

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals  
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

# 2021 Annual Report



Safe | Reliable | Sustainable

NO  
PARKING

SPEED  
LIMIT  
35



# Director's Letter



*Peter Mills, Executive Director*

Having recently completed the overhaul of interchanges in Lewiston, Gray and West Gardiner, the Turnpike is now rebuilding the interstate system west of Portland. The Turnpike began by widening, raising, and lengthening the Cummings Road Bridge that carries a large volume of local traffic over the mainline in South Portland. This was followed by widening bridges over the Stroudwater River and Maine Central Railroad and widening and raising the Warren Avenue overpass.

With the bridges done, the Turnpike is now widening the mainline itself around Portland to six lanes from mile marker 43 in Scarborough to 49.3 near the Falmouth line. The project eliminates congestion and encourages through traffic to remain on the Turnpike rather than to divert through Portland on I-295, a road that should be reserved for local access to Portland. The project adds shoulder room and a heavy center-line barrier to eliminate crossover collisions and to restrain accidents among vehicles going in the same direction.

The current work includes rebuilding Exit 45 and replacing its ancient ramp bridge. When the replacement toll plaza at Exit 45 is opened at the end of 2022, it will mark the completion of a toll system overhaul that began when the Turnpike opened its first high speed toll in New Gloucester on April 1, 2013.

Planning continues for the Gorham Connector, a project intended to resolve the most congested traffic conditions in the state. The Connector is key to expanding affordable housing and improving transit and mobility west of Portland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Mills". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Peter Mills  
Executive Director

# Response to Crisis

*MTA crews and contractors respond to two major emergencies in 2021*

## Fiery crash at Exit 52

In the early morning hours of September 23<sup>rd</sup>, an impaired driver crashed into a toll booth on the Falmouth Spur (Exit 52). The car flipped over and caught fire, causing extensive damage to the plaza. Luckily, the toll collector in the booth was able to escape from the incident with only minor cuts and abrasions. Unfortunately, the fire destroyed the toll booth as well as the associated wiring, tolling equipment and heating system.

The Falmouth Spur was slated to be a critical route during a massive MaineDOT traffic detour for the MaineDOT weekend long closure and replacement of Veranda Street bridge in Portland. The closure was merely a few weeks away. It was a tight deadline, but not insurmountable.

CPM Constructors was already under contract for other toll systems work so the repairs required at Exit 52 were quickly added. The team of MTA, CPM Constructors and their subcontractors worked quickly and efficiently to get the repairs made. By using components from two old booths, they were able to make one useable booth with modifications by October 23, 2021.

## Fire at Litchfield Maintenance Facility

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, a fire ripped through the 8-bay garage at the Litchfield maintenance facility. Luckily, no MTA employees were inside. A total of 15 towns responded to fight the blaze. The building and everything inside were a total loss--including five plow trucks, a bucket loader, a skid steer and a brand-new traffic control vehicle.

Given the timing of the fire, the major question was, how does this impact plowing over the winter? The morning after the fire, MTA staff had already formulated a plan. Spare snowplows were shifted from other maintenance camps and another building on the yard was cleared out to house the trucks.

New trucks are in the process of being ordered and a replacement garage is in the design process. Because of the quick thinking and hard work on behalf of MTA staff, the road in the Litchfield area will be cleared and maintained over the winter just like any other year.



