

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

September 29, 2022
4:00 PM

ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Present:

William Elovirta, Becket; Rob Reilly, Lanesborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Douglas McNally, Windsor; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative. Andrea Wadsworth, Lee arrived during the Administrator's Report. S. Lamb, North Adams left during 8) Budget YTD.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

John Duval, Adams; Charles Ketchen, Alford; Michelle Francesconi, Cheshire; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; John Boyle, Dalton; Melanie Torrico, Egremont; Cynthia Bosley, Florida; John Morrell, Great Barrington; Earl Peck, Hinsdale; Dave Roche, Lenox; Justin Makuc, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mt. Washington; Sherry Youngkin, New Ashford; Brandi Page, Otis; James Welch, Peru; Roger Manzolini, Richmond; Andrew Provost, Savoy; Rene Wood, Sheffield; Kent Lew, Washington; and Brian O'Grady, Williamstown

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, Barbara White, BRTA staff; Rauley Caine and Accem Scott, BTM staff; and Patti Annechiarico.

	Voting Shares	Present
Adams	2.22	0.00
Alford	1.00	0.00
Becket	1.00	1.00
Cheshire	2.70	0.00
Clarksburg	1.00	0.00
Dalton	2.78	0.00
Egremont	1.00	0.00
Florida	1.00	0.00
Great Barrington	3.33	0.00
Hinsdale	1.33	0.00
Lanesborough	2.36	2.36
Lee	3.42	3.42
Lenox	4.22	0.00
Monterey	1.00	0.00
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00
New Ashford	1.14	0.00
North Adams	5.42	5.42
Otis	1.00	0.00
Peru	1.00	0.00
Pittsfield	19.25	19.25
Richmond	1.00	0.00
Savoy	1.00	0.00
Sheffield	1.03	0.00
Stockbridge	2.74	2.74
Washington	1.00	0.00
Williamstown	2.58	0.00
Windsor	1.00	1.00
Disability Community	1.00	0.00
Rider Representative	1.00	1.00

1) ROLL CALL

S. Irvin called the Advisory Board meeting to order at 4:04 PM. A. Wadsworth, Lee arrived during the Administrator’s Report with 36.19 voting shares making a quorum.

2) FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE – VOTE: INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT

R. Malnati addressed the Finance Committee, comprised of North Adams, Pittsfield, and Windsor. He provided a description of the Investment Policy Statement that was approved by the Pension Committee. The Finance Committee needs to approve the Pension Investment Policy. S. Lamb is on both the Pension and Finance Committees, so she has abstained from the vote.

D. McNally made a motion to accept the Finance Sub-Committee Investment Policy Statement. S. Irvin seconded the motion. Both stated ayes, and the Investment Policy Statement passed with S. Lamb abstaining.

Town	(2) Investment Policy Statement
North Adams	Abstained
Pittsfield	Yes
Windsor	Yes

3) ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

COVID-19

R. Malnati shared the Advisory Board meetings will now be in person. We have masks and hand sanitizer available and encourage riders to use them.

FY22 Fixed Route ridership, which ended June 30, exceeded FY21 by almost 20%, with 65,000 trips. The YTD ridership represents 91% of FY 20, the first year of COVID. July’s FY23 ridership exceeded FY22 by 17%. American Public Transportation Association (APTA) shared the national average is at 70% and we have exceeded them by 20%. The BRTA is carrying people that must go to work whereas in the larger cities, a lot of people are still working from home. Paratransit is over 29% from the previous year, increase of 4300 trips. Paratransit YTD was 92%. July’s FY 23 exceeded FY22 by 22%.

STATE

R. Malnati stated the Governor signed the FY23 Budget for the collective RTA funding at \$94M. \$90.5M was distributed at the FY22 level and \$3.5M for the following: 60% ridership, 30% population, and 10% service area. BRTA received approximately \$2.93M. The BRTA has a contract executed for the \$90.5M level for \$2.82M. The additional amount will be in the next payment by December/January.

