



**MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY
MEETING**

March 20th, 2025

1. Pursuant to notice, a meeting of the Maine Turnpike Authority was held at 9 a.m. on March 20th, 2025.

The following were present:

Michael Cianchette, Chair
Jane Lincoln, Vice Chair
Nina Fisher, Member
Andrew McLean, Member (*On Zoom*)
Thomas Zuke, Member
Bruce Van Note, Member Ex-Officio

2. Chairman Michael Cianchette called the meeting to order.
3. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Jane Lincoln, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the minutes of the board's February 20th meeting.
4. John Sirois, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, reported on financial matters. He reported that March had shown a significant improvement over February across all classes of vehicles. He said that staff was currently planning to offer the 2025 Refunding Bonds for sale April 2nd, but that was subject to change given the current market volatility. He said that projected savings from the MTA's advisors remained in the \$5.8 million range.
5. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Nina Fisher, 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 February, 2025, as detailed on a report submitted to this meeting by Bangor Savings Bank, dated March 10th, 2025.
6. Interim Executive Director Peter Merfeld reported to the board on various matters. He shared a list of bridge repair and rehabilitation projects that staff planned to include in the next iteration of the four year capital plan. Mr. Merfeld said tasks orders would be issued to existing engineering consultant contracts for design on these projects. Mr. Merfeld shared a screenshot of a text as an example of the latest "phishing" scam impersonating the

MTA. He said these were becoming frequent and it was very difficult for customer service to handle the influx of inquiries caused by them. Mr. Merfeld described an accident that had occurred a couple of days before, in which a driver fell asleep and collided with two MTA vehicles parked on the side of the road. He noted that the MTA vehicles were eight feet from the white line and had still been impacted. He said that one MTA employee had been in the act of opening his door to leave his vehicle when the door was ripped from the van by the errant vehicle.

7. Mr. Merfeld played a recently received voice mail from a New Hampshire resident thanking the MTA for the "wrong way driver" warning signs that had recently been activated in York, Maine, and which the caller believed had potentially saved the lives of himself and his companions by allowing them time to prepare and avoid the oncoming vehicle. Director of Public Safety and Special Services, Greg Stone, introduced Natalie Halverson, who had been on duty that night and had been the one to activate the signs. Mr. Stone also introduced Jamie Tishim, who had done a lot of coordination work with the State Police to ensure that this warning system worked smoothly and as promptly as possible.
8. Chairman Michael Cianchette thanked Ms. Halverson and Ms. Tishim for their work, saying that it was nice to recognize them for it because normally the behind the scenes nature of their jobs was such that, when they were performing well they were most unnoticed.
9. Interim Executive Director Peter Merfeld noted that there was a purchase of additional "wrong way driver" signs on the Consent Agenda for this meeting. He drew the board's attention to another item on the consent agenda, which was the proposed engagement of Colby Company, an engineering firm, to provide fire prevention services to the MTA.
10. Nina Fisher asked why the Colby contract was not being awarded competitively. Mr. Merfeld replied that this was a specialty service not included on the MaineDOT's prequalification list that the MTA usually referenced for consultants. He said that staff had looked for qualified firms, and discovered that Colby was under a competitively awarded contract with the states' Bureau of General Services. He noted that the contract's proposed not to exceed price was \$100,000, but that the projected expense was closer to \$20,000.
11. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Nina Fisher, with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve a document presented to this meeting entitled Issuance Resolution, authorizing the issuance of bonds in a principal amount sufficient to refund all or a portion of the MTA's outstanding Turnpike Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2015, and the MTA's currently outstanding Special Obligation Bonds, Series 2014 and authorizing the actions of MTA staff and officers necessary to accomplish the issuance, including but not limited to the execution of one or more Bond Purchase Agreements.
12. Timothy Gill of the accounting firm Runyon Kersteen Ouellette presented the report of the firm on its recent audit of the Maine Turnpike Authority. Mr. Gill said that the audit had

gone well, and that MTA accounting staff had been very efficient and helpful. He said that the audit was a clean, unmodified opinion, and that no material weaknesses or deficiencies had been noted in regard to the MTA's internal controls. Mr. Gill described three suggestions for strengthening internal controls and efficiency that had been included in his firm's letter to management: (1) full collateralization of deposit balances in excess of the FDIC insurance limit, (2) establishment of various I/T policies, currently followed in practice, as written, formalized policies, and (3) a practice whereby third party service providers with any level of control over financial transactions would be evaluated annually and required to provide annual System and Organizational Controls (SOC) reports.

