

# KACTS

## Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System

The Metropolitan Planning  
Organization (MPO) for the  
Kittery Urbanized Area

Maximizing opportunities to enhance the movement of goods and people through the Gateway to Maine

### Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 10 at 9:00 a.m.

**Kittery Town Hall  
200 Rogers Road  
Kittery ME 03904**

#### KACTS MEMBERS

Berwick

Eliot

Kittery

South Berwick

York

Maine Turnpike  
Authority

MaineDOT

Southern Maine  
PDC

Public  
Transportation  
Providers

Voting members present: Adam Causey (Kittery), Chris Mann (MaineDOT), Tom Reinauer (Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission), Dylan Smith (York), Robert Currie (York County Community Action Corporation), David Rich (Kittery), Jon St. Pierre (South Berwick), Dean Lessard (York), Joel Moulton (Eliot), Doug Greene (Eliot), Carlos Pena (Federal Highway Administration)

Staff & Guests: Eric Sanderson (Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission)

#### 1. Welcome/Introductions

Meeting called to order by Chair, Dylan Smith at 9:05

#### 2. Approval of Minutes from the March 7, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting

Jon St. Pierre made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris Mann seconded. No further comments/discussion. Motion passed 10-0-0.

#### 3. Kittery Government Street project funding request

- Town is requesting \$132,780.16 in Federal funds from Holding WIN account to cover project construction bid

Tom Reinauer began the discussion noting the project went out to bid in March, and all bids came in over the budget. Kittery is requesting to use over \$132,000 for the project, with the town putting up a total 20% match.

A discussion was held regarding funds currently in the holding WIN. Tom stated \$224,000 in federal amount was being held, and the low bidder for the Kittery Government Street project was Glidden Excavation and Paving. Dave Rich noted the project overruns due to curbing work and additional needs beyond skinny mix, so funds were transferred previously from a Route 103 project.

The Committee discussed the recurring issue of bids coming in well over the project budget. Some of the reasons discussed were a tight labor market (thus higher labor costs), a larger

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pool of projects (and thus a contractor may select which they choose to pursue and have more control over pricing), and stringent requirements of state contracted work. Tom noted that the MaineDOT policy favors the low bid, which in some cases may still be above the project budget. This policy may not be feasible in the long term.

### KACTS MEMBERS

Berwick

The project schedule was reviewed, with Dave Rich reporting that upon possible Committee approval of transfer, work will start in Summer of 2019. Chris Mann added that once Tom gives letter of approval of transfer of funds to MaineDOT if approved, they will be able to get associated paperwork out quickly, as it is already complete.

Eliot

Kittery

Dean Lessard made a motion to move \$132,780.16 in Federal funds in the Holding WIN to Kittery's Government Street Project. The motion was seconded by Dylan. With no further discussion, the motion passed 10-0-0.

South Berwick

York

Tom reminded the Committee that KACTS and MaineDOT agreed projects must be at Preliminary Design Review stage before being considered for construction funding. The Committee discussed holding back some 2022 money for anticipated construction cost overruns, which may need to be covered by towns. PACTS also takes the town responsibility approach, but considering additional funding requests on a case by case basis. Dean noted that the KACTS annual federal allocation is so small that towns may need to chip in more dollars, or projects may not be able to be completed.

Maine Turnpike Authority

MaineDOT

#### **4. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

- Review and possible approval**

Southern Maine PDC

Tom gave an overview of Errata updates given by MaineDOT, and added that a small section was inserted to the plan on performance based planning (as discussed with MaineDOT). There has been no public comment on the document.

Public Transportation Providers

Bob Currie commented that the funding tables for transit may need update, as York County Community Action received \$204,000 from KACTS in 2018.

Bob made a motion to approve the 2019-2022 TIP, which was seconded by Dean. The motion passed 10-0-0.

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### 5. Long Range Transportation Plan Update

- Review and possible approval

Tom gave an overview of the changes made to the document since the last Committee meeting. A Financial Constraint section was added to address funding levels and advocating for larger federal allocations. Chris noted funding has been level for a long period of time, and that the formula for National Highway System funds is no longer applicable because NHPP formula is now used along with other changes. Tom concluded the plan expires at the end of 2019 and the Committee must approve a new plan before that time.

The Committee discussed financial constraint of KACTS. When York joined KACTS, federal funds barely increased, and other options for funding are the Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) Program. For 2019, PACTS swapped federal dollars for state dollars to make projects susceptible to fewer requirements. Carlos suggested the next Maine Transportation Conference should address lack of adequate Transportation funding in general, and MPO funding specifically. Chris added that the FAST Act expires at the end of 2020 and in an election year another bill may not be written. It could be three years before a new bill is voted on, so until then agencies would see the same levels of funding each year.