*CPM Constructors work to replace the damaged booth*



*Destruction from inside booth*



*Firefighters battle the blaze on Dec 3rd*



*The damage from the fire at Litchfield Maintenance*



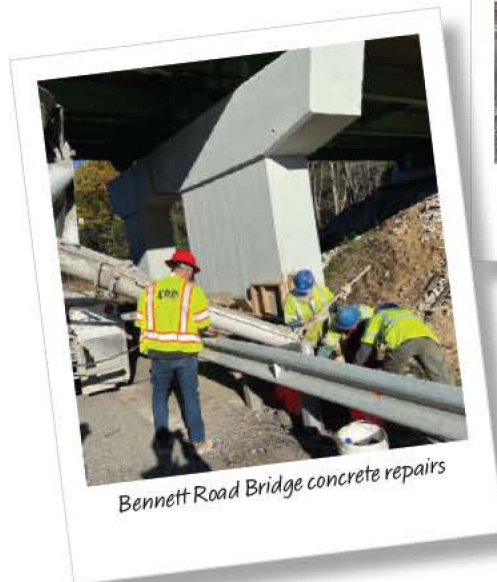
# Projects

In 2021, Maine Turnpike Authority awarded over \$74 Million in new construction projects. At the same time, work continued on the Portland Area Widening projects – one of which being the reconstruction of Exit 45 in South Portland, that has reached the midway point. In addition, routine annual paving rehabilitation and maintenance projects were also completed.



*Exit 45 in November as CPM Constructors worked on interchange ramps and toll plazas*

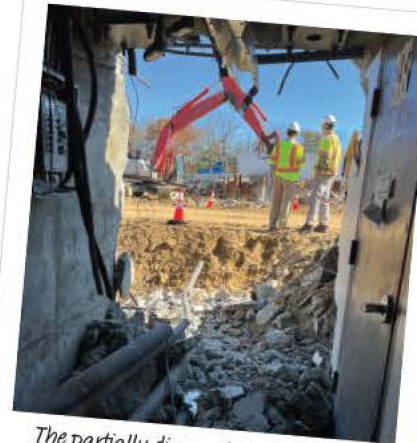




*Bennett Road Bridge concrete repairs*



*Bridge repairs on Route 9 in Sabattus*



*The partially dismantled tunnel at the York Toll Demo Site*



*Portland Area Widening project*



*Pavement rehab in Biddeford*

## LIST OF PROJECTS AWARDED IN 2021

Project Type	Municipality	Description	Amount
Bridges	Lewiston	Grove Street Bridge Repairs (Over height vehicle hit)	\$400,000
Bridges	New Gloucester	Bennett Road Bridge Repairs	\$537,000
Bridges	Sabattus	Route 9 Bridge Repairs	\$363,000
Capacity	Portland	Portland Area Widening & Safety Improvements (Mile 46 to 49)	\$24,400,000
Capacity	Portland	Water Line & Utility Vaults (Mile 47 to 48)	\$1,600,000
Paving	Biddeford/Saco	Pavement Rehabilitation (Mile 30 to Mile 35)	\$7,000,000
Toll Systems	South Portland	Exit 45 Interchange Reconfiguration	\$27,700,000
Toll Systems	York	York Toll Plaza Demolition & Mainline Reconstruction (Mile 7.3)	\$12,300,000
<b>Total awarded in 2021 for construction:</b>			<b>\$74,300,000</b>



# 2021 Brings MTA ORT Conversion to Completion

## All MTA barrier plazas now have Open Road Tolling

This year, the conversion to Open Road Tolling (ORT) on the Maine Turnpike was completed with construction concluding in two final locations: West Gardiner and York. ORT provides the convenience of highway speed center lanes for E-ZPass customers while retaining traditional cash booths to the right for those who want or need it. Maine Turnpike opened its first ORT plaza on the mainline in 2013 at its facility in New Gloucester. Since then, MTA has converted each of its barrier tolls (a total of six) to include ORT lanes.

Conversion to ORT at these two plazas came last by design. Both had very complex construction challenges – albeit, very different. The southernmost plaza in York, originally constructed to be a temporary plaza, was located in poor soils, at the bottom of a hill, on a curve and had an interchange adjacent. Thus, relocating the plaza to one more suitable for ORT was required. Efforts were made by local opposition to block MTA from relocating the plaza, which caused years of delay.

