

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

May 23, 2019
4:00 PM
BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center
One Columbus Avenue Pittsfield, MA 01201

MINUTES

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Present:

Christine Hoyt, Adams; John Boyle, Dalton; Peter Gallant, Lanesborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Rene Wood, Sheffield; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally, Windsor. Caleb Mitchell, Peru arrived during the Administrator’s Report. William Cooke, Great Barrington joined the Board Meeting for New Business via conference call.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Peggy Rae Henden-Wilson, Alford; William Elovirta, Becket; Mark Webber, Cheshire; Carl McKinney, Clarksburg; Bruce Bernstein, Egremont; Neil Olsen, Florida; William Cooke, Great Barrington; R. Kardasen/V. Mason, Hinsdale; Steve Moritz, Lee; Edward Lane, Lenox; Donald Coburn, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mt. Washington; Sherry Youngkin, New Ashford; William Hiller, Otis; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; and Richard Grillon, Washington.

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Barbara White- BRTA staff; Eli Greiner and Rauley Caine- BTM/PMB staff; Patti Annechiarico; Clete Kus- BRPC; and Stephen Barrett;

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.16	2.16	
Alford	1.00	0.00	
Becket	1.05	0.00	
Cheshire	2.11	0.00	
Clarksburg	1.00	0.00	33.00
Dalton	2.22	2.22	needed for
Egremont	1.00	0.00	quorum
Florida	1.00	0.00	
Great Barrington	4.03	0.00	35.4 present
Hinsdale	1.30	0.00	36.40 after minutes
Lanesborough	2.60	2.60	
Lee	3.92	0.00	
Lenox	3.39	0.00	
Monterey	1.00	0.00	
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00	
New Ashford	1.00	0.00	
North Adams	4.92	4.92	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.00	1.00	
Pittsfield	18.77	18.77	
Richmond	1.04	0.00	
Sheffield	1.08	1.08	
Stockbridge	2.77	0.00	
Washington	1.00	0.00	
Williamstown	2.65	2.65	
Windsor	1.00	1.00	
Disability Community	1.00	0.00	

1) **ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

2) **MINUTES OF JANUARY 17, 2019 MEETING-VOTE**

Ms. Wood made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 17, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Boyle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. O'Grady was the only abstension.

3) **ADMINISTRATOR`S REPORT**

STATE

Mr. Malnati provided a link to the Governor's Task Force recommendations. The Task Force recommended to fund the RTAs collectively at \$90.5 M. The Senate released their budget at \$90.5M, holding back \$4.5 M for second round of discretionary grants. The latest amendment put forth by Senator Chandler was \$90.5 M, include the MOU language (specific targets) and an inflationary index. The RTAs would have to talk with DOT to set specific targets and guidelines. The \$4.5 M would come out of a different pot of money, for discretionary grants; not using the RTA base. The House released \$87 M collectively, no holdback, no inflationary index and the Governor gave us \$86 M with a \$4M holdback leaving us with \$82 M.

LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION BRIEFING

Mr. Malnati gave a presentation of a new service delivery system for the BRTA with new ideas. Both MassDOT and the Legislative Delegation have discussed the need for innovation. This was the presentation at a Legislative Briefing held in April to which Mr. McNally and Ms. Lamb were in attendance. Ms. Vallieres attended a RouteMatch conference, one of our software providers, and brought back some mobility management ideas. The BRTA is looking at transforming some services. "In transit we tell people where to go, what if we didn't?" BRTA needs to invite new people into transit such as a trolley and provide different modes of transportation (shuttle) along Route 2: theatres, hotels, entrepreneurs. In South County where it is less populated using demand response technologies. The BRTA is thinking outside of the box. Mr. Malnati and Ms. Vallieres will be attending the NEPTA conference to learn how to interpret the data. There are federal grants BRTA will be applying for to help with this process. This will be a more on this phased implementation of innovation and technology.

Ms. Lamb remarked that the Legislative Delegation were really impressed with BRTA's presentation. Mr. Gallant suggested something similar to a trolley that would do a route to the venues. Mr. Malnati mentioned that Ms. Vallieres has researched a Gillig Trolley Kit, a heavy duty bus with a trolley kit enhancements. Mr. McNally stated some information that drew attention to the delegation was talk about software that allowed real time on demand.

TAXI TICKET PROGRAM

Mr. Malnati discussed, at the Finance Committee Budget meeting in March the Taxi Ticket Program. The BRTA has tracked how many customers are using the Taxi Tickets and every year it is continuously dropping. The Finance Committee voted to discontinue selling the blue Taxi Tickets beginning July 1, 2019 with the ability to still redeem them until the conclusion of the fiscal year on June 30, 2020. A letter will be sent to the taxi vendor and mailed to the list of Taxi Ticket program users from the last 6 months.

11 N UPDATE

Mr. Malnati shared the ridership on the pilot evening service from the ITC to BCC and Walmart has continued to rise. BRTA tracks a variety of statistics on a daily basis. Ninety percent of the people were going to the Intermodal Center, WalMart, BCC, and Big Lots. This route is grant and have the executed contract. BRTA will use these funds for the rest of May and the month of June instead of discontinuing service on May 24. Ms. Davine has been providing outreach to merchants, will be promoting this service to the YMCA for all youth programs using the BCC pool over the summer, and will also be at Morningside talking about this evening service. On July 1, this will be expanding evening service to North Adams and Great Barrington.