Dean and Dave discussed surprise costs at the end of a project. Dean suggested the idea of towns paying for engineering costs to get a project up to PDR, as it is usually cheaper than construction. Carlos added that we should talk to other DOT's and MPO's nationally to get an idea of how they appropriate funds. Additional review by KACTS staff may reduce costs in looking for erroneous engineering estimates. Nationally, a discussion must be held in increasing the gas tax or finding a way to incorporate funding from use of electronic and more fuel efficient vehicles. Various state legislation initiatives were discussed.

Dylan emphasized the Committee should be informed on current bills at the state and federal levels so pressure can be applied to legislators. He also noted the language in the current Financial Constraint Section is not strong enough.

Tom added that KACTS staff are certified Local Project Administrators, and are happy to help a town get its project to PDR phase or review other aspects of projects.

Dave acknowledged that Kittery and York have received much of the KACTS funding in recent years, so projects from other towns would be good to see. Tom added that if a town has a project, they should submit it to show the need for more federal funding, even if that project is not selected. Kittery is facing troubles resurfacing Route 1 and maintaining its condition until MainedOT repairs it.

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The Committee concluded that KACTS should have an agenda item on each future meeting to discuss strategies to acquire more funding and better spend KACTS funds. KACTS staff will prepare a summary of potential strategies for the next meeting that will address how to deal with funding allocations.

### KACTS MEMBERS

#### **6. Draft Project Selection Procedure**

Berwick

Eliot

Kittery

Tom discussed the primary changes of the project selection criteria. These were to add a scoring criteria for statement of need, which will make the scoring system more applicable for all types of projects. When projects are submitted, KACTS staff and a DOT representative will score proposals. Discrepancies will be discussed if large differences in scoring occurs. The final scores will be provided at the June KACTS meeting, with MaineDOT needing a decision on which projects will be funded by July.

South Berwick

York

Maine Turnpike Authority

The Committee discussed issues with towns being responsible for getting a project to PDR phase and spending funds on planning and engineering for projects that may not be approved by KACTS. Other criteria discussed included matching dollars from the municipality/municipalities. Although this could be disadvantageous to smaller communities with smaller budgets. Dean added that if MaineDOT fronts more funds, the towns could match these funds, hopefully bringing in a larger federal allocation to KACTS. Chris stated this approach would involve less “strings” and oversight, but the money would have to come from a specified source.

MaineDOT

#### **7. Other Business**

Southern Maine PDC

Tom updated the Committee on his meeting with MaineDOT on reclassification of KACTS roadways. MaineDOT suggested some minor changes in classification, which Pete Coughlin of MaineDOT will present at a future KACTS meeting.

Public Transportation Providers

Tom also reminded the Committee of the I-95 high level bridge work, which is a 3 year project. If a community or community member wants to be added to an email list for updates on this project, they should email Tom or Eric Sanderson of KACTS. Tom will send out the consultant Traffic Management Plan developed by TY Lin. The project will have sporadic lane closures approaching the bridge at exit 7 northbound in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and exit 1 southbound in Kittery.

Dave noted Kittery pushed for installation of temporary electronic signs to alert drivers of alternate routes, discouraging use of Route 1 and 236 in Kittery as a detour. Tom added that as part of the project, overhead electronic signs will be added indicating when the breakdown lane will be open for travel during summer months. The Committee discussed

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safety issues associated with travel occurring in the breakdown lane, and noted that safety fencing will not be added to the bridge as part of the project, which is something that is needed.

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Dean updated the Committee on funding eligibility of built and unbuilt roads, stating that if MaineDOT does not know which roads are built and unbuilt, that could affect local town budgets after much investment getting a road up to “built” status. Dean gave the example of Route 1A in York, which the town reconstructed. It was previously considered unbuilt, but now that it is built, it would be helpful to know that York can take management of this road off of its plate. This also presents difficulty in planning improvements for roadways, if MaineDOT is planning to improve a road after it becomes deficient for use (so the town must bear the cost of maintaining it to standard until MaineDOT’s project begins).

KACTS staff will work with MaineDOT and municipal staff to gather information on existing data for built/unbuilt sections and work on updating the information.

### **8. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items**

The next meeting will be held at 9AM on Wednesday, May 15, 2019 in York. The meeting location is to be determined. Agenda items to be discussed include:

1. Discussion of federal funding and strategies to acquire or better allocate funding
2. Possible approval of TIP Project Selection Procedures
3. Possible approval of Long Range Transportation Plan
3. Presentation of KACTS project candidates to Policy Committee

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 AM