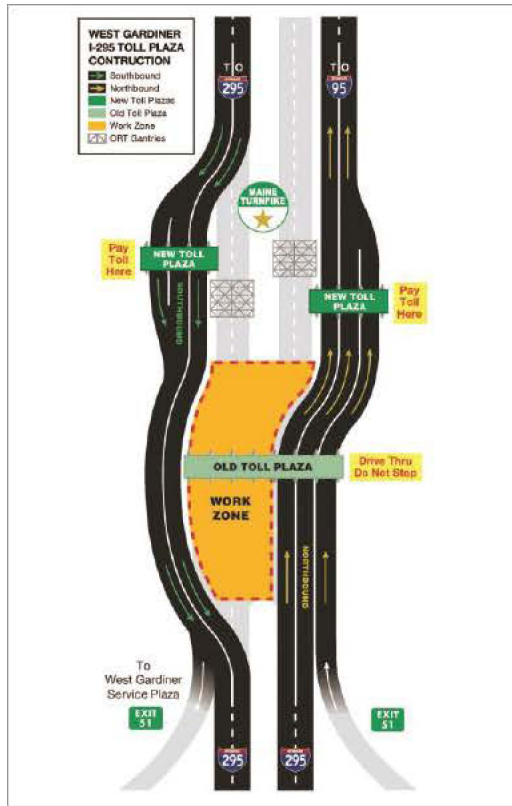
In the case of West Gardiner, a major bridge needed to be replaced first in order to create additional lanes that would then accommodate ORT. Phasing of the construction was also a challenge due to the lack of adjacent space.

Despite the challenges, by October of this year, the plazas at both the northern and southern terminuses of the Turnpike were open for tolls to be collected at highway speed.



*Completed West Gardiner ORT Plaza*





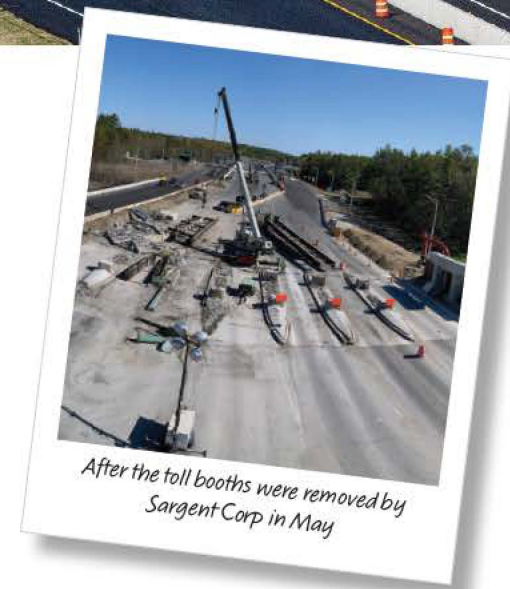
*Info to Public on Traffic Pattern Shifts*



*The ORT Plaza almost complete in October*

## West Gardiner I-295

This project began in 2019. By 2021 the contractor, Sargent Corporation, had built the Lanes and had started work on the toll plaza. In April, the new cash plaza opened to traffic just north of the old plaza. This allowed Sargent to demo the old plaza in phases in order to finish building out the lanes for the ORT portion. This required motorists going northbound to travel through the old plaza and southbound vehicles to drive around the demo area (see graphic). By May, Sargent had the majority of the old toll plaza and utility building removed as traffic moved through the construction area. The lanes were paved and the site turned over to the MTA to commission (a.k.a. test the electronic toll collection system) in September and the new plaza was complete and open to traffic on October 13.



*After the toll booths were removed by Sargent Corp in May*



# An In Depth Look at the New ORT Plaza in York

## York Toll Plaza: Relocation to Mile 8.8

At midnight on September 15, 2021, the new Open Road Toll Plaza in York at mile 8.8 opened to traffic. This project was a long time in the making. Its design started more than a decade ago and faced opposition from local residents. The work began in earnest when permits were filed with the environmental agencies in 2016 and construction began in late 2018.

At the start of 2021 much of the work was complete. Outer cash lanes and booths were started and the tunnel was complete. Throughout the year, construction and tolling contractors coordinated the installation and testing of the tolling system--all while construction continued on buildings, installation of signs on the roadway and paving. By midsummer, the toll system was commissioned while punch-list items were completed.

