

Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2006

PRESENT:	Bill Reed, Veazie	Bob Osborne, Hampden
	Duane Scott, MDOT	Linda Johns, Brewer
	David Struck, Orono	Rob Kenerson, BACTS
	Jim Ring, Bangor	Don Cooper, BACTS
	Frank Higgins, Brewer	Dianne Currie, BACTS
	David Pardilla, Penobscot Nation	Jaci Hancock, EMDC/BACTS
	Stan Moses, Bangor	

1. **Call to Order**

The Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System Policy Committee met on Tuesday, May 16, 2006 in the Penobscot Boardroom at EMDC, 40 Harlow St, Bangor, Maine. In the absence of Bill Reed, Vice Chair Jim Ring, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

2. **Approval of March 21, 2006 Meeting Minutes**

David Struck made a motion to approve the March 21, 2006 Policy Committee meeting minutes as presented. Frank Higgins seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved without revision.

3. **Director's Annual Review – Personnel Committee Recommendations**

At the request of the Vice-Chair on behalf of the committee, Rob Kenerson, and BACTS staff absented themselves from the meeting while the committee met in Executive Session to discuss and finalize the Director's Annual Review. Committee Chair, Bill Reed joined the meeting during Executive Session and took over as meeting chair.

After concluding the Executive Session and reconvening the public meeting, Frank Higgins made a motion to approve the recommendations of the Personnel Committee with respect to the review and pay adjustment for BACTS Director, Rob Kenerson. David Struck seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

4. **Transit Study RFP Review/Approval**

Don Cooper presented the draft RFP for "A Short Range Transit Route Redesign Study in the BACTS Area" for committee approval. The study is aimed at identifying issues that require immediate short-term fixes. Don noted that BACTS is awaiting DOT funding before moving forward with the RFP. He also pointed out that some technical revisions need to be made to the document and that the response deadline will be revised once the funding is approved and the RFP is ready for publication/distribution. In response to the question of a Committee member, Don noted that there will be a response period of about three weeks from the time the RFP is issued.

David Pardilla questioned whether the scope of the RFP should be revised to include review of the feasibility of establishing a BACTS-van link to serve Indian Island. After discussion of the logistics of including an additional task to the RFP, it was the consensus of the committee that, rather than add another item to a study that is limited in scope

due to funding and time constraints, this matter be incorporated into a longer-term, ongoing project of a broader nature with more funding opportunities.

Jim Ring made a motion to approve the Draft RFP as presented with the technical revisions offered by Don Cooper. David Struck seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

5. **FY 2008-2010 Capital Work Program (BTIP)**

Rob Kenerson gave a brief update on the FY '08 – '10 Capital Work Program (BTIP) as most of the members present at the Policy Committee meeting also serve on the Technical Committee which has been working on this project. Rob reported that project proposals are due from BACTS towns by the end of May. He is in the process of working with the four new BACTS communities on BTIP. Proposals will be reviewed and a short-list of approximately 25 projects will be created to undergo scoping during June and July. After scoping, proposed BTIP projects will be brought before the Technical Committee at its August meeting for review and recommendation and presented for approval to the Policy Committee at its September meeting so that BACTS can meet the ME Dot's September submission deadline.

There followed a brief discussion of the ongoing efforts to obtain additional project funding from both the state (proposed bond) and federal (pending "earmark" legislation) governments. Rob updated the committee on the continuing efforts of Maine's Congressional Delegation to secure project funding through earmarks. It was agreed that Rob would draft a letter for committee members that can be sent to State legislators in support of the pending bond proposal.

6. **BACTS Project Status Report**

Staff reported on the following:

(a) Rob Kenerson:

- queried the committee as to whether it is time to review how BACTS should go forward from a staff support and project perspective. At present, BACTS has three full-time and two part-time employees. After discussion, it was the consensus of the committee that Rob report at the July meeting on the status of the budget as of June 30th, -- the end of FY '06 and beginning of FY '07;
- reported that he continues to work with John Noll on the Orono Pedestrian Bridge project and they have participated in recent stakeholders' meetings. As with many other projects, funding remains an obstacle to moving forward – with funding (\$1m) falling well short of current cost estimates (\$2.5 m to locate bridge where originally planned). Rob noted that the project does not have to be put out to bid until 2009;
- reported that he intends to invite Ed Hanscom back to a future policy committee meeting to discuss I-395/I-95 interchange planning;
- noted that UMO still needs to install improved crosswalk lighting;
- updated the committee on the Truck Route Study which will be before the Technical Committee at its June meeting, with the aim of putting the report out in late July – early August; and
- reported that he continues to participate in the Brewer Main Street project, and this is the final week for public comment on the draft final report.

Frank Higgins added that the project went well and that stakeholders are pleased with the results while recognizing that there are implementation challenges to face. He noted that the cost estimate is lower than he expected and shared his belief that the

report "put a finger on the essence of the problems and suggested [appropriate] solutions".

(b) Dianne Currie reported that she:

- has received training in various technical areas including: the DOT TIDE web site, GIS (on-line), and Traffic Signals;
- is in the process of buying new tubes and continues her "count season" work;
- is spearheading efforts for this year's "Commute Another Way Day," scheduled for June 7th and has received a very positive response so far; and
- participated in the May 4th Signal/Study/Inspection;

Dianne presented a preliminary Pavement Condition Ratings Map of the BACTS area and advised the committee that more detailed maps can be created for individual towns.

(c) Don Cooper reported that he continues to work on the Travel Demand Model program, which has pretty much been calibrated and will next be updated to reflect current conditions. After that, he will be able to run demonstration forecasts. Once the program is up and running, the model can be utilized to test various potential traffic options/conditions/situations and serve as a tool for contingency planning for future events such as development and closures.

7. **Other Business**

(a) Rob Kenerson reported that he has been invited to a May 24th "brainstorming" workshop in Old Town on contingency planning for the former GP mill.

(b) Rob reported that he continues to be an active participant in the National Peer Review for MPO's which is currently working on developing workshops for MPO's to be held at five locations throughout the country. Rob noted that it has been very interesting and educational to be the only representative of a small MPO involved in the process. He continues to work hard to assure that the needs, limitations and concerns of small MPO's are taken into account in the peer review process.

(c) Don Cooper reported on the increase in BAT ridership over the same period last year. Ridership increased on all routes; with a low of 2.82% on Hammond and a high of 19.74% on VOOT, for a 10% increase system-wide. It is estimated that ridership will reach 712,468 by the end of FY '06. Don stated that "BAT is doing quite nicely" and he anticipates that ridership will continue to grow in the future, possibly reaching levels requiring the addition of buses. In response to a committee member's question, Don indicated that BAT is currently paying \$2.48/gal for 20/80 biodiesel.

(d) Don reported that he and Joe McNeil (BAT) attended the Maine State Tourism Conference in Augusta to receive an annual "Excellence in Tourism" award for bus service provided at the Folk Festival.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaci S. Hancock