



## SAULT STE. MARIE BRIDGE AUTHORITY

### SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

NATALIE KINLOCH, CHAIR  
THYE LEE, MEMBER  
RÉMI PAQUETTE, MEMBER  
KAREN RICHARDS, MEMBER

### SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

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

**Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority  
Minutes  
August 16, 2023  
Slater Room – Arc Hotel  
Ottawa, Ontario**

**Present:** Natalie Kinloch, Chair (Ottawa, Ontario)  
Thomas Buckingham, Sr., Vice Chair (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan)  
Thye Lee, Member (Ottawa, Ontario)  
Rémi Paquette, Member (Ottawa, Ontario)  
Linda Hoath, Member (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan)  
Scott Shackleton, Member (Ottawa, Ontario)  
Nicholas White, Member (Ottawa, Ontario)

**Also Present:** Peter Petäinen, Bridge Director, IBA  
Michael Dittenber, Attorney General's Office, MDOT  
Emily Jacques, Chief Financial Officer, IBA  
Karl Hansen, Bridge Engineer, IBA  
Marcus Eidenier, Asset Manager, IBA  
Fiore Cappelli, Operations Manager, IBA  
Cheryn Sanford, Departmental Analyst, IBA  
Dan Weingarten, MDOT Communications Representative (via zoom)  
Jennifer MacIsaac, Seaway International Bridge  
Lisa Rozen, The Federal Bridge Limited, Corporation  
Karen Richards, The Federal Bridge Limited Corporation  
Richard Iglinski, The Federal Bridge Limited Corporation  
Ariana Petäinen, IBA Guest

Chair Kinloch called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

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

A motion was made by Member Shackleton to approve the May 18, 2023, Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority regular meeting minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Member Paquette. 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

- The first post-pandemic bridge walk was held on June 24<sup>th</sup> with approximately 600 walkers. The walk went smoothly with no issues and the bridge was re-opened to traffic by 10:45. Next year the walk is scheduled to take place the same weekend as Engineer's Day which should result in a larger number of walkers.
- MDOT's Superior Region, the Office of Economic Development, and the IBA has been tasked with hosting MDOT's fall leadership conference to be held in Sault, Michigan. As part of the conference, the IBA will be arranging a tour of the Sault Locks project; currently we anticipate 40-50 of MDOT's executive leadership to attend the tour.
- Peter reported he has been asked to speak and sit on a panel for the Bridge and Tunnel Operators Association at the Canada-U.S. Transportation Border Working Group in Kalispell, Montana in September.
- The technical issues with the live webcams on the bridge have been resolved and are now once again working. The IBA is currently doing a test phase after which we will announce to the public that the cameras are once again operational.
- Peter stated the public hearings for the new toll rate proposal were all held in July with only one member of the public attending; he expressed his appreciation to MDOT's Monica Monsma and Dan Weingarten who were instrumental in their support to ensure all went smooth and all guidelines were adhered to for the hearings. During the 30-day public comment period, only eight comments were received, all which were provided to the board for their review. The IBA respectfully requests the board approve the new toll rate schedule as proposed; the updated business plan was developed with the increases included as a first step to address anticipated financial challenges over the next 10 years.

The following motion was made by Member Lee:

Whereas, the IBA has conducted public hearings in accordance with Article X, Section 2 of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the toll proposal recommendation as presented by the IBA at the May 18, 2023 SSMBA Meeting, and

Whereas, the SSMBA Board Members have received a complete transcript of the public hearings, and

Now therefore be it resolved, that the SSMBA does hereby approve the toll proposal as presented.

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

Additionally, as a follow up from the May audit committee meeting, the IBA reviewed the average costs for staff to conduct an escort of oversized vehicles. The average time it takes for an escort is 40 minutes at a total cost of \$185 (USD).

Member White made a motion to approve the escort fee for oversized and over-dimension commercial vehicles of \$185 USD and Canadian equivalent fee as recommended effective October 1, 2023. Member Hoath seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

- Peter stated he is happy to report that the new toll system was officially accepted by the project team on June 15, 2023, and the one-year warranty period has now begun. This project has been a fantastic partnership and has been submitted as an entry for a 2023 Toll Excellence Award.

### III. **Finance and Operations**

#### A. Traffic and Revenue

CFO Emily Jacques reported traffic is trending in the right direction with year-to-date crossings as of 6/30/23 being 411,231; however, this is still down 31.9% from pre-pandemic volumes in 2019.

#### B. Second Quarter Financial Report

CFO Emily Jacques reported total combined balance sheet assets were at \$7.9M as of June 30, 2023, and total liabilities were at \$981K. Total fund balances were at \$4.5M and total toll revenue was at \$2.5M, which is 59% of budgeted amount. All departments are currently at or under budget for the year.

#### C. Draft 2024-2028 Business Plan

CFO Emily Jacques requested board members submit any proposed changes/additions to the 2024-2028 business plan by September 30, 2023 to allow the changes to be incorporated into the final plan which will be presented for board approval at the November meeting. Emily expressed her appreciation to Suzanne Moreau who was instrumental in updating the business plan.

#### D. Soo Coop Credit Union Visa

Peter stated several years ago when we requested board authorization to add CFO Emily Jacques to our account at the Soo Co-op Credit Union, we did not specify to add her as a cardholder to our U.S. Visa account.

Member Paquette made a motion to approve adding Emily Jacques as an authorized user to the Soo Coop Credit Union Visa account, and a card added in her name for authorized bridge purchases. Member Shackleton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### IV. **Bridge Engineering and Maintenance**

##### A. Activity and Project Tracking

Asset Manager, Marcus Eidenier reported labor and benefits were up 76% during the second quarter, which is a result of hiring three limited-term employees to assist with snow removal. Equipment repair activity was up 62.4% which is not unexpected with the current fleet of equipment in aging condition.

##### B. Maintenance Projects

Marcus stated the Pier 19 concrete repairs were completed on June 8, 2023; by completing the repairs in-house versus contracting the repairs we realized an estimated savings of \$321,902.

Maintenance staff are now focusing on routine maintenance items from the 2021 routine detailed inspection with 73% of items completed to date; the goal this year is to complete 85%.

Electrical junction box replacement on the Canadian arch is underway and is expected to be complete next week. This will allow the bridge arches to be lit once again.

Other project's the maintenance staff will work on this year are:

- Removal and repair of bridge deck expansion joints
- U.S. arch structural handrail
- Cleaning and coating of the green handrail
- Applying silane sealer on bridge super/substructure concrete

##### C. 2023 Routine Detailed Inspection

Bridge Engineer Hansen reported the hands-on portion of the detailed inspection took place last week. The inspection included an infrared (IR) thermography inspection of the bridge deck in which the preliminary findings revealed no appreciable increase on deck delamination's from the previous IR performed five years ago. The overall inspection revealed the bridge to be in good condition with no major structural deficiencies. The final inspection report will be presented to the board at the November meeting.

#### V. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### VI. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Member Shackleton to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Member Paquette. A roll call vote was taken by all members present. All present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
International Bridge Administration

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Peter M. Petäinen  
Bridge Director

PP:cs