During this time, tolls continued to be collected a mile and a half to the south. In preparation of opening the new plaza, a great deal of coordination was required. Discussions amongst MTA staff including engineering, fare collections and public outreach--along with State Police and the contractors took place in order to coordinate the cessation of collecting tolls at the old plaza and commencement at the new location simultaneously.

## In with New, Out with the Old: Demolition of plaza at Mile 7.3

The maintenance of traffic through the old plaza, while it and the tunnel beneath it were being demolished, was also a balance of coordination with MTA and our contractors. As of late 2021, most of the old tunnel and pavement had been removed and traffic was flowing through the center travel lanes while work continued in the outer lanes.



*Reed and Reed and their subcontractors work on the southbound toll booth canopy in May*



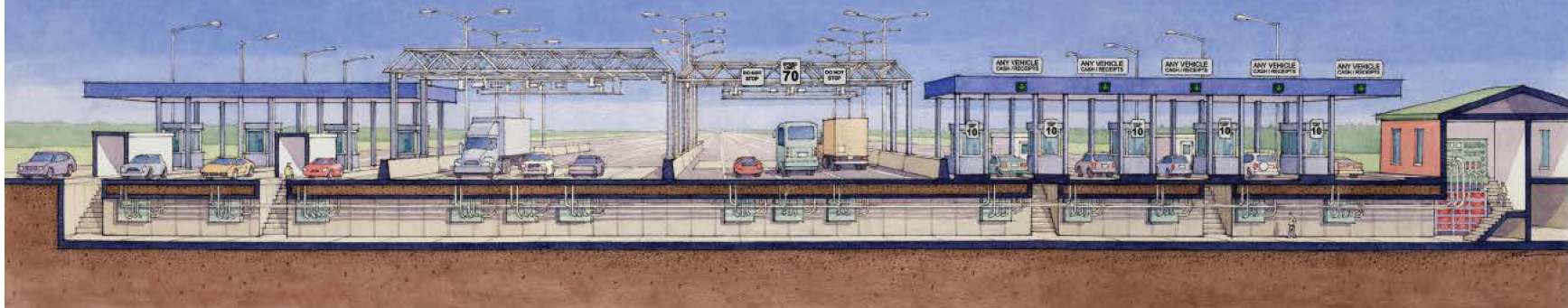
*The northbound cash lanes just prior to opening in September*



*Just after midnight on September 15th, the first cars rolled through the new plaza in York*



*Site of old toll booths after demolition by Sargent Corp in September*



*Artist Rendering of York ORT Plaza*



# York Toll Plaza

## Before

Mile 7.3



*The booths at the old York plaza were cramped, had poor visibility and were hot in the summer and cold in the winter.*

## After

Mile 8.8



*The booths at the new ORT plaza are modern, safer and easier to work in for our toll collectors.*



*The tunnels under the toll booths not only serve as way for employees to get to their booths but also house all of the electronics for the booths and the toll collection system, here is what the tunnel under the old plaza looked like.*



*The new tunnel under the ORT is dry, well-lit and roomy for all of the new electronic equipment and for our toll collectors.*





*First day on the job in 1975*

## Fare Collection Director Has Seen A Lot Over His Tenure

MTA's Director of Fare Collection, Rick Barra, celebrated his 45<sup>th</sup> year with the MTA in 2021. Rick started his career as a toll collector in Wells. He collected tolls at various plazas throughout the years and worked his way up to the Director of Fare Collection, a position he has held for almost 20 years. Here are some of Rick's reflections from his time on the Pike:

"In June of '76, I got a full-time position at Wells Toll, and I was there for 11 years. Everybody was in uniform.

Very strict uniform policy. Eisenhower jacket with the lapels, really official, and



*Toll Manager 1988*



*Rick at the York Toll Plaza at Mile 7.3 in August*

you had to wear a tie. But I hated wearing a tie, even though they were clip-ons. So I remember my boss catching me a couple times without a tie on; he goes, 'one more strike Barra and you're outta here.' So at that point I started wearing my tie.

