



**MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY
MEETING**

February 29, 2024

1. Pursuant to notice, a meeting of the Maine Turnpike Authority was held at 9 a.m. on February 29, 2024.

The following were present:

Daniel Wathen, Chair
Michael Cianchette, Vice Chair
Jane Lincoln, Member
Thomas Zuke, Member
Bruce Van Note, Member Ex-Officio

2. On motion of Michael Cianchette, seconded by Thomas Zuke, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the minutes of the board's January 25th meeting.
3. John Sirois, Director of Finance and Treasurer, reported on traffic and revenue. He said that traffic was up 6.8 % and revenue was up 3.7 % this month. He said that the fair weather had been good for traffic but the lack of snow seemed to have altered its composition – there were fewer trailers hauling snowmobiles, for instance. Mr. Sirois said that there was \$9.4 million in the Reserve Maintenance fund and that he expected it to be fully funded in June. He said investment earnings were still extremely strong, with \$1.1 million in interest earned in January.
4. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Jane Lincoln, with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve investments of money to the credit of Maine Turnpike Authority funds made during the month of January, 2024, as detailed on a report submitted to this meeting by Bangor Savings Bank, dated February 9th, 2024.
5. Executive Director Peter Mills reported on various matters, including a meeting the day before on the Gorham Connector with various groups that had expressed interest in MTA projects in the past. He said the meeting had gone well, with representatives from the area communities explaining the project, challenging questions, and a good dialogue.

6. Michael Cianchette reported on the February 1st meeting of the Personnel Committee. He noted that there were two studies ongoing, with KMA Consultants reviewing the positions of Confidential/Management employees and John Alfano interviewing employees about the MTA's management structure, with possible recommendations to come on how that structure might be adjusted. Chairman Wathen asked if the results of Mr. Alfano's study were going to be provided to the board first, rather than management and Lauren Carrier, Director of Human Resources, answered that, yes, the results were intended to go to the board first. Chairman Wathen replied that if there was a "preview" of any kind of Mr. Alfano's conclusions those should go to the Personnel Committee rather than management.
7. On motion of Bruce Van Note, seconded by Thomas Zuke, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve an employee engagement survey, in which employees would be asked a series of questions relating to employee satisfaction, workplace culture, management efficiency and work environment. The survey would be conducted by KMA, but it would be made clear to employees that the study was directed by the board, with the results to be provided directly to the board.
8. On motion of Michael Cianchette, seconded by Jane Lincoln and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve changes to the MTA's policy on vacation accrual for non-union employees, as presented to the board, in order to set the accrual limit at 400 hours or whatever the employees accumulated time was as of March 1st, 2024, with accruals in excess of those caps to be paid out at the end of the year.
9. Director of Maintenance John Cannell reported on winter maintenance activities. He said that in January there had been eight or nine storm events, which was consistent with 2023. He said that February had been much milder than usual, with only 1,000 tons of salt used during that month.
10. Chairman Wathen asked if there were any concerns of questions regarding the purchases on the February contract consent agenda. Michael Cianchette stated that he had a business relationship with one of the plow truck bidders and was therefore recusing himself. There were no questions or concerns on the consent agenda and it was considered approved.
11. On motion of Michael Cianchette, seconded by Thomas Zuke, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to award Contract 2024.02 Portland Area Pavement Rehabilitation, in the amount of \$ 8,476,739.68, to Coastal Road Repair of Westbrook, Maine.
12. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Jane Lincoln, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve a change order in the amount of

\$2,046,436.61 to Contract 2024.043– Pavement Rehabilitation, in order to add a 1.5 mile stretch of highway that had been scheduled for 2025 but was rapidly deteriorating, to an existing paving contract.

13. On motion of Jane Lincoln seconded by Thomas Zuke, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the following final payments:

- Contract 2022.06 – Bridge Repairs, to New England infrastructure, Inc., in the amount of \$190,942.20, for a final contract amount of \$ 2,545,896.06.
- Contract 2023.08 – Exit 42 Underpass Repairs, to CPM Constructors, in the amount of \$ 33,100.82, for a final contract amount of \$ 255,621.67.

14. Chief Operations Officer Peter Merfeld reported to the board on the engineering procurement process for 2024, stating that the selection committee for the Consulting Engineer’s contract would include himself, Peter Mills, John Sirois, and Jonathan Arey.

15. Chief Operations Officer Peter Merfeld reported on ongoing construction projects. He noted that at York Maintenance the contractor was wiring the building for the replacement generator and upgrading components to meet current code. He said that the clearing project was progressing well, and that the concrete haunch removal work was complete.

16. Erin Courtney, Public Relations Manager, reported on items related to her department, including recent press coverage and online comments on the Gorham Connector. She said she had received 213 comments on the project since the initial press release, many of which were related to Smiling Hill Farm. She said that the first public meeting was scheduled for March 25th, in Gorham, with an “open house” at 4:30, and a presentation at 6 PM, followed by a question period.

17. Ms. Courtney said that the hearing and work session on the MTA’s budget had gone well, with a unanimous “ought to pass” vote out of committee.

18. Chairman Daniel Wathen asked if there were any members of the public present who wished to address the board. There were none.

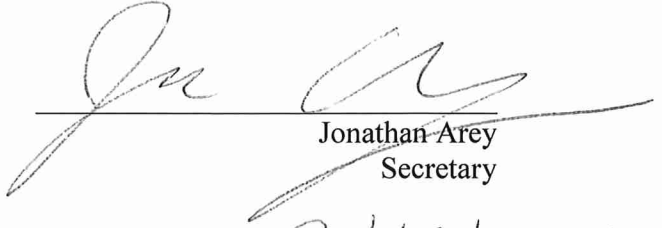
19. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Michael Cianchette, and with unanimous approval of the members present it was voted to enter executive session for the purposes of:

- Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(C), or the acquisition of real property in connection with the Gorham Connector project.
- Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(E), of the legal rights and duties of the MTA in connection with outstanding contractor claims.

February, 2024

The executive session began at 9:45 A.M. and ended at 10:48 A.M.

Adjourned at 10:48 A.M.


Jonathan Arey
Secretary
3/19/24
Date