DOT AUDIT

Mr. Malnati remarked that MassDOT performed their annual audit of the BRTA in April. There was a review of: invoices, policy and procedures, and the cash handling process at the garage. Yesterday BRTA received a draft audit from them to which was responded and corrections made. The final report won't be out until July 17th. A few things they found were some cameras not functioning at Downing, a hard drive had blown on a DVR, a couple of administrative things, like viewing invoices to make sure there is a signature on them, and someone else has to review the Administrator's time sheet.

DOT VISIT FOR MOU THRESHOLDS

Mr. Malnati stated that MassDOT was here setting up the preliminary language for the MOU. Each of these MOU's are tailored specifically to the RTA. The MOU will be negotiated between MassDOT and each RTA and will identify performance targets in the following categories: ridership, customers service and satisfaction, asset management, and financial performance. Each MOU should be ready for signatures before the fiscal year end of June 30.

4) TAXI TICKET PROGRAM – VOTE

Mr. McNally made a motion to discontinue the blue Taxi Ticket program.
Mr. O'Grady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5) CASH REPORTS DECEMBER 2018, AND JANUARY - MARCH 2019 - VOTE

Ms. Wood made a motion to accept the cash reports for December 2018 and January – April, 2019. Mr. Boyle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6) FY 2020 BUDGET – VOTE

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the budget and explained this is a new budget format which is similar to the year to date report the Advisory Board receives. The fixed route fare is down as a lot more riders are utilizing passes. The paratransit fare is down, as non ADA transportation has decreased and ADA service has increased. The Advertising RFP was just awarded and will receive incremental profit sharing. For the state portion, BRTA used a conservative \$86M and includes the funding from the discretionary grant. Administration gave 3% staff raises, with Ms. Vallieres on a step plan. Professional services has increased as the 5 year grant for RouteMatch software has been expended. There will be replacement of some computers and a need for cyber security insurance and professional insurance. The annual borrowing done in September is at 2% interest rate and the management fee is contracted. Ms. Wood asked about the

allocated indirect expense, to which Mr. Malnati explained the portions of fixed route, paratransit, and HST brokerage attribute. The budget includes the contracted wage increase of both fixed route and paratransit. The HST budget is not complete as the State has not provided their information. The information for this budget is based on the current fiscal year and FY 20's management fee, but the income will equal the expense. This budget will be amended at the next board meeting.

The Finance Committee recommended the FY 2020 budget to the Advisory Committee. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to accept the budget for FY 2020. Mr. Boyle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7) ADMINISTRATOR'S CONTRACT – VOTE

Mr. Gallant stated there was a good negotiation and Mr. Malnati accepted a one-year contract offer with 2% raise and an additional personal day. Ms. Wood made a motion to accept the Administrator's contract. Mr. Gallant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8) ELECTION OF OFFICERS – VOTE

Ms. Wood made a motion to re-elect the current state of officers; Ms. Irvin as Chair and Mr. McNally as Vice Chair. Ms. Hoyt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

9) BUDGET YTD

Mr. Malnati discussed the YTD budget through April. Fixed route fare is not quite down as in March and there is an increased stored value on the Charlie Cards. Fringe benefits and miscellaneous are down. Fixed route is under budget and Paratransit over budget due to the strike.

Mr. Gallant asked when the fixed route and Paratransit contract run out, to which Mr. Malnati remarked 3 years. There is a possibility that Martha Vineyards is going on strike. Mr. Boyle asked what the total number on how much BRTA lost on the 13-day strike? Mr. Malnati remarked \$28,000 for fixed route and \$42,000 for vendors for Paratransit for a total of \$70,000.

10) RIDERSHIP YTD

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the ridership through April. The Route 11N (evening service) ridership has increased.

Mr. Boyle asked if there is a demographic break down according to age.

Mr. Malnati remarked we do have a reduced pass for seniors and disabled.

11) OLD BUSINESS

None discussed.

12) NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Malnati passed out survey highlights from Mr. Cooke. Mr. Cooke was conferenced in to discuss the highlights from the survey results from working with Mr. Coleman in South County. Mr. Cooke asked if there was any progress on the cost estimates for the study's proposed route changes. Mr. Malnati responded no because due to the budget and a couple capital projects, which are priority now. The next step will be to take a look at what Mr. Coleman has done. Mr. Malnati suggested that they work together to provide more informational sessions.

Ms. Irwin asked if we do Public service announcements on PCTV and CTSB. Mr. Malnati replied no but he will look into it. Ms. Wood asked Mr. Malnati to go over what the expanded evening services will be for the 21X. Mr. Caine replied there is a 5:30, 7:30, and 9:00, ending here at 10:25 PM. Mr. Malnati will email both Mr. Cooke and Ms. Wood copies of the schedules.

Mr. Malnati stated he will be attending the Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors at Mass MOCA. He will be speaking on "access to work studies".

Mr. Gallant asked if BRTA has a booth on third Thursday. Mr. Malnati replied BRTA will be there to let people know about the new service.

Ms. Wood discussed US Census awareness.

13) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME

August 22, 2019 at 4:00PM.

14) ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Wood made a motion to adjourn, was seconded by Mr. Boyle, and approved by all.