We have a great staff of toll collectors out there. You'd be surprised how many people still like to stop and pay the toll and see the toll collector and get a 'good-morning' or 'good-afternoon', 'have-a-nice-day' greeting from the toll collectors. So part of my job is to stress that courtesy to the public is very important. It's the most important part of your job besides, of course, collecting the tolls.

I've loved working for the Turnpike all these years. It's been a great career, and I'm one of the few people who started right out of high school and is still here. It's been a great ride."

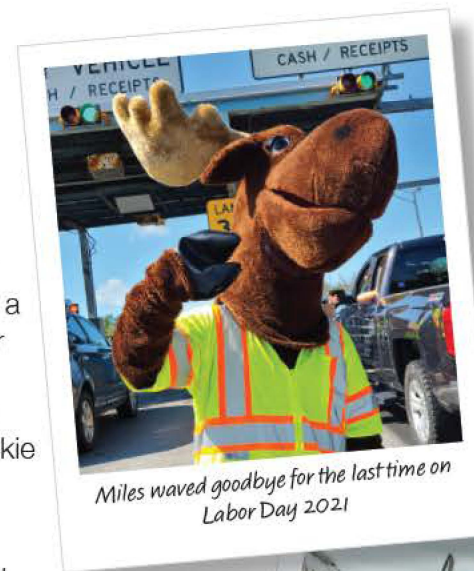


## Farewell to Summer: A 20 Year Tradition Ends

Labor Day is typically the busiest day of the year for the Maine Turnpike. In 2001, during the widening when traffic was at capacity and made dreadful due to construction, MTA found a way to make the headache of Labor Day traffic a little more fun. As travelers approached York Toll southbound they would be greeted by Miles the Moose and several friendly MTA staffers to wave, give high fives and pass a long a memento of Maine. The first few years “Moose” pads were handed out. Over the years new friends joined Miles, including Clawdette the Lobster, and the items handed out changed. Some of the favorites were calendars highlighting Maine’s fall fairs and festivals, Farmer’s Almanacs, cookie cutters with the Governor’s family cookie recipe and more recently, treats like Fox Family Chips and Wicked Whoopie Pies.

This tradition was greeted positively by travelers. They loved to get a high five from a moose, see a lobster dance and get a freebie that reminded them of Maine or that satisfied a sweet tooth.

2021 was the last year of this Maine tradition. With the new ORT plaza open in York and the majority of vehicles using E-ZPass, the traffic backups that occurred bringing cars to a standstill aren’t likely to occur – meaning it won’t be safe for staff to be standing in the lanes. While Miles won’t be in traffic anymore on Labor Day, he hopes to find other ways to say farewell to our summer visitors in the future.



