

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

March 23, 2017
4:00 PM
BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center
One Columbus Avenue Pittsfield, MA 01201

MINUTES

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Present:

William Elovirta, Becket; Mary Cherry, Dalton; Peter Gallant, Lanesborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Leonard Lipton, Pittsfield; Brian O'Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally; Windsor. William Cooke, Gt. Barrington was not present for the first vote, but arrived for agenda item #3.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Jeff Snoonian, Adams; Timothy Drumm, Alford; Paul Astorino, Cheshire; Carl McKinney, Clarksburg; Bruce Bernstein, Egremont; Glenn Burdick, Florida; Laurel Schialabba, Hinsdale; Thomas Wickham, Lee; Channing Gibson, Lenox; Carol Edelman, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mount Washington; Robert Sarnacki, Otis; Gary Stergis, Peru; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Andrew Peterson, Sheffield; Ernest Cardillo, Stockbridge; Mike Case, Washington; and Vacant Disability Representative.

Also present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Lisa Parise - BRTA staff; Kirk Dand and Corey Gagnon - BTM; Anuja Koirola- BRPC; Jonathan Levine- Pittsfield Gazette; and Patti Annechiarico.

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.16	0.00	
Alford	1.00	0.00	
Becket	1.06	1.06	
Cheshire	2.11	0.00	
Clarksburg	1.00	0.00	31.75
Dalton	2.09	2.09	needed for
Egremont	1.00	0.00	quorum
Florida	1.00	0.00	
Great Barrington	3.71	3.76	32.52 present
Hinsdale	1.33	0.00	36.23 after agenda
Lanesborough	2.92	2.68	item #3
Lee	3.80	0.00	
Lenox	3.19	0.00	
Monterey	1.00	0.00	
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00	
North Adams	4.60	4.48	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.00	0.00	
Pittsfield	18.17	18.86	
Richmond	1.01	0.00	
Sheffield	1.01	0.00	
Stockbridge	2.67	0.00	
Washington	1.00	0.00	
Williamstown	2.68	2.33	
Windsor	1.00	1.00	
Disability Community	1.00	0.00	

1) **ROLL CALL**

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

2) **MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2017- MEETING- VOTE**

Mr. Lipton made the motion to accept the minutes of the January 26, 2017 meeting. Mr. O'Grady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3) **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mr. Malnati stated the BRTA participated in this year's Legislative Luncheon in Boston on March 8. Three Representatives and the Senator from the Berkshire Delegation attended to discuss the need to include RTAs in the statewide transportation plan. Included in the program was the RTA's request for \$86.2 million for the FY 2018 budget, rather than the 2015 level funding of \$80 million currently in the budget proposed by the Governor. BRTA discussed with the Berkshire Delegation, Berkshire's needs of later evening service and Sunday service that cannot be implemented.

Greyhound bus lines began servicing Pittsfield on March 8. We are operating under a temporary agreement until the contract has been received, reviewed by legal, and executed. Mr. Malnati mentioned that he is meeting with Greyhound tomorrow to discuss the contract.

Mr. Malnati discussed the State Senate's Commonwealth Conversation tour. He said anyone from the Board who is interested in going should register online. Senator Hinds will be presenting. Mr. Malnati stated that representatives from BRTA will not be able to go, as this is the date of BRTA's Triennial Review. Mr. Malnati crafted a letter to Nat Karns, from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to present on behalf of BRTA.

BRTA has been meeting with the Tyler Street Business Group as they plan for the revitalization project to get underway. Tyler Street is in the next phase in the city's streetscape improvement. This meeting showed some progress in locating designated bus stops and shelters along Tyler Street. This is a change from the current flag stop system which has the bus stopping many times within a short distance. Mr. Lipton asked how many bus stops? Mr. Malnati said there may be six on Tyler Street. There have been a few sites proposed and the Business Group is working with the owners of the property. Mr. Gallant asked if there would be shelter on both sides of the street, as Tyler Street can be difficult to cross; which Mr. Malnati answered yes.

4) **TITLE VI/LEP PROGRAM UPDATE- VOTE**

Ms. Vallieres gave a brief overview to the board on the BRTA's Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program. The BRTA must review and update the Title VI program at least every three years. This exercise ensures that BRTA is using up to date census information in formulating the LEP calculations. She discussed two companies BRTA will be using if the need arises for phone translation and document translation. Both programs were attached to the email the Board Member received prior to the meeting. The Limited English Proficiency Program (LEP) is a stands alone document, but goes hand in hand with the Title VI Civil Rights Anti-Discrimination program. BRTA researches within our community what amount and percent of the population that speak

English less than very well and use public transportation. BRTA uses census data from the Planning Commission to determine the native language of the population that speaks English less than very well and the number and percentage that are transit dependent.

Mr. O'Grady made a motion to accept BRTA's Title VI and LEP Program. Mr. Elovirta seconded the motion which passes unanimously.

5) CASH REPORTS FOR JANUARY 2017- VOTE

Mr. O'Grady made the motion to accept the cash reports from January-February 2017. Mr. Lipton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6) BUDGET YTD

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the budget. The farebox revenue has decreased; in which that trend started April 2016. Mr. Malnati will be watching the data to see if the decrease continues this April or if it increases.

BRTA has been assembling the FY 2018 budget over the past month and will meet with the Finance Committee prior to the Board meeting. Preliminary federal funding levels remain uncertain as the continuing resolution will expire at the end of April. BRTA is exploring all avenues to maintain the current service levels for our customers.

7) RIDERSHIP YTD

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the ridership. Ridership has been down.

Total Ridership is down 7.96%
Fixed Route is down 8.54%
Paratransit is down 3.44%
Wheelchairs are down 26.02%
Bikes are up 2.65%

Mr. Malnati mentioned that he reached out to a couple other RTA's and their numbers for ridership has been low this year as well.

Mr. Malnati also discussed that he attended a Pedestrian Planning meeting at MassDOT's district garage. This meeting spoke about sharing the road with different modes of transportation. Mr. Malnati provided the BRTA's bicycle transportation numbers, as an unmet transportation need within the County. He discussed the bicycle ridership has doubled and the Pedestrian Planning group spoke of possibly having a pilot study performed here. Mr. Gallant asked which routes carried the most bicycles, to which Mr. Malnati answered routes 1 and 34.

8) OLD BUSINESS

None discussed

9) NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Malnati gave a data report on Solider On. From July 2016- January 2017 there were 1,155 trips. Most trips are to Leeds, Albany Medical, and Pittsfield.

Ms. Cherry is stepping down from the Dalton Select Board. She will let us know in May if she will continue to be a member of BRTA's Advisory Board. Everyone wished her well.

10) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME

May 25, 2017 at 4:00 PM

11) ADJOURMENT

Mr. Gallant made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Elovirta seconded the motion.