

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
Finance/Audit Committee Virtual Meeting

March 17, 2021 at 10 AM
BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center
One Columbus Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Finance/Audit Committee Members present:

Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Sandy Lamb, North Adams; and Doug McNally, Windsor
Also present: Robert Malnati and Sarah Vallieres.

1. **Approval of Minutes for September 22, 2020 -VOTE**

The Finance Committee members reviewed the minutes of September's meeting. Mr. McNally made the motion to accept the minutes, was seconded by Ms. Lamb, and approved by all. Ms. Irvin abstained.

2. **FY 22 Draft Budget Assumptions-Bob**

Mr. Malnati started by highlighting the current unknowns and reviewed the budget assumptions sheet. He discussed all the potential funding, including CARES Act and CRSSA. This included from the Governor's budget, State Contract Assistance of \$90.5M collectively, \$2.8M for BRTA without the discretionary grant funding line item.

Mr. Malnati explained the HST contract is due to expire on 6/30, with a potential loss of 4 staff, where the pension payout could be significant. The Legislators are looking for a reprieve. This loss will not bode well for customers. BRTA has been working on fixed route service efficiencies for July 1 and will discuss this at the April Board meeting. The MassDOT discretionary grants will expire on 6/30 and the new awards have not been released. BRTA applied for funds and is anticipating MassDOT's imminent notification. RouteMatch Pay was funded through a 5310 grant and will be implemented shortly. BRTA is transitioning the Paratransit system from tickets to a cloud-based accounting system. There will be a presentation at the Board Meeting.

Mr. Malnati discussed the BTM/PMB labor contract and would like to create a non-CDL pay scale to replicate the model at FRTA. Mr. Caine is in conversation with their labor attorney. The cost benefits were discussed, and Teamster's insurance will go up.

Mr. Malnati shared the design thinking process Administration has been performing to figure out BRTA's ultimate goal and create a bedrock approach to achieve this over the next few years- "A Better BRTA". There will be a review of efficiencies using data driven decisions and analyzing the data to move forward. BRTA needs to be sustainable, inclusive, and forward thinking coming out of COVID-19.

Mr. McNally discussed the COVID-19 funding and perhaps utilizing this funding as an opportunity to plan and analyze data, possibly using outside contractors. Mr. Malnati discussed the 5307-funding appropriation and look at using the COVID-19 funding for some expertise on data. He also discussed the AECOM 5-year plan's executive summary.

3. **BRTA Bus Stop Project- VOTE**

Mr. Malnati presented the Bus Stop Project power point. This will be presented by Operations at the Board Meeting and Mr. Malnati would like the Finance Committee to endorse this project for a vote. Mr. McNally made a motion to endorse this project proposal and recommend to the Advisory Board. This was seconded by Ms. Lamb and approved by all.

4. **Ridership Review**

Mr. Malnati provided an overview of ridership to the committee. The evening programs have increased and discussed the numbers. Overall, customers are coming back at 61% of pre-COVID levels. Paratransit ridership is below 50% probably due to serving this vulnerable population.

5. **Old Business**

No Old Business.

6. **New Business**

No New Business.

7. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be tentatively booked for April 15 at 10 AM dependent on more information.

8. **Adjournment**

Mr. McNally made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting, was seconded by Ms. Lamb, and approved by all.