



## SAULT STE. MARIE BRIDGE AUTHORITY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

NATALIE KINLOCH, CHAIR  
WARREN ASKEW, MEMBER  
THYE LEE, MEMBER

SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

LINDA HOATH, VICE CHAIR  
THOMAS BUCKINGHAM SR., MEMBER  
SCOTT SHACKLETON, MEMBER  
NICHOLAS WHITE, MEMBER

### Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority Minutes August 19, 2021 Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Present:** Natalie Kinloch, Chair (Apple Hill, Ontario)  
Linda Hoath, Vice Chair (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan)  
Thye Lee, Member (Maberly, Ontario)  
Thomas Buckingham, Sr., Member (Newberry, Michigan)  
Nicholas White, Member (Petoskey, Michigan)

**Absent:** Warren Askew, Member  
Scott Shackleton, Member

**Also Present:** Peter Petäinen, Bridge Director, IBA  
Laura Mester, Chief Administrative Officer, MDOT  
Michael Dittenber, Attorney General's Office, MDOT  
Sara Moore, International Border Crossing & Trade Specialist, MDOT  
Emily Jacques, Chief Financial Officer, IBA  
Karl Hansen, Bridge Engineer, IBA  
Marcus Eidenier, Facilities & Asset Manager, IBA  
Cheryn Sanford, Departmental Analyst, IBA  
Suzanne Moreau, Accounting Technician, IBA  
Holly Bishop, Calculations Assistant, IBA  
Dan Weingarten, MDOT Communications Representative  
Bradley Sharlow, Urban Travel Analysis Unit, MDOT

Chair Kinloch called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

#### I. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hoath to approve the May 13, 2021 Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority regular meeting minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Member Lee. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

REPLY TO: PETER M. PETAINEN, BRIDGE DIRECTOR

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## II. **Bridge Director's Comments**

### A. Toll Software Replacement Project

Peter reported IBI Group is under contract for the development of the new toll software. The project is progressing quickly and is currently in the second phase of design review.

### B. Michigan Mobility 2045

Bradley Sharlow from MDOT's Urban Travel Analysis Unit made a presentation on the *Michigan Mobility 2045* which is the state of Michigan's long-range transportation plan. The plan is a federally required document with updates occurring every five years and a complete overhaul of the plan performed every 10 years. Online survey's and town hall meetings were conducted which received feedback from 14,000 people across Michigan with representation from all 83 counties in the State. The final plan will be presented for adoption to the State Transportation Committee in October 2021.

### C. Other Comments

- Peter reported our crossing felt no major impacts from the August 6, 2021 Canada Border Services Agency work to rule action.
- Peter reported traffic was lined up at midnight in anticipation of the opening of the Canadian border for northbound travelers on August 9, 2021. Wait times were significant for the 1,000 northbound crossings with travelers experiencing wait times up to three hours. Since the Canadian border opening, traffic has stabilized at about 800 crossings per day; in comparison, during the pandemic crossings averaged 500 per day and pre-pandemic crossings averaged approximately 3,000 crossings per day.
- Peter reported VAST has provided us with the expected work comp mod for 2022 which will be unchanged at a rate of .69. This is an excellent rate and can be attributed to the IBA's excellent safety record.
- Peter reported the deepening portion of the Sault Locks project is winding down with work moving further away from the bridge structure; we do not anticipate any further impacts to the bridge as a result of this project.

## III. **Finance and Operations**

### A. Traffic, Revenue, and Operations

CFO Emily Jacques reported total traffic as of June 30, 2021 showed a 71% decrease compared to 2020.

### B. Second Quarter Financial Report

CFO Emily Jacques reported combined balance sheet assets as of June 30, 2021 were at \$6.6M; total liabilities were at \$642K, and total fund balance was at \$3.8M. Total net revenue for quarter ending June 30, 2021 was \$1.4M with total next expenditures totaling \$2.5M.

