

Maine State Ferry Advisory Board
Thursday 9/18/25 10:30 AM via ZOOM

1. Roll Call

Vinalhaven: Alan Barker – Primary and Marjorie Stratton – Alternate
North Haven: John Emerson – Primary, Islesboro: Peter Willcox- Primary,
Swan’s Island: Kathy Clark – Primary, Matinicus: Eva Murray – Primary,
Frenchboro: Jan Keiper – Alternate, Bass Harbor: Dannis Damon – Primary

MaineDOT:

Bill Pulver, Bill Geary, E.J. Dupont, Dan Conrod, Michael Cavalieri, Danielle Molloy, Missy Goocher, Chris Cusson, Tracy Ames, Captain Kevin Hopkins of the M/V Captain E. Frank Thompson, Sri Beerman

2. Introduction of Visitors

Bill Banks. Peter Drury

3. Approval of Minutes

Unanimous approval of the meeting minutes as drafted.

4. Communications To or by the Board: None

To or by the MSFS/MDOT: None

There were no formal communications addressed to or issued by the Board prior to this meeting. However, members briefly acknowledged ongoing correspondence between Maine State Ferry Service management and island representatives regarding operational updates and schedule consistency. The Chair emphasized the importance of maintaining transparent communication channels with island communities, particularly when service adjustments are made due to vessel maintenance or weather disruptions.

5. Reports on the Ferry Service

Board members noted that several topics discussed in prior meetings — including passenger feedback mechanisms and terminal facility updates — remain active and under internal review. Members reaffirmed the Board’s advisory role in supporting

MaineDOT efforts to maintain reliability, affordability, and safety across all ferry routes.

a) Ridership

Ridership across the ferry system continues to reflect steady seasonal demand. Summer volumes remained strong, particularly on high-traffic routes, though minor fluctuations were observed as seasonal residents began to depart. Comparative data indicated consistent performance with prior years, with no significant deviation in total ridership. Members discussed the potential benefit of having a year-to-date ridership summary available for the next meeting to help assess overall trends and plan for winter operations.

b) Vessel Status Report

The fleet remains operational with all primary vessels in active service. Routine maintenance and inspection schedules are being followed. Minor mechanical issues reported on one vessel were promptly addressed without service interruption. The operations team continues to manage maintenance rotation to minimize downtime. The Board acknowledged the staff's efforts in maintaining fleet readiness during peak demand periods.

c) Staffing Report

Staffing levels are generally stable, with recruitment continuing for several open positions, including relief and deckhand roles. The service is maintaining sufficient crew coverage for scheduled operations. The Board recognized the challenges of recruitment in the current labor market and discussed potential strategies to enhance retention, including training opportunities and cross-departmental support.

6. Island Specific Issues

Members noted a few inquiries from island residents regarding the consistency of ferry schedules and occasional delays linked to weather and vessel turnaround times. Discussion emphasized the importance of clear communication with island communities when adjustments occur. While no formal motions were made, members encouraged continued monitoring of feedback and engagement with island leadership to address local operational concerns proactively.

7. New Business

No new agenda items were presented during this meeting. The Chair invited members to submit topics for inclusion in the next session, particularly regarding long-term infrastructure planning and fare system modernization initiatives.

8. Old Business

Follow-up items from prior meetings, including service efficiency evaluations and terminal improvement discussions, were briefly reviewed. No new updates requiring board action were available at this time. The Chair noted that progress reports will be provided once MaineDOT concludes its ongoing internal reviews and assessments.

9. Next Meeting / Adjournment

Next regularly scheduled Advisory Board meeting will be on 11/20/25 at 10:30am.