OPERATIONS

R. Malnati explained that Berkshire Transit Management (BTM) has been conducting the Commercial Learner’s Permit class in conjunction with MassHire. Accem Scott, Assistant

General Manager of BTM, has been conducting this class since March. Four sessions have been held and a candidate was hired from each class. It takes about 90 days from date of hire to begin driving. 12 operators, out of 31, called out sick in one day last week, which caused service cancellations on some routes. Rauley Caine, General Manager of BTM, and the supervisors have also been driving to continue to run the fixed route. This has required us to reduce some service. At this meeting, we are proposing a service change for BRTA Route 14 starting immediately through mid-November. The Route 14 will not operate from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, but it will continue to operate in the evenings from 6:30 to 9:55 PM. Those who use the Route 14 during the day can still travel in the similar corridor by utilizing Route 12. Operations should be restaffed in mid-November to resume the normal Route 14 schedule.

BORROWING FY23

R. Malnati described the short-term borrowing process for the Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN) The \$5.35M note was awarded to Jefferies LLC at 4% and a Net Interest Charge of 2.809%.

BRTA AUDITS

R. Malnati discussed three Audits. Federal Triennial Review, MassDOT, and the external audit. The Federal Triennial Review Audit is open with 1 item remaining and will be complete after a solicitation contract is awarded for FTA to review. MassDOT performed their audit on August 17, 2022, which included a site visit. BRTA requested a draft report and is currently waiting for this. Lastly, Adelson & Company, performed the annual external audit. The Draft Financial Statements were reviewed by the Finance Committee. The Draft Statements are on the agenda today as a voteable item.

PILOT BERKSHIRE FLYER FY23

R. Malnati gave an update on the pilot Berkshire Flyer season. This started July 8th and ended September 5. Approximately 50-60 customers arrived on the train every Friday night, vehicles were lined on the street. 914 people rode the Flyer the first year. There was a Chief Ambassador hired to coordinate and had Ambassadors from Downtown Inc. welcoming the customers, handing out packets, and service surveys. The Ambassadors were here on Sundays for the return trip to NYC asking about their experiences. There is a wrap up meeting in October to discuss the next steps. There was a discussion about the estimated expectation of ridership, which was about 1000 riders, but it was supposed to run Memorial Day to Columbus Day. Bloggers were on the train and talked about their positive visit. Funding was included in the FY23 Budget for the Flyer. Details are still being worked out on allocations for the next proposed pilot season from Memorial Day to Columbus Day.

GRANTS

Mr. Malnati remarked that the BRTA applied for and received almost \$2.5M from the Federal Transit Administration under the Bus and Bus Facilities and Low or No Emission programs. This grant award will replace 3 buses with 3 hybrid diesel electric buses, a small bus, and the HVAC at the ITC. There was a discussion and BRTA is part of MassDOT's GreenDOT initiative. There will be a state match of \$614,332 bringing the total cost of this award to \$3,071,660. BRTA has a solicitation for a facility condition assessment, which we had some responses already.

MassDOT announced a \$2.5M grant to the RTAs for means-tested, discounted, or fare-free pilot programs. Collectively, the 15 RTAs will submit one application to promote a fare-free event during the holiday season.

4) MINUTES OF THE MAY 26, 2022 MEETING - VOTE

D. McNally made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 26, 2022 meeting. B. Morrison seconded the motion. All stated aye and the minutes were passed with B. Elovirta abstaining.

Town	(4) Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting	(5) Proposed Service Changes	(6) FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements	(7) Cash Report May, June, and July 2022	14) Adjournment
Becket	Abstained				
Lanesborough	Yes				
Lee	Yes				
North Adams	Yes				
Pittsfield	Yes				
Stockbridge	Yes				
Windsor	Yes				
Rider Representative	Yes				

5) PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES – VOTE

R. Malnati explained the proposed service change for the Route 14, which currently operates 6:30 AM to 9:55 PM. Due to driver shortages, BRTA has only been doing the 6:30PM to 9:55 PM lately. To remain reliable, the proposed service change is to operate the Route 14 from 6:30 PM to 9:55 PM only. There was discussion on this topic. Those who use the Route 14 during the day can still travel in the similar corridor by utilizing Route 12, which is an hourly service, instead of the ½ hour service provided by both routes.

