

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

March 28, 2024

4:00 PM

BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center, Second Floor Board Room

One Columbus Avenue Pittsfield, MA 01201

**ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

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

William Elovirta, Becket; John Boyle, Dalton; Rob Reilly, Lanesborough; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally, Windsor.

Sarah Fontaine, Adams arrived during TAM Plan Overview.

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

Charles Ketchen, Alford; Ray Kileen, Cheshire Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Cynthia Bosley, Florida; Benjamin Elliott, Great Barrington; Sherman Derby, Sr., Hancock; Earl Peck, Hinsdale; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Mindi Morin, Lenox; Frank Abbott, Monterey; Eric Mendelsohn, Mt. Washington; Tara White, New Marlborough; Brandi Page, Otis; James Welch, Peru; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Andrew Provost, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Kent Lew, Washington; Andrew Potter, West Stockbridge; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative.

**Also, present:** Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Gina LePage King, BRTA; Rauley Caine, Accem Scott, and Roberto Quintos, BTM; Patti Annecharico; Anuja Koirola, BRPC; and one other attendee.

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.8649	2.8649	
Alford	1.0000	0.0000	
Becket	1.0274	1.0274	
Cheshire	3.7143	0.0000	
Clarksburg	1.0087	0.0000	38.5000
Dalton	2.5375	2.5375	needed for
Egremont	1.0011	0.0000	quorum
Florida	1.0000	0.0000	
Great Barrington	3.5906	0.0000	
Hancock	1.0000	0.0000	37.1429 when called to order
Hinsdale	1.2521	0.0000	
Lanesborough	2.4182	2.4182	40.0078 during TAM Plan Overview
Lee	4.1210	0.0000	
Lenox	5.1519	0.0000	
Monterey	1.0000	0.0000	
Mt. Washington	1.0000	0.0000	
New Ashford	1.0954	1.0954	
New Marlborough	1.0000	0.0000	
North Adams	6.5767	6.5767	
Otis	1.0000	0.0000	
Peru	1.0136	0.0000	
Pittsfield	19.7465	19.7465	
Richmond	1.0000	0.0000	
Savoy	1.0000	0.0000	
Sheffield	1.0748	0.0000	
Stockbridge	3.3046	0.0000	
Washington	1.0000	0.0000	
West Stockbridge	1.0000	0.0000	
Williamstown	2.7319	2.7319	
Windsor	1.0093	1.0093	
Rider Representative	1.0000	0.0000	
Disability Community	1.0000	0.0000	

1) **ROLL CALL**

S. Irvin called the Advisory Board Meeting to order at 4:00 PM stating this meeting will be recorded for the purposes of the notes of the Board Minutes.

2) **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

R. Malnati asked if there were any questions regarding the Administrator's Report from the Advisory Board packet that was emailed to the Board Members. There were no questions.

3) **TAM PLAN OVERVIEW**

R. Malnati presented the BRTA Transit Asset Management (TAM) PowerPoint Presentation. This plan needs to be reviewed periodically and the assets need to be in a state of good repair. It includes targets for rolling stock, equipment, and facilities. Overall, BRTA is at 3.69% for revenue vehicles, 3.66% for the facilities, and 3.67% for the equipment.

4) **MINUTES OF JANUARY 11, 2024 MEETING- VOTE**

D. McNally made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 11, 2024 meeting, S. Youngkin seconded the motion, and all stated aye. The Minutes of the January 11, 2024 Board Meeting passed.

5) **ZEB PRESENTATION: ZERO EMISSION BUS**

R. Malnati presented the BRTA Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus Project Power Point Presentation. There have been several studies that show battery electric buses will not work for BRTA's daily service range and are looking at Hydrogen fuel cell as a viable option. These zero emission buses have a range of 350 miles and fuels in 5 minutes. Fleet transition will be a process over time. BRTA will be taking steps to upgrade to a lower greenhouse gas fleet. Hydrogen buses are already a competitive alternative to battery operated vehicles. There are 2 business models, either buy hydrogen or make your own. If BRTA makes hydrogen, there may be a benefit to the community. Local solar and wind farms have excess capacity that could be used by BRTA to create a microgrid. The current hydrogen buses available are 40-feet and this could solve BRTA's overcrowding as ridership continues to increase.

Discussion:

Wind farms to create hydrogen. BRTA would need to look for additional real estate for a new zero emission facility for this new fleet.

Next steps, BRTA is working with Hatch on a feasibility study and creation of a fleet transition plan. BRTA will be applying for the FTA Low-No grants for a couple of hydrogen buses and a self-contained supply for a pilot.

6) **CASH REPORT DECEMBER 2023, JANUARY, and FEBRUARY 2024-VOTE**

R. Malnati passed out the Cash Reports for December and shared the Cash Reports for January and February 2024.

D. McNally made a motion to accept the Cash Reports for December, January, and February 2024. J. Boyle seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Cash reports were passed.

7) **RIDERSHIP YTD**

R. Malnati reviewed the ridership year to date. The fixed route ridership is up 11% more than last year, possibly due to the holiday fare free event. There will be another Fare Free Event in June and July, which should increase ridership of BRTA's routes to above the pre-Covid numbers.

8) **BUDGET YTD**

R. Malnati provided an overview of the BRTA budget through March. Overall, the budget looks good with expenses below budget and revenue shifting to state funding for the fare free event.

9) **BUS ROUTE ACCESSIBILITY TO...**

This topic was brought up at the last meeting to discuss promotion of BRTA buses. The new evening services will continue with extended times for the summer, but to promote different venues where people may want to go as long as bus routes travel in the area. One idea for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is to have passports and collect

stamps at various venues. There was a discussion about Lenox restaurants in the evenings; Live on the Lake at Onota; and Greylock Glen’s educational and recreational activities.

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

The only new topic for future advisory board meeting was about Zoom.

**11) NEXT MEETING DATE**

R. Malnati scheduled the next meeting for Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

**12) ADJOURNMENT**

J. Boyle made the motion to adjourn and was seconded by S. Fontaine. All stated aye and the meeting ended at 4:47 PM.

**Meeting Materials**

- BRTA Advisory Board Packet
- BRTA Public Notice and Agenda
- BRTA Transit Asset Management PowerPoint Presentation (shown)
- BRTA Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus Project PowerPoint Presentation (shown)
- BRTA Cash Report December 2023

**BRTA Advisory Board Votes from March 21, 2024:**

<b>Town</b>	<b>2) Minutes of January 11, 2024 Meeting</b>	<b>6) Cash Reports for December, January, and February 2024</b>	<b>12) Adjournment</b>
<b>Adams</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Becket</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Dalton</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Lanesborough</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>New Ashford</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>North Adams</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Pittsfield</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Williamstown</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Windsor</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes