



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
and
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2024 – 1:30 to 3:00

Location – MaineDOT Maine Conference Room (216 – Main Floor)

1. Introductions
2. Review minutes – September 18, 2023 meeting
3. Review agenda – Policy meetings are March/September. Technical meetings are June/December, however topics are needed. Highway Lessons Learned is moving from this June to later this year.
4. MaineDOT Updates (Including personnel changes).

General Updates – Todd Pelletier

- Nina Fisher has left MaineDOT
- Dale Doughty is now Deputy Commissioner
- Jeff Folsom and Todd are looking at succession planning for the Bureau of Project Development and for MaineDOT. Many retirements are anticipated over the next few years.
- Discussion on Consultant Reviews and the time MaineDOT is spending on this effort.
- Reminder to consultants - basic plan and design comments should be done by the consultant.
- Contracting – Dale Doughty participated in the internal review of contracting at MaineDOT.
- Contract Specialist are spending a lot of time sifting through invoice issues. Consultants, please make sure invoices are accurate prior to submission.

Bridge Program – Wayne Frankhauser

- Bridge Design Guide Status Update - Chapters 1 – 3 in internal review. Making good progress in Chapter 4. Will send 1—3 out to consultants by the end of April.
- Staff Changes:
 - Jason Stetson – New Fabrication Engineer - formerly Project Manager in Team North
 - Rick McKenna retired (Property Office). Bridge is now sharing a ROW person (Andrew Johnson)
 - Bridge Program has a steady stream of interviews.
- Bridge workload is trending up:
 - 2024 - 69 projects at \$236 m
 - 2025 - 106 projects at \$350 m
 - A lot of projects were pushed to 2026-2027.
 - Alternative Delivery – 3 Design Build Bundles:
 - 2 bridges in Bangor
 - I-95 overpasses between Augusta and Waterville and
 - I-395 bundle in Brewer.
 - Looking at ways to improve the delivery process and complete design packages.
 - Seeing the impacts of December 2023/January 2024 storms i.e. delay claims from Contractors. There were no bridge failures but a lot of damage.
 - Will be revising Design Standards for Integral Abutments and Bridge Opening

Highway – Brad Foley

- Staff changes:

- Rhobe Moulton retiring end of March. Laurie Rowe has taken her place as Senior PM and Derrick Carelton has taken Laurie's PM position on that team
- Steve Bodge is leaving state service the middle of June.
- Geoff Doyle is new PM in Village Program with Ernie Martin
- Looking to hire additional Assistant Transportation Engineers
- Work Outlook – Waiting on the STIP. A lot of unbuilt CAPs.

Multi-Modal – Jeff Tweedie-

- Staff Changes:
 - Joe Stilwell, Construction Manager has left MaineDOT. Position is currently posted
- LAP delivery from 70% to 30%.
- Storms – one transfer facility failed but remains usable.
- Work Outlook - anticipates a traditional program of LAP's and trails, sidewalks and intersections.

Regional Program – Dave Bernhardt

- Staff Changes:
 - No major staffing changes at higher levels. Senior Project Manager in Region 1 Laray Hamilton is leaving state service June 14th. Ryan Hodgman has been promoted to take his place.
 - Gained 2 inspectors/designers, losing 4 or 5.
- Construction - MaineDOT is meeting in Bangor to talk about construction staffing and needs for consultant staffing. Most work will be out by the end of April.
- Design – large culverts are huge for regional putting out 12 this year will be more like 30-35 each year going forward to 2027. There is a need for these projects. Not quite keeping ahead of the storm damage. Thank you to consultants for helping out with the emergency projects due to the storms.
- Dave Bernhardt is retiring the end of August.

Bridge Maintenance – Ron Taylor

- Several large culverts becoming minor spans.
- Bridge Maintenance is gearing up on inspections, and load rating posting scour.
- Entire inventory needs to be rated for FAST, EV and RPV.
 - A lot of extra work related to ratings will be coming out.
- Scour assignments will be coming out.
- Updated Load Rating Guide to be issued in May.

Construction Services – Highway/Regional - Scott Bickford, Bridge - Eric Shepherd, Multi-modal - Joe Stilwell

- Upcoming construction season outlook on consultant usage, changes, staffing of projects.
 - Joe – Finding staffing, Construction training on 3/28-29.
 - Shawn – Meeting Wednesday to go through staffing choices. April 22 and 24 training is specific to Guard Rail. Documentation training and potentially a few other trainings to be scheduled by George Macdougall.
 - Field Manager is going away in 2024.
 - Schedule for consultant documentation training and other consultant related meetings and trainings as the season progresses.
 - Field Manager is going away in 2024. Implementation of AASHTOWare Project from Field Manager, specifically: will be web base so access for consultants should be easier. Guy's work around is nearly done. Reach out to DOT PM for reactivation of

access. You do not get a notification when submissions are entered. There will be more discussion on this in the training.

- Workzone safety week is 4/15 through 4/19.
- Eric - Lost 6 in-house bridge residents, 3 did not work out. Consultant usage is going to go up. Bridge kept most of their consultant inspectors over the winter. This season the Bridge Program will need 6-8 more inspectors (Class II-III).

Contract Procurement Office – Chad Lewis

- Reviewing Consultant Procurement Manual chapter by chapter.
- There is an increase in invoices – internally CPO is trying to make processing more efficient.
- Staffing Updates:
 - Gail Lizotte retired in Nov. 23.
 - Tina Bushaw filled that position. Working to fill Tina’s position.
 - Down 3 CS’s and allowing limited OT to keep up. Also added a tracker so if CS’s have time they can assist with invoices etc.
 - Departmentwide RFQ – Will be released in early September with submissions due in early Oct. The goal to have GCA’s in place by end of June 2025.
 - Any changes to submittal requirements – Generally the same format.
 - Any new definitions of services – Unknown currently
 - Any new service numbers to expect – Unknown currently.
 - NOTE: Since the time of this meeting Chad Lewis has left MaineDOT and Tina Bushaw has filled the position in an Acting Capacity.

Property Office – Heath Cowan

- Staffing Updates:
 - Scott Avore – Retired. Send any questions to Heath.
 - Kyle McLaggin - Mapper
 - Joe White – new research tech
- ROW supervisors – Andy Johnson for Multimodal and Bridge and Brian Sanderson for Highway and Regional
- ROW Mapping outside of DOT – Now using consultants for ROW Mapping and Survey. Work with PM’s upfront including existing conditions. Any questions see Guy for expectations. Some consultants taking on complete Phase I (from kick-off to PDR) with minimal oversight from Property Office so consultants will know what the deliverables and expectations are. If it goes well may be asked to do Phase II.

Planning – Dale Doughty

- Staffing Updates
 - Dale Doughty now Deputy Commissioner
 - Nate Moulton has assumed the role of Acting Director of Planning and Jen Grant as Deputy. Interviews scheduled Week of June 10th for new Director
 - Darryl Belz moved over to Region 2 Traffic Engineer
 - Creating a Multimodal engineering position for Marine Infrastructure
 - Hired an Urban Planner to work with MPO’s. Working with MPO’s to focus on Planning and Preliminary Engineering to get geared up for competitive grant opportunities.
- Planning Partnership and Village Partnership – more of these grants are coming up.
 - If working with community on State Aid Infrastructure encourage them to talk with MaineDOT early on.

- More if not the same level of grants. Timing of projects are tied to when you can get a grant. As Consultants assisting the municipalities, please discuss the importance of hitting the project delivery dates.
- Contracts – Dale led the internal review of MaineDOT contracting. Most of the work was related to internal. There is a need for modernization of systems for efficiencies.
- Virtual Public Involvement – Scott Rollins
 - No personnel changes
 - 2023 doubled the amount of vpi's. Trying to make it easier without having to do full fledge videos and working to keep the details to a minimum. Focusing on how the project will affect the users and neighbors. When videos are required try to keep them to 5 or 6 minutes in length.
 - Scott working on a story map on how to create a meeting.