C. Draft 2022-2026 Business Plan

The current draft of the business plan has an assumed inflation rate of 2% and a construction index rate of 3.5%. After discussion with the audit committee yesterday, these rates will be changed to reflect an inflation rate of 3% and a construction index rate of 7.5%. These changes will be incorporated into the final draft that will be sent to board for approval at the November meeting. The final draft of the business plan will also address long term COVID effects with the biggest unknown being what the projected traffic recovery will look like, full recovery of traffic in 2024 is currently built into the plan. The draft plan also incorporates a 5% toll increase in 2024 and again in 2029; these rate increases have not been approved and will be subject to the required public hearings.

Chair Kinloch made a recommendation to include a large disclaimer in the final draft of business plan. The plan reveals there will be trouble meeting long term goals which will require both owners to consider what source of funding they will have available to support the infrastructure and specific projects.

Emily requested any comments or suggested changes to the business plan be submitted to her by the end of September to allow these changes to be incorporated in the final draft which will be presented to the board at the November meeting.

D. 2021 Toll System Budget Amendment

With the toll software redevelopment underway, a budget amendment is required to cover IBI billings for the remainder of this fiscal year.

A motion was made by Member Lee to amend the 2021 budgets as presented, to account for the shared toll software project stakeholder fund contributions and expenditures:

- **Increase Revenue Accounts:** Revenue Fund 116.730 Toll Project Funds MDOT by \$1,056,530 and 116.731 Toll Project Funds FBCL by \$528,265
- **Increase Expenditures Accounts:** Capital Fund 220.979 Toll Department Software by \$1,584,795

The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Hoath. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. **Maintenance Operations**

A. Activity and Project Tracking Report

Asset Manager Marcus Eidenier stated overall labor and equipment usage spending is down 34% for the second quarter of 2021; the decrease is attributed to a decrease in winter plowing and sanding activities along with the payroll savings realized from staff temporary reassignments and four full time vacancies. It is anticipated that this

decrease will continue into quarter three due to further staff reductions. The IBA will be advertising to hire fulltime bridge workers; the goal is to advertise, interview, and have qualified candidates ready to start work as soon as the border fully opens.

B. 2021 Maintenance Projects

Marcus stated as a result of our current low staffing levels, several routine maintenance projects such as individual crack sealing, cleaning/coating of the ivory curb rail, U.S. arch spot painting, and concrete repairs to pier 19 are being postponed until next season. IBA maintenance staff have completed the removal of the decommissioned Shaw utility cable, Shaw Cable is covering all costs associated with the removal.

V. **Capital Project Update**

A. Sault Locks Deepening Project Update

Karl reported as Pete mentioned in his Bridge Director's comments, this is the last year of the channel deepening of the Sault Locks project. Hardesty and Hanover have been monitoring the bridge piers for seismic movement; however, no blasting was performed. To date, only \$29K out of the approved maximum of \$149K has been expended on Hardesty and Hanover's contract for this work.

B. 2021 Routine Detailed Inspection

Bridge Engineer Karl Hansen reported Hardesty and Hanover was onsite to perform the hands-on inspection during the week of August 2<sup>nd</sup> and he is pleased to report there were no critical findings noted. Hardesty staff will present their final report at the November SSMBA meeting.

C. U.S. Plaza Project Update

Karl reported that the final warranty inspection was performed in July with no issues found; the concrete has been accepted in whole and the bonding company has been notified that the contractor has no further obligations for this project.

D. Storm Sewer Inspection

Karl reported the bridge's underground storm sewer mains in both the U.S. and Canada have not been inspected since the original bridge construction. The mains collect storm water and snow melt run-off from the bridge deck through the various deck level scuppers, which then carry the drainage through downspouts and into the storm sewer mains. The final draft of the business plan will include an expenditure to have these mains inspected over the next couple of years.

VI. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

VII. **Adjournment**

Vice Chair Hoath made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Member White. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
International Bridge Administration



Peter M. Petäinen  
Bridge Director

PP:cs