



**MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY
MEETING**

November 20th, 2025

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

The following were present:

Michael Cianchette, Chair
Emily Becker, Member
Nina Fisher, Member (*Via Zoom*)
Thomas Zuke, Member
Acting MaineDOT Commissioner Dale Doughty (*Via Zoom*)

2. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the board's October 16th meeting and November 13th workshop.
3. John Sirois, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, reported on financial matters. He said that traffic was down about 2%, with revenue down about 4%, but there was a backlog of unposted transactions so he expected to end slightly positive by the end of the year.
4. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Nina Fisher, the board voted unanimously to approve investments of money to the credit of Maine Turnpike Authority funds made during the month of October, 2025, as detailed on a report submitted to this meeting by Bangor Savings Bank, dated November 13th, 2025.
5. Director of E-Z Pass Samantha Kaherl introduced customer service representative Jennifer Chen and described a complimentary e-mail received from a customer regarding Ms. Chen, praising her diligence and patience helping the customer resolve issues consolidating E-Z Pass accounts.
6. Director of Highway Maintenance John Cannell presented the board with an e-mail from a state trooper praising the patience and professionalism of MTA employee Peterson Campbell during a tire change for an MTA patron who was deaf and had an autistic child with him in the vehicle.

7. Director of IT William Yates described the efforts of his IT Development Group, who had worked all weekend two weeks ago on transitioning the MTA to the new IAG file specifications. This required updating around 300 programs to the new protocol, and had been just about the largest IT project his department had ever undertaken. Executive Director Andre Briere noted that in New York the consultant hired to perform this task had caused chaos with the transition. He also mentioned that the very next weekend this group had again worked long hours of overtime to transition the MTA to Microsoft 365, a much needed modernization.
8. Director of Finance Matthew Elliott introduced Michael Haines of the payroll department who had just successfully completed an eight week course for his payroll certification. He said this was a significant achievement and represented the kind of continuous improvement that should be encouraged among all employees in all departments.
9. Director of Fare Collection Rick Barra introduced toll collector Robert Hooper, who was retiring from the MTA after 31 years. Mr. Barra noted that prior to that, Mr. Hooper had worked 35 years for the MTA's trustees, so his three decades in fare collection had been a retirement job.
10. Chairman Michael Cianchette congratulated Mr. Hooper and thanked him for his long service. Executive Director presented him with an MTA trailblazer and wished him well in his retirement.
11. Executive Director Briere reported to the board on several matters. He said that the strategic planning work groups were up and running, prioritizing projects and identifying methods to achieve identified goals. He said that a question and answer document from the town hall process, summarizing answers to questions that were asked at the meetings and following up on questions that had not been fully answered in person, was substantially complete and would be distributed to all employees. He said that an RFP was being developed for an enhanced wellness program that would include proactive training on how to respond to traumatic events, such as the double fatality that had occurred on the turnpike the previous week. He said that his negotiation team was putting together a counter to Applegreen's latest offer on the lease negotiations, and that he hoped to share a final or near final version of a preliminary MOA with the board soon.
12. Chief Administrative Officer Erin Sullivan reported that she had been working on the town hall question and answer document and on the virtual employee store, which was almost ready for launch. She shared a report on call statistics from customer service and noted that the backlog in image review had been decreasing, and now stood at around 135,000 images. She reported that applications for the human resources director position were due December 5th. She said that staff was looking at software to improve the hiring process, including applicant tracking, but implementation of that would be on hold until a new human resources director was hired.
13. John Sirois, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, presented some material on CPI and the annual COLA granted to union and non-union employees at the MTA. Mr. Sirois noted

that this material had been shared and discussed at the November 13th workshop and that staff was recommending that non-union employees receive the same 3.11% COLA that union employees were scheduled to receive pursuant to contract.

14. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, other than Dale Doughty, who recused himself from the vote, it was voted to approve a 3.11% Cost of Living Adjustment for the MTA's Management / Confidential and Professional/Technical employees, to be effective as of the first payroll period of 2026.
15. Director of Maintenance John Cannell presented proposed vehicle purchases to the board, including five one ton pickups which were part of the vehicle replacement plan. Mr. Cannell said that these vehicles would function mainly as debris replacement trucks and would have to be outfitted with plows for that work. He said that he would be sharing the bids for plow blades for these trucks at a future meeting.
16. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the purchase of five one ton pickup trucks from O'Connor Motors, for the total price of \$303,075.00, as presented.
17. Mr. Cannell presented a proposed sole source purchase of a traffic control truck with attenuator to replace a truck that had been burnt in the Auburn Maintenance fire. Mr. Cannell explained that the sole source nature of the purchase was due to the vendor's ability to customize the truck to MTA's specifications, and the desire for uniformity among the MTA's traffic control trucks.
18. Chairman Cianchette asked about the insurance settlement for the Auburn Maintenance fire. Chief Financial Officer John Sirois answered that the settlement had been around \$1 million for the eight vehicles lost and that \$1.3 million had been offered for the building.
19. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the purchase of a traffic control truck and attenuator from Royal Truck and Equipment, in the amount of \$ 212,867.00, as presented.
20. Purchasing Manager Nate Carll presented bids received to supply electricity to the MTA for a one year term, commencing December 1st. Mr. Carll noted that the low bid would be about a 14 percent increase over last year. He said the bid of .11298 per kwh, though subject to change on a daily basis until locked in, still compared favorably to CMP's standard offer of .1236. He said that in the future, staff was going to try to lock in a bid earlier in the year, in late spring or summer.
21. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve a contract to supply the MTA with electricity for the December, 2025-2026 term to Direct Energy, at the quoted price of .11298, or subsequent updated price if still the lowest bid or, in the alternative, to whichever company provided the lowest bid on the day of the contract.

