

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

September 19, 2019
4:00 PM
BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center
One Columbus Avenue Pittsfield, MA 01201

MINUTES

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Present:

John Boyle, Dalton; William Cooke, Great Barrington (arrived during Administrators report); James Sullivan, Hinsdale; Peter Gallant, Lanesborough; Sherry Youngkin, New Ashford; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Rene Wood, Sheffield (left after FY 2019 Financial Statements vote); Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally, Windsor.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Christine Hoyt, Adams; Peggy Rae Henden-Wilson, Alford; William Elovirta, Becket; Edmund St. John IV, Cheshire; Carl McKinney, Clarksburg; Bruce Bernstein, Egremont; Cindy Bosley, Florida; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Edward Lane, Lenox; Steve Weisz, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mt. Washington; William Hiller, Otis; Caleb Mitchell, Peru; Alan Hanson, Richmond; 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; and Clete Kus- BRPC

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.16	0.00	
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	4.03	38.31 Present
Hinsdale	1.30	1.30	42.34 during Admin
Lanesborough	2.60	2.60	Report
Lee	3.92	0.00	41.26 after #4 voting
Lenox	3.39	0.00	
Monterey	1.00	0.00	
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00	
New Ashford	1.00	1.00	
North Adams	4.92	4.92	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.00	0.00	
Pittsfield	18.77	18.77	
Richmond	1.04	0.00	
Sheffield	1.08	1.08	
Stockbridge	2.77	2.77	
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 AUGUST 22, 2019 MEETING-VOTE**

Mr. McNally made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 22, 2019.

Ms. Wood seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3) **ADMINISTRATOR`S REPORT**

STATE

Mr. Malnati stated the FY20 Funding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed and returned to MassDOT. The additional funds have not been released by DOT but should arrive with the next scheduled payment in January.

FY19 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Malnati shared the Audit has been completed by Adelson & Company. The Finance Committee met today and reviewed this with the auditor. Once the audit is finalized and accepted by the Board, the "draft" wording comes off; will be posted to the website; sent to the Board members; and sent to the state with an October 1st deadline.

RIDERSHIP REVIEW

Mr. Malnati explained a recommendation from BTM, to help with some of the flaws for more efficient service. We would like to make some changes to the Route 3 in Williamstown. The Williams Inn has moved to their new location, but the bus still stops at the old location. The Route 3, North Adams to Williamstown, will have some changes to the bus stops, bus stop descriptions, and departure time at the ITC. The Route 4, Dalton/Hinsdale, will incorporate a Route 11 Saturday service and increase the Route 4 headway from 90 minutes to 120 minutes between departures. The Route 5 will include a 60-minute round trip in the same direction of travel for the entire day. The Route 11 and 15 timetables will include the new Wayfair Call Center located in the Clocktower complex. The Route 12 timetable will include Federico Drive as a designated stop instead of an on-demand service. The Route 21X will discontinue evening trips from 7:30 PM and 9:15 PM. The money saved from discontinuing these two trips would be used to create a new route, the Great Barrington Circulator, for service within the town between 6:15 PM and 9:50 PM. This new route will include service to Simon's Rock College, the shopping plaza, and Fairview Hospital. This will reduce 18,000 miles over the course of a year. BRTA will announce to customers in November and December, through marketing and advertising, that the changes will start in January.

Ms. Wood discussed her concerns if the Route 21 X is eliminated and BCC students will have no transportation to Great Barrington if they take a 5 PM course. Mr. Malnati remarked that BRTA is considering eliminating the 7:30 PM and 9:15 PM of Route 21X. So far, only 28 people have used it this month, 54 in July, and 59 in August. Ms. Wood's concern is the connection for South County students connecting to Pittsfield and to let BCC know. She is concerned that BRTA just started this service a couple months ago and now it's being discontinued. Mr. McNally remarked BRTA is not discontinuing it until January. She agreed if it is not being used, then why are we doing it? I think this is a public relations issue and I would give them until the next meeting, to come up with a plan, or at least be aware of it. Mr. Malnati remarked this is September and the Board

