

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

PACTS Policy Committee Meeting Notice

March 20, 2008
1:30 p.m.

GPCOG, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Minutes of the February 21st Meeting**
- 4. MaineDOT Commissioner David Cole**

The Commissioner will give an overview of transportation policy topics in Augusta and in Washington, D.C., and then take questions.

- 5. PACTS Process Review**

Act on Transition Team recommendations to revise the PACTS Bylaws

- 6. Consent Agenda (including an action item)**
- 7. Adjourn**

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Attachments for the March 20th Policy Committee Meeting

Minutes of the February 21st Meeting

Members Present: Mike Bobinsky, Chair, Portland; Neal Allen, GPCOG; David Cole, Gorham; MaryAnn Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Kevin Donoghue, Portland; Kathi Earley, Portland; Jim Gailey, South Portland; Joe Gray, Portland; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Donna Larson (for Dale Olmstead), Freeport; Tom Meyers, Public Transportation; Rick Michaud, Saco; Tom Milligan (for John Bubier), Biddeford; Ron Owens, Scarborough; Nathan Poore, Falmouth; Ed Reidman (for Jerre Bryant), Westbrook; Bill Shane, Vice-Chair, Cumberland; Nat Tupper, Yarmouth; Conrad Welzel, MTA; Gary Williams (for Dale Doughty), MaineDOT

Members Absent: Mike McGovern, Cape Elizabeth; John Perry, FHWA; Anthony Plante, Windham; Paul Schumacher, SMRPC; Scott Tilton, North Yarmouth

Staff and Guests: Maddy Adams, GPCOG; John Cannell, MaineDOT; John Duncan, PACTS; Carl Eppich, PACTS; Hazel Fallas, Intern for South Portland; Kyle Hall, MaineDOT; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; David Willauer, GPCOG

- (1) **Call to Order.** Mike Bobinsky called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.
- (2) **Public Comment.** None.
- (3) **Welcome John Cannell, MaineDOT Region One Manager.** John introduced himself to the committee and said that he had been in his new position for six months. The Policy Committee meetings occur at the same time as the Region Managers meetings, so it will be difficult for him to attend on a regular basis. Kyle Hall was also introduced – he replaces David Sherlock. Bill Shane expressed an interest in having John Cannell and Kyle Hall meet with the Managers and Public Works Directors. There have been many shifts in the MaineDOT office. For the maintenance department, contact John Cannell and Tim. Traffic engineering – Jen Paul is the Region One Traffic Engineer and John McDonough is the Assistant Traffic Manager. Mike Bobinsky requested that John Cannell send an e-mail to the committee providing an update of all these changes, and asked for a heads up on bidding, asphalt information, etc.
- (4) **Minutes of the January 17th meeting.** *David Cole moved approval of the January 17th minutes, seconded by Bill Shane. All were in favor of the motion.*
- (5) **PACTS Process Review.** Mike Bobinsky reported that at the last Policy Committee meeting, the Transition Team had asked for their guidance. The Transition Team met again on February 5th. They agreed on creating a nine-member Executive Committee with broad authority. The Transition Team will meet again in mid-March to refine the information presented today.

David Cole mentioned that he had recently sent a note to the Policy Committee and his position hasn't changed. To date, we have done a good job of including all of the municipalities in the process. He sees a great deal of adverse consequences with the proposed Executive Committee structure. There will be Policy Committee members who will no longer be making policy decisions and it will erode support from the municipalities that make up the PACTS region. Bill S. said that he doesn't disagree with David but a very

strong majority of the group wanted things to change. The Transition Team struggled with the subregion idea and they came to a stalemate. The idea of an Executive Committee was a position that everyone could support. David C. agreed that if a change needs to be made then the Executive Committee idea might be the route to go, but we need to step back and determine if the process is actually broken. The biggest problem with PACTS is that it doesn't have the money to do what needs to be done.

Tex noted that the PACTS Policy Committee has been very congenial and he sees the potential for more political maneuvering going on with this proposed change. There is a lot of power being given to the Executive Committee. Mike B. pointed out that with the power shift, the allocation of funding would still rest in the hands of the Policy Committee. Joe Gray said that he is open to an Executive Committee formation that would have more administrative functions, but the funding decisions and adjustments probably should not be the role of the Executive Committee. The infrequency of the Policy Committee meetings could also create problems, and the opportunity to keep up with what's going on could be lost. The Policy Committee would be rubber-stamping decisions made by the Executive Committee. Jim Gailey agreed that the Executive Committee could take some tasks off of the Policy Committee but the Policy Committee should have input as to the responsibilities of the Executive Committee. Kevin D. said he doesn't like the idea of the Executive Committee or the subregions.