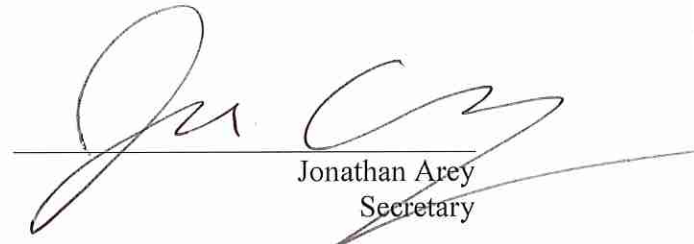
22. Chairman Cianchette drew the board's attention to the November Contract Consent Agenda and asked if there were any questions or objections. There were none, and the Consent Agenda was considered approved.
23. Deputy Director of Engineering Kristi Van Ooyen presented bids received on three construction contracts. She noted that another contract, for toll plaza tunnel repairs at New Gloucester and West Gardiner, had received no bids. She said that staff believed this was due to the number of subcontractors needed to do this work, and that the plan was to repackage this work into smaller contracts for rebid.
24. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve the award of the following three contracts:
- Contract 2025.16 – Widened Concrete Haunch Removals in the amount of \$ 822,223.54, to CPM Constructors
 - Contract 2026.13 – Air Handler Replacements, in the amount of \$ 253,500.00, to Damon Mechanical
 - Contract 2026.15 – Roadside Clearing, in the amount of \$ 219,196.00, to Comprehensive Land Technologies.
25. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to approve final payment on the following contracts:
- Contract 2024.11 – Cumberland Service Plaza Fuel System Replacement, to SRS Petroleum Services, in the amount of \$40,132.25, for a final contract amount of \$ 2,432,691.55
 - Contract 2024.16 – Slope and Drainage Repairs, to R.J. Grondin and Sons, in the amount of \$ 7,198.18, for a final contract amount of \$ 461,727.88.
26. Deputy Director of Engineering Kristi Van Ooyen presented to the board on traffic congestion at the Biddeford Interchange and near term improvements that could improve the situation to some degree. One proposal involved conversion of a cash lane to an E-Z Pass lane and changing signs on route 111 to larger, more descriptive signs for turning onto the turnpike. She also described a re-countering of the exiting ramp, which could lessen the severity of exiting traffic backups on the turnpike, and the addition of a new entering lane. Ms. Van Ooyen said the hope was to have these improvements, which were expected to cost around \$2 million, ready to go for next summer. She said that none of this work would impact longer term plans for a westerly access road, which, if constructed, was expected to provide much greater relief.
27. Staff Attorney Jonathan Arey reviewed four policy documents with the board. The Ethics Code, and accompanying Ethics Policy were, on suggestion of Chairman Cianchette, being

offered on a “first reading” basis only, to give the board a fuller opportunity to review them before being asked to approve them in December. The other policies, the Holiday Policy and the Unscheduled Office Closings Policy, were being offered for the board’s review only.

28. Project Manager Jamie Mason reported on ongoing construction projects. Mr. Mason said that the Saco Interchange was now open and the contractor was working on striping and other punch list items. He said that there were currently two lanes open northbound on the Androscoggin Bridge, with only one lane southbound until the contractor went into winter break. He said that there were only a few small items remaining on the Exit 45 project, and he expected this would be his last report on that project. He said that night work had started on the Forest Avenue repair project, and there was not much left to do. He said the contractor would be returning in the spring to add a rubber joint and do some concrete work. Executive Director Briere noted that no complaints had been received related to noise on the Forest Avenue project.
29. Acting Commissioner Dale Doughty left the meeting at 10:10 A.M. because he had another engagement.
30. Director of Communications Rebecca Grover reported on activities relating to her department. She said the annual holiday event was scheduled for December 18th, after the board meeting and that she hoped board members would be able to attend. She described the education campaign her department was working on, which was intended to consist mainly of “bite size” messages on social media.
31. Staff Attorney Jonathan Arey discussed the 2026 meeting schedule with the board. He said that staff would be coming back to the December meeting with some suggestions for “on the road” board meetings next summer.
32. Tim Cote of HNTB Corporation discussed preliminary plans for the upcoming 2028 toll increase with the board. Mr. Cote said there had been a highly inflationary environment since COVID, with construction costs outpacing other sectors of the economy. He noted that at the same time rating agencies were placing higher emphasis on factors like the liquidity and available cash of agencies they rated. He said that the MTA’s “rate per mile” had historically been in the lowest 25 percent of toll agencies, and the 2028 toll increase had been scheduled for quite a while. He said one of the goals being discussed was to use the opportunity to simplify the toll structure while raising revenue. He mentioned concepts such as surcharges for image tolls, which were widely employed by other toll agencies, and peak travel period pricing. He said that this process was just beginning and that initial conclusions would be reported by the end of 2026.
33. Executive Director Briere said that the current planning goals included no increase for Maine E-Z Pass holders and that he planned to keep that a top priority.
34. On motion of Thomas Zuke, seconded by Emily Becker, and with unanimous approval of the members present, it was voted to adjourn.

November, 2025

Adjourned at 10:30 A.M.


Jonathan Arey
Secretary
12/19/25
Date