5. CADD Subcommittee – Jonathan French provided notes:

- WorkSpace Version 1.9 for OpenRoads Designer (ORD) 2021 R2 is out now on the MaineDOT CADD Support Website.
- CADD Support plans to be rolling ORD 2023 and WorkSpace v.2.0 for ORD 2023 at the beginning of April due to the instability issues of ORD 2021 R2. Files will all need to be upgraded to ORD 2023 ASAP once released because there is a new schema. There will be a batch process to upgrade all files that will also be provided. WorkSpace v.2.0 is essentially v.1.9 in ORD 2023 with the change of the WorkSet properties for sheets now being in the Sheet Index and there are some changes to the location of files in the configuration as well.
- Changes to add new functionality of ORD 2023 will be part of WorkSpace 2.1 that will be available in June and WorkSpace 2.2 will be available in the fall with further increased functionality and possibly some future digital delivery additions such as item types.
- MaineDOT has switched to SharePoint as its file storage for CADD and related project data in ORD because of very slow loading times working remotely over our VPN along with stability issues. There have been a few issues with syncing via OneDrive, but most everyone has synced and there has been a definite performance increase. ORD took about 15 minutes to load remotely prior to the change, now it loads under 30 seconds. There is a new check out and check in procedure that has been established to control versioning in SharePoint to minimize file sizes.
- Due to the switch to SharePoint, consultants will now be able to have access to projects to upload and download files directly via a web browser. Syncing will only be possible if a consultant provides a GUID to MainIT, however, and we are looking for somebody to test that process. Contact the Project Manager and Jonathan French if you are interested in having access to a particular project.
- There will be a SharePoint site for ORD created for consultants after the rollout of ORD 2023. Access can be provided via e-mail addresses for individuals similar to project access. The site will have documentation as well as videos of MaineDOT specific workflows. This will likely be the preferred location for information until and possibly after MaineDOT has its website redesign.
- Conversions of DGNs have been going OK – there are spreadsheets within the provided configuration package to convert individual DGNs, but there is some manual effort required for text and if linework wasn't put on the proper level. Recommendation for projects that are converting designs is to import alignment files only and then rebuild corridors in ORD. Template files use a different point naming convention and creating sheets is a completely different

process. A Coach Point meeting is still recommended if the project is at or beyond PDR but prior to PIC to determine if conversion from V8i should happen or not due to the possible amount of re-work. Still plan to retire V8i in the first half of 2025.

- A WorkSet folder and files should be provided to you by the Project Manager and must be used instead of the consultant WorkSet and provided back to MaineDOT with any ORD files. There have been noted issues with ProjectWise and trying to use a provided WorkSet after the fact, so make sure to get those from the Project Manager prior to commencing work on a project in ORD, especially if using ProjectWise.

6. Funding – Andy Bickmore

- Workplan – Workplan is posted, everything is trending up with \$800 M over three years mostly in discretionary programs. Could see an uptick in the next workplan as they get into the full swing of awards. Many have obligation dates.
- The T-HUD appropriations bill includes \$126 M to MaineDOT – pavement preservation, bridge etc. with many projects already identified in the work plan.
- Bridge funding program Maine 1 of 4 states to get \$35.2 M that will need to get programed in next plan. Will have until 2027 to obligate.
- Starting the 2025 Bills now – expect request from congressional delegation. Continue to submit and are successful.
- Submitted on multiple grants: Libbytown – Reconnection Commission - \$22.4M; two Raise Grants for over \$50 M; and two Bridge Improvement for \$100M. 65% success rate on dollar for dollar. Maine is doing very well. Raise Grants – they are requesting less cutbacks on grants. Office of Secretary is trying to give at least one Raise Grant to each state.