Nat stated that what he is hearing today is what they were hearing at the Transition Team meetings; the Transition Team didn't miss any of the arguments. The Executive Committee would be structured in a way that is geographically balanced but not necessarily a representative from each subregion. Ron O. thought that the Executive Committee could take away some of the administrative work, but in this draft we have tilted too much power to the Executive Committee. We don't want to go too far with the Executive Committee powers. Conrad stated that this group is one of the most civil groups of people to work with even though they have to deal with some difficult issues. We don't need to fix something that isn't broken. Maybe there is some logic to having the Executive Committee look into the funding issue. Mike agreed that we don't want to undo our collaboration. Perhaps the Executive Committee could look into the funding issue as well as having administrative functions. It would be similar to approving the consent agenda. Tom Milligan pointed out that if they don't go boldly to a broader role for the Executive Committee, then why would those members want to attend the meetings? We either need to give the power or keep it. Tom Meyers explained that the Transition Team did go down the columns (in meeting memo) to determine what the role of each of the committees should be. The Policy Committee would still be setting the guidelines for their expectations; the funding items are still in the Policy Committee column. It was not intended for the Policy Committee to serve as a rubber-stamp board. Tex suggested that PACTS staff be empowered to take care of the administrative stuff rather than forming another Committee.

Mike B. said they would take this back to the Transition Team – this is not an action item today. The Transition Team will meet again in March to follow up on today's input.

- (6) **High Priority Projects Committee.** Rick Michaud reported that a meeting of the HPP Committee was just held prior to this meeting. Nothing has been voted on yet. The Committee's target is to have a specific project recommendation with priorities for the September meeting. The HPP forum that was recently held was beneficial. The idea of holding more forums in the north, west and southerly part of the PACTS area was discussed. Some time needs to be spent getting support for the projects. Gary Williams mentioned that

MaineDOT has been working with the Congressional Delegation on focusing on a corridor or a broader project but the Legislature tends to lean toward a specific project. MaineDOT is trying to convince them to look at it on a broader scale.

Tex suggested doing a scientific survey to find out where the overall population stands regarding transportation. In this way, we'd be able to get input from those people who are unable to come to the forums. John noted that PACTS did a \$60,000 survey of residents in 2001 and he will pull it out and we can look at it. There was further discussion about the public meeting process.

The HPP committee will report back to this group in September. Forums will be held before summer and then we will have conversations with the communities regarding support. John D. and Donna will discuss the idea of doing a survey. It was suggested that PACTS get a read from the congressmen on how they feel about the project candidates. The report was accepted.

7. FY 2008 to FY 2010 Transportation Improvement Program. John reviewed. **Rick Michaud moved and David C. seconded the approval of all the items on the list** which included:

1. MaineDOT Bridge Program: to program \$750,000 for the engineering of Veterans Bridge improvements (S. Ptd and Ptd), and \$150,000 for engineering for a Route 100 bridge (Falmouth).
2. METRO: FY07 JARC funds: \$60,000 to be added to the TIP for Falmouth Flyer to continue service with one bus. Falmouth currently pays annual matching funds of \$60,000.
3. YCCAC: FY07 JARC funds: \$80,021 to be added to the TIP for WAVE to expand door-to-door van service between the Sanford Labor Market and Biddeford with connections to employment at the Biddeford Crossing development, to the ZOOM Turnpike Commuter Express service, and to the ShuttleBus Intercity and Tri-Town services.
4. METRO: FY06 JARC \$50,000 & FY07 JARC \$50,000 funds to be added to the TIP, operating costs for the proposed Lakes Region Transit Service, weekdays from Bridgton to Portland.
5. METRO FY07 5307 funds to transfer \$230,000 from operating to capital maintenance.
6. 5307 FY08 Cap[ital and Operating funds from area transit providers to reflect actual budget allocations from the Federal Register published on January 28, 2008. NNEPRA and YCCAC will be added to the TIP.

Kathi requested that the bidding process not begin on the Veterans Bridge project until the Veranda Street bridge is taken care of first. David W. explained the FTA amendments. These amendments do not affect any other projects in the TIP. Nat asked what the \$8,550 NNEPRA item was for. David explained that NNEPRA picked up the Portland Explorer service for an eight-week period and this is a one-time reimbursement for 50% of the operating costs. Kevin asked about the JARC funds. David explained that JARC funds have to be approved by PACTS. It used to be a statewide program but now it's a formula program. Nathan asked if this was all of the JARC funds that are available. David responded that it was not and that they have not yet reached the cap on JARC funding. *All were in favor of the motion to approve the amendments to the PACTS 2008-2010 TIP as listed above.*

8. Consent Agenda. *Bill Shane moved approval of the consent agenda. The motion was seconded and passed.*

9. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Agenda Item 4 – MaineDOT Commissioner David Cole

Commissioner Cole recently decided to visit with the Policy Committees of PACTS, BACTS, KACTS and the ATRC. He will give us overviews of his recent meetings with Congressional leaders in Washington, D. C., and transportation policy topics in Augusta.