doesn't meet in November and December. Do we want to meet in October to talk about this again? If ridership is not being utilized, I'd rather spend the money on a Great Barrington Circulator, especially hearing from Simon's Rock that they have 30-40 people a day that could use the service. It would be a better use of funding. If we mirror or think of what we did with 34 in North Adams, that use to be a 2-hour ride, but we created a circular that goes from Main Street to Walmart. We are looking at the best use for the remaining funds. Even the 11N, over a couple months, could see some consistent growth. The most people that rode the 21X a day was maybe 5. Ms. Minacci remarked that maybe giving it a little more time so the students signing up for classes in the winter will have the opportunity to use the bus and maybe use Renee's idea. Mr. Malnati remarked that enrollment is down at the college and that plays a big part in our ridership. BRTA spoke to the college about ridership, put posters up at the college, and were at the college for their welcoming barbeque. BRTA had a survey on our website and most of the responses were from Simon's Rock students. Ms. Youngkin stated they would have to mobilize the ridership in some way. Mr. McNally remarked, BRTA did the outreach to BCC last spring about the evening service, posters were up there and registration was there. The students didn't choose to take the classes that would accommodate the busing. It is mostly used going to Pittsfield. Mr. Malnati stated it is the 11N to Walmart that is driving ridership up. Mr. McNally remarked our most successful route right now is the 34, the circulator route, which gives local bus service in a region. We are suggesting make a circulator in South County. Ms. Irwin stated if BCC is offering more classes in Great Barrington, then it makes sense for a circulator, which would also service Simons Rock.

BERKSHIRE FLYER

Mr. Malnati stated he met with representatives of the steering committee: BRPC, 1Berkshires, and Senator Hinds. We talked about the next steps in creating a job description for a project manager, the MOUs between the state and us, and the state and Amtrak. Discussions will continue how to access the funding outlined in the state budget.

4) FY2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – VOTE

Mr. Malnati passed out the draft Financial Statements and provided an update on them.

Mr. McNally made a motion to accept the FY2019 Financial Statement.

Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5) CUSTOMER CODE OF CONDUCT – VOTE

Mr. Malnati shared the draft Customer Code of Conduct. This document was researched by reviewing other RTAs' Code of Conduct. Mr. Gallant stated he thinks likes it, but it should be explained who the customer should appeal to and if there is a backup person. Mr. Malnati stated they have ten days to appeal to him in writing and Ms. Vallieres will be the backup. Mr. O'Grady remarked in reference to Page 3 regarding unsanitary conditions, if someone is sick or vomits, do you kick them off. Mr. Malnati remarked no. This is if someone has continual poor hygiene, this would be discussed with the customer. We might have a social services agency get involved to do a well-being check.

Mr. McNally made a motion to accept the Customer Code of Conduct.

Mr. Gallant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6) CASH REPORTS JULY 2019 – VOTE

Mr. Gallant made a motion to accept the cash reports for July 2019.
Ms. Lamb seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7) AMENDED FY20 HST BUDGET – VOTE

Mr. Malnati provided an overview of the amended budget. When HST gave their final budget, BRTA had already approved our budget with a place holder number in its spot. When they gave their final budget, it was almost a million dollars higher than what we approved previously. So, with a higher cost of the program, comes additional indirect cost. With that million-dollar increase, that indirect increase went up \$6,172.

Mr. McNally made a motion to accept the amended FY20 HST Budget.
Ms. Youngkin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8) BUDGET YTD

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of the Budget through July. Fixed route fares are on the increase. Last year it was below budget. Ridership was up and Paratransit was down. Non transportation revenue is up. We did more maintenance than what we budgeted for. Local grants are always negative. Labor costs under budget. BRTA found out windows 7 will no longer be supported come January 7 and are in the process of upgrading all staff computers.

9) RIDERSHIP YTD

Mr. Malnati gave an overview of Ridership. July was up 775 customers from last year, which included Routes: 11N, 21X, 34 and 1. Paratransit is up; ADA is up; Non-ADA is down; wheelchairs are up; HST is up 12%; and bikes are down.

10) OLD BUSINESS

None

11) NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Malnati remarked the discontinuation of Route 21X was originally put off until January, Ms. Wood wants us to hold off longer. I can certainly reach out to the college to let them know and see what their reaction is. If our ridership continues to show it is less than 70 people for September and October, then we should be focusing our efforts on the other parts. Mr. McNally remarked there are very few students taking evening courses at BCC. Ms. Youngkin agreed.

Mr. McNally made a motion to approve the modifications for the route changes starting in January. Mr. Boyle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Gallant recommended contacting the college so they can notify their students that there may or may not be transportation starting in January. Mr. Malnati stated as of now, it will end December 27.

12) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME

January 23, 2020 at 4:00PM.

13) ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boyle made a motion to adjourn, was seconded by Mr. O'Grady, and approved by all.

FENVA