13. Nina Fisher asked what kind of third parties fell into this category and Mr. Gill answered that the most prominent example was ADP, the MTA's payroll provider.
14. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Nina Fisher, with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to accept the independent auditor's report, including the Government Auditing Standards Report and the Audited Financial Statements for 2023-2024, as presented by Runyon Kersteen Ouellette.
15. Director of Maintenance John Cannell presented a report on winter maintenance. Mr. Cannell noted that salt use in February had been high, but not as high as he had expected with the number of storms, which was good. There had been a lot of weekend and overtime work due to the timing of the storms, however.
16. Purchasing Manager Nate Carll presented proposed purchases of traffic paint and glass beads. He noted that the Visi-Loc beads would be purchased from Potters Industries under an existing state contract, for the same price the MTA had paid in 2024. He said that Ennis held the current traffic paint contract with the state, but that the MTA had reached out to Franklin, which had provided a better price, and that staff was recommending that purchase.
17. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Nina Fisher, with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the purchase of Visi-Loc beads from Potters Industries in the total amount of \$ 155,804.00, and traffic paint from Franklin Paint, in the total amount of \$404,933.50, all as presented to the board.
18. On motion of Jane Lincoln, seconded by Thomas Zuke, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve amendment of the MTA's existing 2025 Contributions and Memberships Budget, to include \$500 for the Maine Association of Conservation Districts and to increase the annual budget for the Maine State Chamber of Commerce membership to \$10,609.
19. Chairman Michael Cianchette asked if there were any questions or objections related to items on the consent agenda. There were none, and the March Contract Consent Agenda was considered approved.

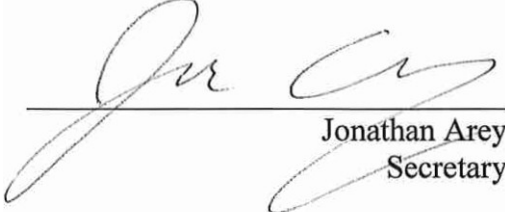
20. Deputy Director of Engineering Kristi Van Ooyen presented a request for final payment on Contract 2024.08 -Exit 36, Kennebunk, and Biddeford Park and Ride Repairs, noting that the final contract price was significantly above the \$444,760.00 bid price due to several change orders, including change orders for pavement repairs, some of which had resulted from car fires.
21. Project Manager Jamie Mason reported on ongoing construction projects. Mr. Mason said that the Saco Interchange contractor was continuing preparation for the spring Route 112 work, currently drilling foundations for signs, about 75 of which would be installed or relocated during the course of that project. He said that work on the MTA headquarters' front entrance was approaching completion, the engineering department was almost ready to return to its previous quarters, and that I/T staff would be relocating next for work on the first floor. He said the roof installation was complete on the York Garage project, which was progressing well. He said the clearing project was winding down.
22. Interim Executive Director Peter Merfeld supplemented Jamie Mason's report on the Saco Interchange project, saying that there were four pending or proposed developments on Route 112 that would impact the intersections the MTA was planning to reconstruct, potentially causing the road to be reopened and reconstructed not long after completion of the MTA's project. Mr. Merfeld said that MTA staff was meeting with the MaineDOT and the City to examine what could be done, if anything, during the MTA's work, to minimize later disruption.
23. Public Relations Manager Rebecca Grover updated the board on activities relating to her department. She said that Work Zone Awareness Week was the first week in April, during which the MTA would hold a joint press conference with MaineDOT, promote work zone safety on social media, and air radio spots on the subject. She presented board members with copies of the recently printed Annual Report, which prominently featured MTA employees, and shared the new section of the MTA's website featuring those employees. Ms. Grover played one of the videos, featuring MTA Sign Shop employee Joe Chase, for the board.
24. MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note presented a recently redrafted co-operative agreement between the MTA and MaineDOT concerning the Portland West study. He reiterated that the objective remained for MaineDOT to take the lead, conducting a comprehensive review of existing options. Commissioner Van Note said the draft might not be in its final form, but that the intention was to share it at this point with potential stakeholders and other interested parties.
25. Interim Executive Director Peter Merfeld discussed the board's existing workshop schedule, saying that staff would prefer to postpone the 30 Year Plan discussion, currently scheduled for April 10th, in order to involve the new executive director more thoroughly than that schedule would permit. Mr. Merfeld said that staff was proposing that the April 10th workshop be used instead to discuss MTA support for transit and alternative modes of

transportation, pursuant to commitments made during the initial phases of the Portland widening.

26. On motion of Jane Lincoln, seconded by Nina Fisher, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the purchase of a John Deere Compact Track Loader for the amount of \$ 174,104.96, from United Construction and Forestry, as a replacement for a piece of MTA equipment damaged by fire in 2024.
27. On motion of Nina Fisher, seconded by Thomas Zuke, 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), of the acquisition of real estate.
 - Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(E), of the legal rights and duties of the Maine Turnpike Authority in relation to several proposals being considered by the E-Z Pass Interagency Group.
 - Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(E), of the legal rights and duties of the Maine Turnpike Authority in relation to the MTA's existing maintenance contract with TransCore.
 - Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(E), of the legal rights and duties of the Maine Turnpike Authority and information contained in documents designated confidential by statute, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(F), in relation to positions on legislation
 - Discussion, pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405(6)(A), and § 405(6)(E), of the MTA's legal rights and duties in regard to the employment of the Maine Turnpike Authority's new executive director.

The executive session began at 10:05 A.M. and ended at 11:40 A.M.

Adjourned at 11:40 A.M.


Jonathan Arey
Secretary
3/28/25
Date