

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

March 30, 2023  
4:00 PM

**ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

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

William Elovirta, Becket; Rob Reilly, Lanesborough; Jenn Nacht, Lenox; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; Douglas McNally, Windsor; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative. Roger Manzolini, Richmond came during the Administrator’s Report.

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

Christine Hoyt, Adams; Charles Ketchen, Alford; Michelle Francesconi, Cheshire; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; John Boyle, Dalton; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Cynthia Bosley, Florida; John Morrell, Great Barrington; Earl Peck, Hinsdale; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Justin Makuc, Monterey; Jim Lovejoy, Mt. Washington; Brandi Page, Otis; James Welch, Peru; Andrew Provost, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; and Kent Lew, Washington.

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Gina LePage King- BRTA; Anuja Koirola, BRPC; Rauley Cain-BTM; and Patty Annechiarico.

	Voting Shares	Present
Adams	2.8124	0.0000
Alford	1.0000	0.0000
Becket	1.0000	1.0000
Cheshire	3.4428	0.0000
Clarksburg	1.0078	34.75
Dalton	2.4426	needed for
Egremont	1.0010	quorum
Florida	1.0000	0.0000
Great Barrington	3.3315	36.2723 when
Hinsdale	1.2269	meeting was called
Lanesborough	2.3242	to order
Lee	3.8089	0.0000
Lenox	4.7367	4.7367
Monterey	1.0000	37.2723 present
Mt. Washington	1.0000	during Administrator’s
New Ashford	1.1044	Report
North Adams	5.7136	5.7136
Otis	1.0000	0.0000
Peru	1.0123	0.0000
Pittsfield	16.6803	16.6803
Richmond	1.0000	1.0000
Savoy	1.0000	0.0000
Sheffield	1.0673	0.0000
Stockbridge	3.0741	0.0000
Washington	1.0000	0.0000
Williamstown	2.7121	2.7121
Windsor	1.0010	1.0010
Disability Community	1.0000	0.0000
Rider Representative	1.0000	1.0000

1) **ROLL CALL**

S. Irvin called the Advisory Board meeting to order at 4:00 PM

2) **MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 27, 2022 MEETING – VOTE**

D. McNally made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 27, 2022 meeting. B. Elovirta seconded the motion. S. Lamb, J. Nacht, and B. O’Grady abstained and the October 27, 2022 Meeting minutes were passed.

Town	(2) Minutes of the October 27, 2022 Meeting	(3) Minutes of the November 7, 2022 Special Meeting	(5) Updated Title VI Program	(6) Administrator Review	(7) Cash Reports, October, November, and December 2022	(8) Cash Reports January and February 2023
Becket	Yes					
Lanesborough	Yes					
Lenox	Abstained					
New Ashford	Yes					
North Adams	Abstained					
Pittsfield	Yes					
Richmond	Yes					
Williamstown	Abstained					
Windsor	Yes					
Rider Representative	Yes					

3) **MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 7, 2022 SPECIAL MEETING - VOTE**

D. McNally made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 7, 2022, Special meeting. S. Youngkin seconded the motion. S. Lamb and J. Nacht abstained and the November 7, 2022 Special Meeting minutes were passed.

Town	(2) Minutes of the October 27, 2022 Meeting	(3) Minutes of the November 7, 2022 Special Meeting	(5) FY Updated Title VI Program	(6) Administrators Review	(7) Cash Reports October, November, and December 2022	(8) Cash Reports January and February 2023
Becket		Yes				
Lanesborough		Yes				
Lenox		Abstained				
New Ashford		Yes				
North Adams		Abstained				
Pittsfield		Yes				
Richmond		Yes				
Williamstown		Yes				
Windsor		Yes				
Rider Representative		Yes				

**4) ADMINISTRATOR`S REPORT**

**TRY TRANSIT FARE FREE EVENT - FOLLOW UP**

R. Malnati stated the Try Transit fare free event held from the last week of November to December 31, 22, had a goal of 54,000 riders and BRTA was just shy of that goal: 51,591. A snowstorm the week of Christmas put us down a fraction. Currently we are tracking March numbers and are averaging about 1,500 riders a day, which is an increase from last year. This should put us at the 40,000 mark, if it continues. All in all, it was a positive event. BRTA has not seen these monthly ridership levels in years. BRTA had a meeting March 27<sup>th</sup> with DOT and discussed this event.

There was a discussion on how this information was disseminated to the public via the Deputy Administrator’s Facebook social media campaign, email blasts, and press releases. There was additional discussion on the prospect of doing this again if funding was available with the idea of a summer campaign. This 5-week trial provided the opportunity for new customers to ride the BRTA and the length of this event may have helped change patterns and increase ridership.

**STATE AUDITOR’S REVIEW**

R. Malnati explained the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) is conducting an audit of the BRTA’s paratransit program with bi-weekly meetings. OSA is auditing other RTAs as well. He will keep the Board advised on the progress of this review and provide copies of their final report.

**SOLICITATION**

R. Malnati shared the Facility Condition Assessment solicitation was awarded to AECOM and the contract has been signed. They will review both properties and map a prioritized capital plan with cost estimates.