S. Lamb made a motion to accept the Proposed Service Changes. J. Minacci seconded the motion. All stated aye and The Proposed Service Changes were passed unanimously.

Town	(4) Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting	(5) Proposed Service Changes	(6) FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements	(7) Cash Report May, June, July 2022	12) Adjournment
Becket		Yes			
Lanesborough		Yes			
Lee		Yes			
North Adams		Yes			
Pittsfield		Yes			
Stockbridge		Yes			
Windsor		Yes			
Rider Representative		Yes			

6) FY 2022 DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS -VOTE

R. Malnati provided an overview of the FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements. The only recommendation from the audit was to incorporate the new GASB 87 language about leases into the financial statements and BRTA Accounting Manual. This has been completed and BRTA is now conforming to the new GASB regulations. The Auditor provided the BRTA an unmodified or clean opinion on the financial statements. Finances were accurate with nothing missing, no issues, and no material deficiencies. The Auditor was very transparent especially with any COVID funding the BRTA received. Berkshire Transit Management (BTM) absorbed Paratransit Management of Berkshire (PMB) into another department instead of a subsidiary. Any assets from PMB were closed and returned.

A. Wadsworth made a motion to accept the FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements. D. McNally seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Draft Financial Statements were passed unanimously.

Town	(4) Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting	(5) Proposed Service Changes	(6) FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements	(7) FY 2022 May, June, July, 2022	12) Adjournment
Becket			Yes		
Lanesborough			Yes		
Lee			Yes		
North Adams			Yes		
Pittsfield			Yes		
Stockbridge			Yes		
Windsor			Yes		
Rider Representative			Yes		

7) CASH REPORT MAY, JUNE, AND JULY 2022 – VOTE

R. Malnati shared the Cash reports for May, June, and July.

D. McNally made a motion to accept the Cash Reports for May, June, July 2022. S. Lamb seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Cash Reports for May, June, and July 2022 were passed unanimously.

Town	(4) Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting	(5) Proposed Service Changes	(6) FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements	(7) Cash Reports May, June, July 2022	12) Adjournment
Becket				Yes	
Lanesborough				Yes	
Lee				Yes	
North Adams				Yes	
Pittsfield				Yes	
Stockbridge				Yes	
Windsor				Yes	
Rider Representative				Yes	

8) BUDGET YTD

R. Malnati provided an overview of the BRTA budget year-to-date for July only.

9) RIDERSHIP YTD

R. Malnati stated fixed route ridership through August had 41,000 people riding, a 28% increase. Paratransit is showing an increase, especially ADA and COAs. On the BRTA website, ridership is shown by route and by month. The Route 34 has the highest amount of wheelchair transports for all fixed route. Route 1 and 34 evening service are showing high increases.

10) TOPICS FOR FUTURE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

R. Malnati asked if the Board would like to add anything to the Agenda for the next Board meeting and they can send him an email. During discussion, the Micro-transit has not started yet. Only one Oak Hill resident requested a ride, which was performed as a deviated service from the Route 5 bus.

11) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME

R. Malnati scheduled the next meeting for October 27, 2022 at 4 PM.

12) ADJOURNMENT

J. Minacci made a motion at 4:55 PM to adjourn the Advisory Board meeting. B. Elovirta seconded the motion. All stated aye and the motion carried. The adjournment was passed unanimously.

Town	(4) Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting	(5) Proposed Service Changes	(6) FY 2022 Draft Financial Statements	(7) Cash Reports May, June, July 2022	12) Adjournment
Becket					Yes
Lanesborough					Yes
Lee					Yes
North Adams					-----
Pittsfield					Yes
Stockbridge					Yes
Windsor					Yes
Rider Representative					Yes

Meeting Materials:

- BRTA Advisory Board Packet**
- BRTA Amended Public Notice and Agenda**
- BRTA Draft 2022 Financial Statements**
- BRTA Draft 2022 Management Letter**
- BRTA Draft 2022 Single Audit Package**