

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

September 28, 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; William Cooke, Gt. Barrington; Harvey Drosehn, Hinsdale; Peter Gallant, Lanesborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Caleb Mitchell, Peru; and Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield. Channing Gibson, Lenox arrived after the Minutes of the May 25, 2017- VOTE.

**Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:**

Erica Girgenti, Adams; Timothy Drumm, Alford; Mark Webber, Cheshire; Carl McKinney, Clarksburg; John Boyle, Dalton; Charles Ogden, Egremont; Neil Olsen, Florida; Steve Moritz, Lee; Kenneth Basler, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mount Washington; William Hiller, Otis; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Donald Chabon, Stockbridge; Richard Grillon, Washington; Brian O'Grady, and Williamstown; Douglas McNally, Windsor.

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, Ana-Lisa Parise and Bridget Keegan - BRTA staff; Kirk Dand - BTM; Clete Kus, BRPC, 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	0.00	needed for
Egremont	1.00	0.00	quorum
Florida	1.00	0.00	
Great Barrington	3.71	3.71	32.79 present
Hinsdale	1.33	1.33	35.98 after Minute's Vote
Lanesborough	2.92	2.92	
Lee	3.80	0.00	
Lenox	3.19	3.19	
Monterey	1.00	0.00	
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00	
North Adams	4.60	4.60	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.00	1.00	
Pittsfield	18.17	18.17	
Richmond	1.01	0.00	
Sheffield	1.01	0.00	
Stockbridge	2.67	0.00	
Washington	1.00	0.00	
Williamstown	2.68	0.00	
Windsor	1.00	0.00	
Disability Community	1.00	0.00	

1) **ROLL CALL**

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM. Ms. Lamb introduced two new board members present at this meeting. Mr. Mitchell representing the town of Peru and Mr. Drosehn representing the town of Hinsdale.

2) **MINUTES OF MAY 25, 2017 MEETING- VOTE**

Mr. Gallant made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 25, 2017 meeting. Mr. Elovirta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ms. Irvin and Mr. Drosehn both abstained from voting.

3) **ADMINISTRATOR`S REPORT**

Mr. Malnati discussed the FY17 audit with Adelson and Company. The BRTA met with the finance committee to review the draft audit. The audit came back as a clean opinion. The BRTA completed its annual borrowing on September 22. The amount borrowed for the year is \$4.5 million with a new interest cost of 1.084492%. Eastern Bank was the successful bidder out of four responses received. This is a short term note of 364 days and BRTA pays interest on the balance.

The BRTA submitted a Federal application for 5339 Bus and Bus facilities program. The vehicles that BRTA is looking to replace are 2007 heavy duty vehicles with a useful with of twelve years or 500K miles. Currently these two vehicles have 534,647 and 546,282 miles. BRTA's Federal funding cannot afford capital items, such as 2 buses. Mr. Malnati explained that it will be a couple of months to see if the grant application was successful.

Mr. Malnati spoke of Governor Baker's State Budget, the RTA's line item was funded at the \$80.4 million level; instead of the original proposed amount of \$84.1 million. This is for the 15 RTA's collectively and has been consistent in Governor Baker's budget. BRTA should be receiving an annual increase in the funding level to \$86.2 million for FY18. The BRTA will not see the proposed increase.

BRTA has participated in several outreach efforts. The efforts include the Better Block Building Project on Tyler Street. BRTA produced 2 bus stop signs which were installed along to project route. BRTA also has developed coordination between the Towns of Lee and Lenox, and the Big Y, to ensure transit service to a grocery store since the Price Chopper has closed. BRTA buses have rerouted, going into the Big Y. BRTA also has provided the town of Lee information on how to apply for MAP vehicles. Berkshire Community College's President Ellen Kennedy rode the BRTA's route 11 bus to the main campus to the Intermodal Transportation Center on September 20<sup>th</sup> to promote the Clean Air Challenge. President Kennedy traveled three round trips. She was encouraged as she was able to connect with BCC students on the bus. BRTA was also present for BCC's first day back to school for a picnic. The Charlie Card van was present for bus information and 2 semester passes were purchased at the event. There was a discussion on how to purchase Charlie Cards using the student's financial aid. BRTA was present at the Spectrum health clinics located in both Pittsfield and North Adams to provide bus information to promote the use of a bus pass as another transportation option.

BRTA participated in a Design Thinking Project at MCLA's Main Street workspace on July 7 sponsored by Senator Hinds. BRTA was partnered with Jonathan Butler from 1 Berkshire and created a Figure 8 transportation concept. There would be express service to park and rides connecting North Adams, Williamstown, Adams, Pittsfield

Lenox, Lee and Stockbridge. It would run 6 AM-12 AM but this is conceptual with no price put to it. Great Barrington and Sheffield, Dalton and Hinsdale may be a feeder route. This project group has met in September and are scheduled for another meeting in early October.

BRTA's survey resulted in a total of 462 participants. Mr. Malnati discussed the demographics of the participants. This survey explained why people don't ride the bus: don't want to rely on others, the times, and the locations. According to the survey the recommendations were for longer hours, Sunday service, and going to where they need to go. This is the same as previous studies.

Mr. Malnati also discussed his commentary piece in the Berkshire Trade and Commerce.

**4) FY2017 AUDIT- VOTE**

Ms. Lamb stated that the Finance Committee met with the auditor, reviewed, and found a clean opinion of the audit. The Finance Committee recommends to the Advisory Board to accept the FY17 audit. Mr. Gallant made motion to accept the FY17 audit. Ms. Irvin made a motion to second the motion, which passed unanimously. Copies of the audit will be emailed tomorrow afternoon.

**5) CASH REPORTS FOR MAY, JUNE AND JULY 2017- VOTE**

Mr. Elovirta made a motion to accept the cash reports for May, June, and July 2017. Mr. Gallant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**6) HST BUDGET FY18, UPDATED- VOTE**

Mr. Malnati explained that the HST contract numbers did not arrive at the BRTA until mid- June, so the Board needs to vote to accept the amended HST budget. The HST budget is balanced. Mr. Cooke made a motion to accept the amended FY18 HST Budget. Ms. Irvin made a motion to second the motion, which passed unanimously.

**7) BUDGET YTD**

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the YTD budget. He stated that this is a new version and should be both easier to read and understand, than prior versions. He mentioned that the line item for Local Grants will always be a zero, as this is a reimbursement for the last year.

**8) RIDERSHIP YTD**

Mr. Malnati provided an overview of the YTD Ridership budget. He mentioned that last year the ridership was down 6%. BRTA has started this fiscal year above that level. He discussed the changes in North Adams, the Rt. 34 loop is making it easier for residents to move around.

**9) OLD BUSINESS**

None discussed

**10) NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Malnati stated the BRTA has received a letter from the town of New Ashford to become a member community. He is now waiting to hear back from the State. If approved, they will share in the cost assessment. Mr. Malnati discussed the Mass Moves Listening sessions were held. BRTA was unable to participate due to the Federal

Audit. The results were to improve the rail and bus service. There was also a suggestion to interconnect RTA's. Ms. Irvin asked how many people work in the PVTA are and may travel from the Berkshires? There are copies of this Listening Session available.

11) **NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME**

October 26, 2017 at 4:00 PM

12) **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Elovirta made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Gallant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.