**SFY 24 BUDGET**

R. Malnati explained the BRTA has begun the process of developing the budget. Originally the RTA’s collectively asked for \$150M which is 10% of the MBTA’s budget from the state. The Governor’s budget is \$98.6M, including \$6M in Fare Share funding for a total of \$102.8M. It’s an increase from the past, but BRTA receives 3.12% of that. The \$150M would ensure equity, sustainability, and predictability of services. MassDOT has a discretionary grant of \$15M million and an additional \$4M for the Community Transportation Grant Program. R. Malnati discussed the RTAs virtual introductory meeting with Undersecretary of Transportation, Monica Tibbitts-Nutt and it was a very good meeting. The RTAs were able to discuss their concerns including equitable and sustainable funding. During the meeting, he mentioned the fact that BTM’s GM and AGM have been collaborating with MassHire, BCC, and BIC to develop a CDL program in Berkshire County.

**TITLE VI**

The Title VI Program has been updated and will require a BRTA Advisory Board vote.

**5) UPDATED TITLE VI PROGRAM – VOTE**

S. Vallieres provided a synopsis of what the BRTA Title VI Program is, how the Language Assistance Plan for Limited English Persons was updated, and how BRTA provides a variety of language translation methods. Spanish continues to be the primary language for translation at 3.1%.

B. O’Grady made the motion to accept the updated BRTA Title VI Program. S. Lamb seconded the motion. All said aye and the updated Title VI Program was passed unanimously.

Town	(2) Minutes of the October 27, 2022 Meeting	(3) Minutes of the November 7, 2022 Special Meeting	(5) Updated Title VI Program	(6) Administrators Review	(7) Cash Reports for October, November, and December 2022	(8) Cash Reports for January and February 2023
Becket			Yes			
Lanesborough			Yes			
Lenox			Yes			
New Ashford			Yes			
North Adams			Yes			
Pittsfield			Yes			
Richmond			Yes			
Williamstown			Yes			
Windsor			Yes			
Rider Representative			Yes			

**6) ADMINISTRATOR'S REVIEW-VOTE**

S. Irvin discussed the Finance Committee's annual review of the Administrator's contract. They reviewed the Administrators' actions and looked at 4 categories: leadership, innovation, collaboration, and financial planning. They reviewed riders input and commended the Administrator on projects like the Try Transit event, the Berkshire Flyer, better connectivity of bus routes, MassHire training, and the award of grants. As inflation is 6%, the Finance Committee is recommending to the BRTA Advisory Board a 4% raise in the Administrator's salary.

S. Lamb made the motion to accept the Administrators Review of a 4% salary increase. B. O'Grady seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Administrator's Review of a 4% salary increase for the Administrator was passed unanimously.

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Becket				Yes		
Lanesborough				Yes		
Lenox				Yes		
New Ashford				Yes		
North Adams				Yes		
Pittsfield				Yes		
Richmond				Yes		
Williamstown				Yes		
Windsor				Yes		
Rider Representative				Yes		

**7) CASH REPORTS OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, AND DECEMBER 2022-VOTE**

R. Malnati shared the cash reports for October, November, and December 2022. R. Manzoloni inquired about the rates received on BRTA funds.

D. McNally made a motion to accept the cash reports for October, November, and December 2022. R. Reilly seconded the motion. All stated aye and the cash reports for October, November, and December 2022 were passed unanimously.

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Becket					Yes	Yes
Lanesborough					Yes	Yes
Lenox					Yes	
New Ashford					Yes	Yes
North Adams					Yes	Yes
Pittsfield					Yes	Yes
Richmond					Yes	Yes
Williamstown					Yes	Yes
Windsor					Yes	Yes
Rider Representative					Yes	Yes

**8) CASH REPORTS JANUARY and FEBRUARY 2023-VOTE**

R. Malnati shared the cash reports for January and February 2023.

D. McNally made the motion to accept the cash reports for January and February 2023.

B. Elovirta seconded the motion. All stated aye and the cash reports for January and February 2023 were passed unanimously.

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Becket						Yes
Lanesborough						Yes
Lenox						Yes
New Ashford						Yes
North Adams						Yes
Pittsfield						Yes
Richmond						Yes
Williamstown						Yes
Windsor						Yes
Rider Representative						Yes

**9) BUDGET YTD**

R. Malnati provided an overview of the BRTA through February 2023. Fares are \$13K over budget due to increases in ridership and total expenses are \$10K over. BRTA's budget is on the conservative side.

**10) RIDERSHIP YTD**

R. Malnati discussed the ridership packet which has 3 years of wheelchair data to compare. Fixed route ridership and paratransit are doing well. December, January and February has marked increases as a result of the Try Transit initiative. Ridership increased to 97% of pre-COVID levels. Route 34, followed by Route 1 continues to have the highest wheelchair ridership. BRTA's Performance Measures can be found on BRTA's website.

**11) TOPICS FOR FUTURE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

R. Malnati stated the election of officers, the Safety Plan, and the draft 2024 budget will be presented and voted on at the next meeting.

**12) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME**

R. Malnati scheduled the next meeting for Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 4 PM.

**13) ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 PM.

**Meeting Materials:**

**BRTA Advisory Board Packet, including BRTA Title VI Program  
BRTA Public Notice and Agenda**