

A “workshop meeting” of the Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board was held at 10:30am on Thursday, June 18, 2020, via Zoom.

Attendees:

Phil Crossman, Vinalhaven  
Jon Emerson, North Haven  
Rick Latimer, North Haven  
Maggie Wilcox, Islesboro Island News  
Kathy Clark, Swan’s Island  
John King, Islesboro  
Dennis Damon, Bass Harbor  
Tom Luttrell, Rockland  
Bill Pulver, MDOT  
Mike McKenna, MDOT  
Joanne O’Shea, MSFS  
Mark Higgins, MSFS Manager

- No agenda.
- Mark provided an overview of ridership data and financials and schedules/policies.

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Mark shared ridership data. See below.

For the month of June, there’s been a little bit of a turnaround, with an increase in traffic during the week. Schedules have increased based on ridership.

Eva said Matinicus data skews the data and isn’t relevant because some years, extra trips have been requested.

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Mark shared financial data. See attached.

Financials through the end of May, specifically revenue. In April, we made \$133k vs 304K last year. May \$141k vs \$408k last year.

Each payroll is about \$250k and we had shipyard period.

\$2m grant received. A second \$1M grant expected this fall. Once Thompson is out of yard, next ones are Philbrook and Smith which aren’t until Sept. We don’t expect large bills during the summer. Grants don’t need to be paid back and may be used on anything in the operations.

Dennis: can the money be applied to the 50% obligation? Mark: no because it’s not farebox revenue. Mike will record it as services. Dennis: are we in danger of not making our 50%? Will the highway fund have a reduction in what they will contribute? Bill: he doesn’t think it’ll carry it over. The \$2M is a reduction in expenditures. The bar of the 50% is being lowered by the \$2M. John wonders how grant

will apply to budgeted expenditures. What impact do grants have on budgeting process, since budget is in effect through FY21. Bill: Next fall we will go into budget process for the next two years. The highway fund is required to pay 50% off the top for the ferry service, regardless of revenue issues. He doesn't see the budgeted amount for the ferry service being impacted unless costs are reduced. John: budget was based on projected expenditures and revenues—how will we meet revenue projections? Eva: MSFS is not unique in this. Other agencies would have similar situation. Bill: we project what we think expenses will be then, fund 50% of that with highway fund and expect the ferry service to generate 50%. Capital expenses are outside of this process.

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July and August schedules are in place—these were sent out a few weeks ago. See below.

Policies: We are still under orders by the Governor to wear masks. Drawings of vessels have been given to CDC to see if seating can be adjusted/number in cabins be updated. Jon asks if people are wearing masks in cabins. Mark: if people aren't complying, we assume riders have a medical condition. We are politely asking people to wear mask. Jon asks if we can some available for those without. Mark: no, state isn't offering them.

Rick: asked Mark to help them spread the word on CDC guidelines. As towns, he wants to help manage expectations and communicate ahead of time. Rick asks for consistency in messages.

John: 1<sup>st</sup> boat to mainland from IS carries a lot of contractors. They are compliant down the ramp, but not waiting outside. Mark: we can spray paint lines on sidewalk. (Request has been sent to all terminals to spray lines)

John: thank you for flexibility on schedule. Mark: we're trying to accommodate as best as possible. Our staff has risen to the challenge.

Jon: asks about the Burgess limit of 5 in the cabin. Mark: people can be outside, so it doesn't limit to a grand total of 10. Jon has traveled once in 3 months and stayed in car...many people may choose to do this. Jon asks about providing masks. Mark: not a money issue, he asked and was told that no state agencies are providing masks.

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Next meeting is July 9. Mark will send out zoom link and agenda.