7. Report from Subcommittee Co – Chairs

- Bridge – Ashley Stephens
 - As more projects come up the Committees are focused on how to be more efficient putting out more projects.
 - Everyone is getting into OpenRoads tips and tricks.
 - Potential future training needs – hydraulics and fracture critical inspection
 - Pilot projects for driveway assisted (DADs) reach out to PM's
- Highway – Shawn Davis
 - Subcommittee reinstated rotation.
 - Lessons Learned - next technical mtg (Fall 2024).
- Multimodal – Ariel Greenlaw

Focus on learning on different topics and inviting MaineDOT staff to present information:

 - Joe Stillwell – shop drawing protocols
 - Kate McGuire – Geotech, signal and lighting foundations
 - Jonathan French - ORD
 - Brian Keezer - Signalization
 - Pedestrian Lighting primer upcoming

8. Report from Consultants on recent staffing changes, mergers/acquisitions, added services.

9. Delivery Performance Summary– Jeff Folsom

- 2023 Results: 218 projects with 203 delivered on time (93% delivery) Increase of 20 projects over the prior year
- 22 projects added including 9 emergency = 229 project \$239 M
- 2024 slow start 89% still projecting to be about 90% projecting 232 projects.

- 73/82 LCP, Paving - Regional half done
- ¾ consultant usage.
- Reached a steady state on delivery performance with a 10-year average of 90% and a 5 year average of 91%
- Looking at new performance measures with attention to budgets at milestones and general commitment to deliver within 3 years from being in workplan.

10. EDC-7 & State Transportation Innovation Council Updates –Jeff Pulver for Patrick Adams, FHWA

- Mary Ann Hayes retired the same time as Dale Peabody. Dawn Bickford is the new Innovation Coordinator.
- STIC funding is going up from \$100k to \$125k
- Looking at a way to add the STIC applications through the MaineDOT website to increase participation.
- EDC – 7 continuing. Next new round 2025.
- Anticipate awarding 3 STIC funded projects this year.
- There is approximately \$20-25k STIC funding remaining.

11. FHWA – General Updates – Jennifer Williams, FHWA provided notes:

- NPRM for the discontinuance of the general waiver of Buy America for manufactured products, and the corresponding RFI on the use of Manufactured Products. The comment period is open until May 13th.
 - i) FHWA is proposing to discontinue its general waiver of Buy America requirements for manufactured products and in doing so, require FHWA recipients to start applying Buy America requirements to manufactured products. The FHWA is also proposing standards for applying Buy America to manufactured products should the waiver be discontinued.
 - ii) FHWA is also publishing a Request for Information (RFI) on the use of Manufactured Products in highway projects. FHWA is seeking additional information on the domestic availability of specific manufactured products commonly used in FHWA-funded projects to ensure the continued effective implementation of FHWA programs that would be subject to new requirements for manufactured products.

12. Maine Turnpike Authority Updates - Kristi Van Ooyen

- All RFQ's are up on the MTA's website.
- GEC Due May 1 selection in June.
- Consultant Engineering Due June 1 selection fall
- Construction Services – leaving open all year.
- Peter Merfeld – Update on Gorham Connector, Public Mtg March 25th. There is a series of Public Meetings scheduled over the next few months, MaineDOT is taking on the bike/ped interests.
 - Maine Turnpike has had a lot of meetings w/ Smiling Hill Farm.
 - Contract w/ HNTB is through PDR and they are looking into what they are doing with Final Design Contracts. They need to balance work with other consultants and they don't have a lot of other work.

13. Next meetings:

- Policy – September 9th, 2024 1:30pm – 3pm
- Technical –Highway Program Lessons Learned - this fall

Special thank you to Peggy Duval for her 10 years of volunteer service on the ACEC of Maine Board of Directors and her many years on this Taskforce. THANK YOU!