



SAULT STE. MARIE BRIDGE AUTHORITY

SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN
NICHOLAS WHITE, CHAIR
THOMAS BUCKINGHAM SR., MEMBER
LINDA HOATH, MEMBER
SCOTT SHACKLETON, MEMBER

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO
NATALIE KINLOCH, VICE CHAIR
WARREN ASKEW, MEMBER
THYE LEE, MEMBER

**Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority
Minutes
May 12, 2022
James McIntyre Board Room
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**

Present: Nicholas White, Chair
Natalie Kinloch, Vice Chair
Linda Hoath, Member
Scott Shackleton, Member
Warren Askew, Member
Thye Lee, Member

Absent: Thomas Buckingham, Sr., Member

Also Present: Peter Petäinen, Bridge Director, IBA
Michael Dittenber, Attorney General's Office, MDOT
Sara Moore, International Border Crossing & Trade Specialist, MDOT
Emily Jacques, Chief Financial Officer, IBA
Fiore Cappelli, Operations Manager, IBA
Karl Hansen, Bridge Engineer, IBA
Marcus Eidenier, Facilities & Asset Manager, IBA
Cheryn Sanford, Departmental Analyst, IBA
Suzanne Moreau, Accounting Technician, IBA
Dan Weingarten, MDOT Communications Representative (via telephone)
Ken Talsma, Principal, Anderson Tackman & Company
Mike Grentz, Partner, Anderson Tackman & Company
Kathleen Brosemer, Public Attendee

Chair White called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

I. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Member Hoath to approve the February 24, 2022 Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority regular meeting minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Member Askew. Motion carried unanimously.

REPLY TO: PETER M. PETAINEN, BRIDGE DIRECTOR

934 BRIDGE PLAZA
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN 49783
PHONE: (906) 635-5255 FAX: (906) 635-0540
TDD/TTY – MICHIGAN RELAY CENTER (800) 649-3777

121 HURON STREET
SAULT STE. MARIE, ON P6A 1R3
PHONE: (705) 942-4345
www.michigan.gov/iba

IA. Public Comment

Kathy Brosemer addressed the board. She stated she is a dual citizen and has been a part of the twin Sault communities for over 12 years. Kathy stated she crosses the bridge daily via an e-bike and would like the board to consider ways to make crossing the bridge more user-friendly for bicyclists. She inquired about the possibility with the upcoming new toll software if there was a way for bicyclists to cross without having to pay cash, or maybe pay the toll for both ways when heading south. Kathy thanked the board for their time and extended her appreciation for any thought they can give to this issue.

II. Bridge Director's Comments

A. Toll Software Replacement Project

Peter reported the project is going very smoothly and continues to stay on budget. Factory acceptance testing will soon be underway with a go live date for the IBA set for August 9, 2022. Chair White asked if the new software will be flexible for making future changes; Peter stated the system has been designed to be very flexible.

B. Other Comments

- Peter reported border crossing restrictions have further eased as of April 1, 2022; however, customers crossing must register using the ArriveCAN app before each trip entering Canada. While traffic has improved since April 1st it is still down about 50% compared to pre-pandemic levels. The ArriveCAN app seems to be a detriment to our customer base as they are uncomfortable with using the app. Discussion took place on ways to better educate the public on the ArriveCAN app; Peter will reach out to CBSA to invite them to speak at Chamber of Commerce meetings in public sessions on both sides of the border in attempt to make the public more comfortable utilizing ArriveCAN.
- Due to entry/vaccination requirements at the border the local Chamber's have made the difficult decision to cancel the annual bridge walk this year. Similar to 2020, a friendship walk will take place with invited public officials only who will walk to the center of the bridge. It is expected to return to a full public bridge walk in 2023.

III. Finance and Operations

A. December 31, 2021 Audit Report

CFO Emily Jacques introduced Ken Talsma and Mike Grentz of Anderson, Tackman & Company. Mr. Grentz stated the IBA received the best possible independent audit result, which is an "Unmodified Opinion" which means everything was fairly and accurately reported in accordance with auditing principles.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kinloch to approve the December 31, 2021 Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority Basic Financial Statements and Independent Audit Report. The motion was seconded by Member Shackleton. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Independent Auditor Renewal

Per the Intergovernmental Agreement the board must approve the auditor for each fiscal year. Peter requested board approval to renew the contract with Anderson Tackman & Company for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022.

A motion was made by Member Shackleton to exercise the option to renew the contract with Anderson Tackman & Company as the Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority's independent auditor for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022. The motion was seconded by Member Lee. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Traffic, Revenue, and Operations

CFO Emily Jacques reported total traffic as of March 31, 2022 showed a 44% increase compared to 2021; though traffic is still down 79% when compared to 2019 pre-pandemic traffic. Emily reported traffic as of April 30, 2022 shows an increase of 93.2% compared to 2021 which is still down 57.4% compared to 2019.

D. First Quarter Financial Report

Emily reported total assets (excluding fixed assets) were at \$9.42 million as of March 31, 2022 and total liabilities were at \$1.1 million. Total revenue as of March 31 was \$1.8 million and total expenditures were at \$2.3 million. All departments were on or under budget for the first quarter of 2022.

IV. **Maintenance Operations**

A. Activity and Project Tracking Report

Asset Manager Marcus Eidenier stated labor and benefits were down 24% when compared to 2021; however, the first quarter in 2022 had one less pay period in the reporting period than the first quarter in 2021. Equipment costs show an increase of 40% which can be contributed to the harsh winter we experienced.

B. Maintenance Projects

Marcus stated staff levels are still down with three current full-time vacancies. This season, the maintenance crew will work on routine maintenance items identified in the 2021 bridge inspection and the 2020 fracture critical inspection. Other projects that will be assigned to the maintenance staff include completing the repair of delaminated concrete on top of Pier 19, installation of new expansion joint seals, replacement of deteriorating electrical junction boxes on the Canadian Arch, and as time and staffing allows some zone painting and finishing the handrail on the U.S. Arch.

V. **Capital Projects**

A. 2022 Fracture Critical Member Inspection

Bridge Engineer, Karl Hansen, reported the 2022 fracture critical member inspection is scheduled to take place during the first two weeks of August. Karl will report preliminary findings to the board at the August SSMBA meeting with the final report being presented at the November meeting.

B. Capital Plan Update

Karl stated the Capital Plan that was developed in 2008 by Parsons Transportation Group has evolved and the IBA is no longer confident with quantities/costs for several items listed in this plan. The IBA will be issuing an authorization to Hardesty & Hanover (H&H) under their Indefinite Delivery of Services contract to update the Capital Plan. Phase I of the project will consist of H&H updating/validating the existing plan and Phase II will consist of H&H identifying new items for future capital needs. Phase I is scheduled to be complete in August 2022 with Phase II being complete in February 2023. Karl stated H&H will also be updating the construction price indexing used in the plan based on the past 3 ½ years.

VI. **Public Comment**

There was no additional public comment.

VII. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Member Hoath to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Member Askew. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
International Bridge Administration



Peter M. Petäinen
Bridge Director