*Miles waved goodbye for the last time on Labor Day 2021*



*Miles the Maine Turnpike Moose thanking tourists on Labor Day 2002*

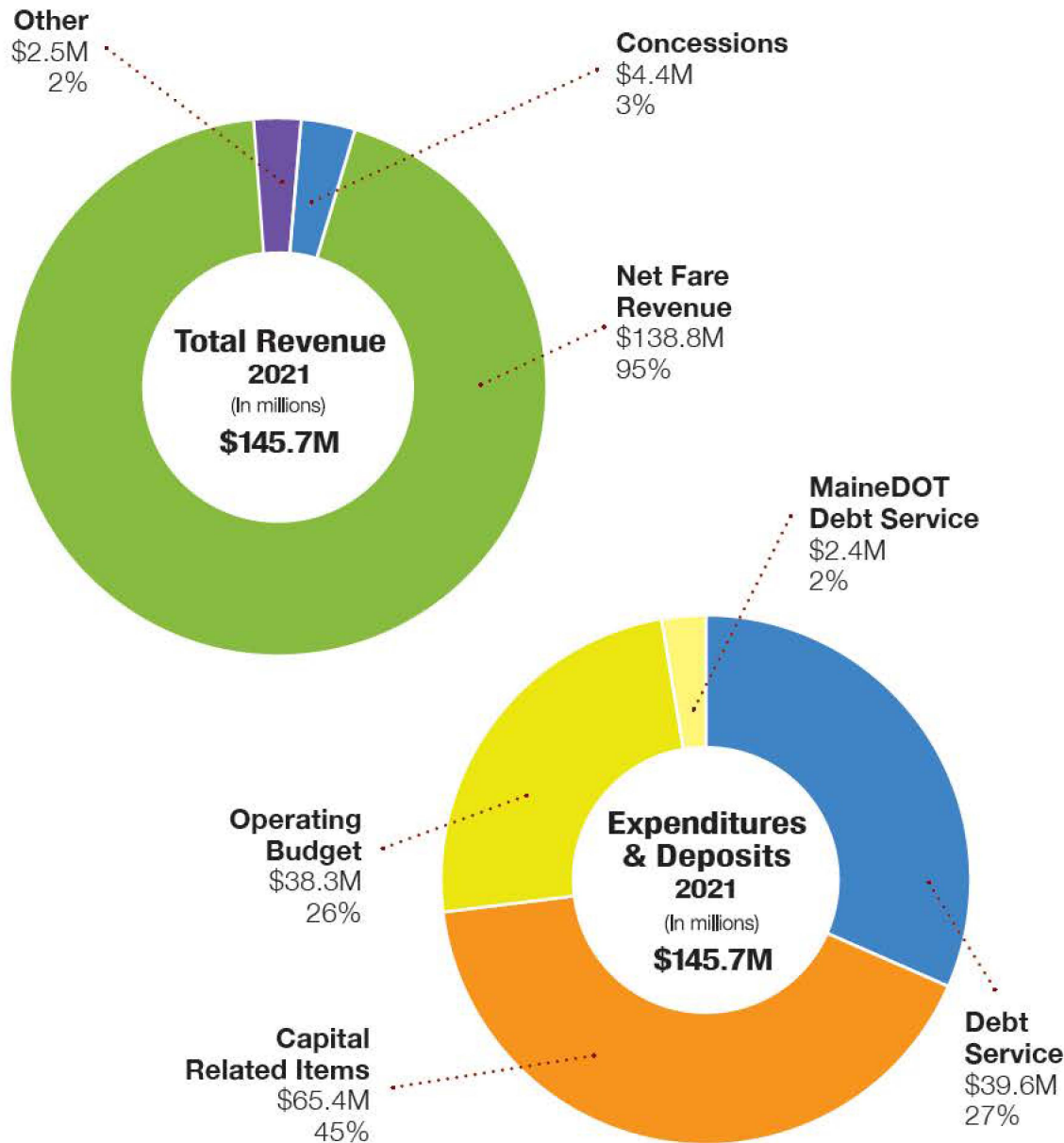


*Keeping the turtles off the highway*

## Environmental Mitigation: MTA participates in two efforts to protect turtles in York County

As part of Maine DEP permit requirements for construction of the new York Toll Plaza, MTA completed construction of a wildlife barrier fence on both sides of the Turnpike to protect spotted turtles, which are threatened in Maine and known to inhabit wetlands and forested areas adjacent to the project site. The purpose of the barrier fence is to stop spotted turtles from crossing the Turnpike. The barrier fence consists of wire mesh that is embedded approximately six inches deep into the ground and securely fixed to MTA’s standard right-of-way fencing so that spotted turtles cannot dig beneath, pass through, or climb over the fence. The fence is located so as to direct turtle movements across the Turnpike to safer locations, such as stream culverts. In addition, MTA provided financial support for a MaineDOT turtle barrier fence and tunnel crossing project located along State Route 236 in Eliot.