Gary Williams and Kat Fuller might attend also. Gary is MaineDOT's federal liaison person, and is a member of our High Priority Projects Committee. Kat Fuller is the head of Planning at MaineDOT. Officially she is the Chief Planner of the newly reorganized Bureau of Transportation Systems Planning.

This is a great opportunity for us all to connect with MaineDOT leadership.

Agenda Item 5 – PACTS Process Review

Member Resources: The Transition Team

Staff Resources: John Duncan, Neal Allen and David Willauer

Recommendation: Adopt the recommended changes to the PACTS bylaws.

Background

Last fall the Policy Committee held two retreats designed to outline some improvements to the organization of the PACTS process. The two retreats were well attended and produced many good ideas. A 9-member Transition Team subsequently met four times to develop specific recommendations. The Policy Committee meetings in December, January and February included discussions of the work of the Transition Team.

Last month the Transition Team asked the Policy Committee for input on the Transition Team's draft recommendation to create a 9-member Executive Committee with broad authority. The consensus was to ask the Transition Team to develop a proposal for a limited authority Executive Committee. In response to that input, the Transition Team and staff met again, and have developed the following recommendations.

- Create a 6-member Executive Committee.
- Change the Policy Committee's regular meeting schedule to bi-monthly.
- Add voting seats on the Policy Committee for the Planning and Technical Committees.
- Amend our mission statement.

See the details in the attached draft revised PACTS bylaws which would become effective on July 1, 2008.

Agenda Item 6 – Consent Agenda

Action Item

The Transit Committee recommends that two recently submitted proposals for FY 2010/2011 funding under our STP Transit Set Aside be incorporated instead into an existing FY 2008/2009 STP Transit Set Aside project. This is a “TIP Amendment”. Here are the details:

- For several years, the MaineDOT, GPCOG and the Transit Committee have been collaborating to develop automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems in our region and around the state. Last year PACTS programmed a \$333,716 project (PIN 14922) for an AVL communication system at the METRO. Based on recent advances in AVL technologies and the continued collaborative work of all the staff and members of the Transit Committee, the scope of the new system has changed and its estimated cost is less.
- Two weeks ago, the CBITD and GPCOG submitted, respectively, proposals for an AVL system and the purchase of additional transportation information display terminals to be located throughout the region. The Transit Committee and staff reviewed those proposals (\$150,000 and \$40,000 respectively) last week along with several other proposals for FY 2010/2011 funding. The Transit Committee supports both of the proposals and recommends that they be incorporated into PIN 14922.
- PACTS staff supports this proposal and wishes to recognize the great collaborative work of the several organizations involved.

Information Items

2007 transit ridership in our region was 10% higher than in 2006.

John Melrose and Mark Eyerman recently met with a small group here to kickoff our PACTS New Transportation Funding Opportunities Study. They will present draft recommendations to the Planning Committee in early May.

March 27th at 10:00 a.m. – The second information session for all PACTS Committee members regarding the PACTS and MaineDOT capital funding policies and procedures

Policy Committee Draft Agenda for April 17th

1. A staff recommendation to develop a six year capital improvements budget this spring in order to complement the MaineDOT’s Six Year Plan.
2. A report on the status of several PACTS projects whose combined budgets now exceed the amounts programmed by \$2.5 million. These are projects for which PACTS policy is to program no additional funds.

3. A report on the TIP projects that are not yet complete four years after programming, per our policy on that.

PACTS High Priority Projects Status

Carl Eppich is organizing three additional forums. They will be held in the Saco area, the Yarmouth area and the Westbrook/Gorham area in May.

We are also looking into the concept of doing a statistically significant survey of the region's residents on this subject. (We have received a \$30,000 survey cost estimate, but there is a possibility that it could be done for less.)

Recent Committee Meetings

Planning – Did not meet in March.

Transit – Held a productive discussion of the proposals for FY 2010/2011 STP Transit Set Aside projects. Produced the proposal above in the Consent Agenda. Also held a long and productive discussion of the many regional transit studies and the recent presentation at the Maine Better Transportation Association dinner.

Technical – Met with Gorrill-Palmer staff to officially kickoff our Regional Collector Road Assessment Study. The members also shared insights on the costs of paving roads and on design standards.

Jonathan LaBonte, the Assistant Manager of Government Relations at the Turnpike Authority, is leaving to become the Executive Director of the Androscoggin Land Trust.

Bill Bent, the PACTS Director in the early 1980's, was recently hired by HNTB in Westbrook.