and training will give our crews the ability to respond to a wider range of medical situations onboard. I want to thank Chris for recognizing this improvement opportunity and taking the lead; it's exactly the kind of proactive thinking that makes our team stronger.

New Ridership and Passholder Data

Earlier this month, staff released updated ridership and passholder behavior data, which was presented at the Finance Committee meeting. You can find that data on the Finance Committee's Rate Change page: <https://www.cascobaylines.com/uploads/Data-for-Passenger-Rate-Discussion-February-2026-v1.1.pdf>

Large Vehicle Implementation

We continue beta testing and finalizing preparations for the new large vehicle rate, which takes effect Saturday, February 28th. As many predicted, the snow we've had over the past two months has made it challenging to add measurement hashmarks on the sidewalk just yet. In the meantime, staff will use tape measures and survey wheels to determine vehicle length. We've also created several resources to help explain the new structure, including a poster board in the terminal lobby, brochures at the ticket window, and a downloadable flyer on the website: <https://www.cascobaylines.com/uploads/Large-Vehicle-Poster-v1.0.pdf>

Terminal

Security remains a top priority at the terminal. We've added enhanced signage, increased security rounds, and have been rotating our security details. We're also pleased to see greater police presence through Portland's constable program, which brings uniformed officers on roving patrols.

Battery Steele

Construction continues to move forward with a crew of 20–25 working daily. The focus has been on wiring, engine room adjustments, and switchboard rooms. Electrical work has advanced enough that ABB, our propulsion system provider, arrived on February 18th to begin pre-commissioning checks. ABB will be on site for the next three to four weeks. Meanwhile, Senesco and their subcontractors are making progress on interior finishes including bench installation, plumbing fixtures, and ceiling grid systems. The yard has been submitting commissioning plans for review, and battery installation into the racks is expected to begin around February 26th. Current scheduling calls for a launch on or around April 1st, with dock trials beginning in early May followed by sea trials.

Christening Ceremony:

Staff is currently working with the Senesco on a small christening ceremony for the Battery Steele that will be held on launch day at the Senesco yard. This will be in addition to a more formal ceremony to be held in Portland at some point after the vessel's arrival.

Down Bay Vessel

We've received a list of final design deliverables from our naval architect, BHGI, and have been discussing whether to bring on a propulsion system integrator during the design phase. We believe an integrator would help us get the propulsion system we want while making it easier for shipyards to price their bids, potentially saving both time and money. BHGI is currently working on their final design cost proposal, which we expect before the end of the month. Staff has prepared an independent estimate to compare against it.

MaineDOT Piers

The pier work at Peaks, Great Diamond, and Chebeague is essentially complete. MaineDOT and their design team conducted a final inspection visit on February 24th, and Bancroft is demobilizing equipment and materials. A few punch list items may remain but can be handled with a small crew.

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 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 continues to coordinate on 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Dinsmore

General Manager