# Finance



## 2021 Toll Adjustment

At its May 26, 2021 meeting, the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA) Board resolved that beginning on November 1, 2021 MTA will implement changes to its toll structure in order to generate an additional \$18 million in revenue to offset significant losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, to sustain sufficient funding for updated bonding requirements, and to combat rising project inflation costs. On July 19, 2021, MTA formally released the details of the proposed adjustments marking the beginning of the public comment period that ran through August 20, 2021. During this time MTA provided various methods by which someone could provide an official public comment:

- Via an online platform on the Maine Turnpike website
- In person at public meetings in York, Saco and Lewiston
- Virtually at the public meeting held in Saco on August 4, 2021.

At the September 2021 meeting the Board voted to adjust tolls in the following manner

- Increase York from \$3.00 to \$4.00 for a passenger car (Class 1) cash rate and corresponding rates for remaining toll classes.
- Increase the current Maine E-ZPass rate per mile from 7.7 cents to 8.0 cents.
- Adjust the Class 1 Personal Volume Discount thresholds from a 25% discount to a 20% discount for Maine E-ZPass users making 30 or more trips per month and from a 50% discount to a 40% discount for Maine E-ZPass users making 40 or more trips per month.
- Eliminate image tolls (I-tolls) that count towards the Class 1 Personal Volume discount. I-tolls are created when an E-ZPass transponder is not present or read in a valid Maine E-ZPass account.



# Employee Recognition

The employees of the Maine Turnpike Authority are the reason we can deliver on our promises of **safety** and **reliability**—day and night, all year long. Our team's institutional knowledge, longevity, and loyalty make it possible to offer the high standards of customer service that our travelers expect of us. We are pleased to recognize the dedication of our employees.



Denise G. Blanchette  
*Toll Collector I*  
Jeffrey C. Buzzell  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Joseph E. Chase  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
James H. Doucette  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Seth S. Drown  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Donald R. Gagnon  
*ISeries Programmer - Analyst*  
Jodie A. Gilbert  
*Toll Collector I*  
Scott W. Gwilt  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Allysa L. Howell  
*Receptionist*  
Susan E. Hussey  
*Toll Collector I*  
James M. Kelly Jr.  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Adam D. LePage  
*Toll Collector I*  
Nongnuch Makarom  
*Toll Collector I*  
Alexander P. Martin  
*Custodial Worker II*  
George E. Mathews  
*Toll Collector I*  
David T. Marsters  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Amber D. Michaud  
*Toll Collector I*  
Patrick R. Nadeau  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Dana H. Nason Jr.  
*Highway Maintenance III*

Scott O. Nielsen  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Alexander P. Paquette  
*E-Z Pass Customer Service Representative*  
Darcy L. Rose  
*E-Z Pass Customer Service Representative*  
Ryan J. Rutledge  
*PC Support Specialist - ADP System Administrator*  
Ryan S. Tibbetts  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Denise M. Vannah  
*Toll Collector I*



Ronald H. Andrews  
*Highway Maintenance Foreman*  
Andrew S. Bridges  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Terry L. Cain  
*Toll Collector I*  
Lou Ann M. Castonguay  
*Toll Collector I*  
Minus Cole Jr.  
*Toll Collector I*  
Erin T. Courtney  
*Public Outreach & Marketing Manager*  
Glenn C. Davis  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Barry M. Dolan  
*Toll System Maintenance Technician*

Robert C. Douville  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Ryan S. Harris  
*Accountant III*  
Mark A. Hussey  
*Toll Collector I*  
Deborah A. Jordan  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Ryan J. Leavitt  
*Senior Resident Engineer*  
Bernard P. Nadeau  
*Toll Collector I*  
Heather M. Stowe  
*Payroll Manager*  
Brian A. Taddeo  
*Project Engineer for Maintenance & Operations*  
Robert L. Tibbetts Jr.  
*Building Maintenance III*  
Kristin M. Van Ooyen  
*Engineering Program Manager*



Lauren G. Carrier  
*Director of Human Resources*  
Rebecca J. Danforth  
*E-Z Pass Customer Service Representative*  
Mark D. Edgerly  
*Highway Maintenance III*  
Matthew W. Elliott  
*Controller*  
Reiko Laney  
*Accounts Payable Processor*

Todd E. McArthur  
*Toll Collector I*  
Amanda S. Wilcox  
*Toll Collector I*



John M. Branscom  
*Environmental Services Coordinator*  
John E. Bray  
*ISeries Programmer - Analyst*  
Randy T. Bubar  
*PC Programmer*  
Nathaniel F. Carl  
*Purchasing Manager*  
Nicole E. Chase  
*Highway Maintenance Foreman*  
Todd L. Deroche  
*Toll Collector I*  
Sue Ann L. Desmarais  
*Toll Collector I*  
Clifford B. O'Brien Jr.  
*Highway Division Supervisor*  
Barbara A. Reitze  
*Toll Collector I*



Joan A. Angers  
*Toll Collector I*  
Jamie L. Armstrong  
*E-Z Pass Customer Service Representative*

Misty L. Bentham  
*Fare Collection Superintendent*  
Dennis D. Charette  
*Toll Collector I*  
Mark E. Dufour  
*Assistant Purchasing Manager*  
John E. Heffernan  
*Currency Processing Technician*  
Robert H. Hooper  
*Toll Collector I*  
Scott N. Lachance  
*Fare Collection Superintendent*  
Jean H. Lamour  
*Toll Collector I*  
Gerald K. McArthur II  
*Toll Collector I*  
Michael D. Pettay  
*Toll Collector I*



Scott T. McConihe  
*Engineering Technician II*



Richard R. Barra  
*Director of Fare Collection*



## Executive Staff

Peter Mills  
*Executive Director*

Douglas D. Davidson  
*Chief Financial Officer  
& Authority Board Treasurer*

Peter S. Merfeld, P.E.  
*Chief Operations Officer*

Jonathan A. Arey, Esq.  
*Staff Attorney & Authority Board Secretary*

Richard R. Barra  
*Director of Fare Collection*

John W. Cannell, P.E.  
*Director of Highway  
Maintenance*

Lauren G. Carrier  
*Director of Human Resources*

Matthew W. Elliott  
*Controller*

Shawn Laverdiere  
*Director of Building Maintenance*

John P. Sirois  
*Director of Finance*

Richard Somerville  
*Director of E-ZPass Operations*

Greg J. Stone  
*Director of Public Safety*

Stephen R. Tartre, P.E.  
*Director of Engineering  
& Chief Engineer*

William H. Yates, III  
*Director of Information Services  
& Communications*

## MTA Board of Directors

Daniel E. Wathen - *Chairman*  
Augusta, Maine  
Kennebec County

Robert D. Stone - *Vice-Chair*  
Auburn, Maine  
Androscoggin County

Michael J. Cianchette - *Member*  
Cumberland, Maine  
Cumberland County

Thomas J. Zuke, CPA - *Member*  
Saco, Maine  
York County

Ann R. Robinson - *Member*  
Portland, Maine  
Cumberland County

Jane L. Lincoln - *Member*  
Farmingdale, Maine  
Kennebec County

Bruce A. Van Note - *Commissioner*  
MaineDOT  
Ex-Officio Member





## Contact the MTA

Erin T. Courtney  
Public Outreach & Marketing Manager  
(207) 482-8119

MTA Administration  
& Public Safety Building  
2360 Congress Street  
Portland, ME 04102

Administration  
(877) 682-9433 (toll free)  
(207) 871-7771

E-ZPass  
(888) MTA-PASS or (888) 682-7277  
8:00 am to 5:00 pm M-F  
ezpassmaineturnpike.com

Outside United States  
(207) 871-7771, then press 2

MTA Website  
[www.maineturnpike.com](http://www.maineturnpike.com)

 Twitter: @maineturnpike

 Facebook: Maine Turnpike Authority

Photo credits: David Bates, Dave Cleveland and Rebecca Grover



Safe | Reliable | Sustainable

*Front and Back Cover: York Toll Plaza, York, Maine*