

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

September 26, 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; Ray Killeen, Cheshire; John Boyle, Dalton; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Mary Reilly, Lanesborough; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Stuart Lawrence, New Marlborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Mayor Peter Marchetti, Pittsfield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Michael Case, Washington; and Douglas McNally, Windsor. Frank Abbot, Monterey arrived during the Advisory Board Orientation.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Sarah Fontaine, Adams; Charles Ketchen, Alford; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; Neil Olsen, Florida; Benjamin Elliott, Great Barrington; Sherman Derby, Sr., Hancock; Raymond Huntoon, Hinsdale; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Mindi Morin, Lenox; Brian Tobin, Mt. Washington; Brandi Page, Otis; Terry Walker, Peru; Neal Pilson, Richmond; Justin Kaczowski, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Andrew Potter, West Stockbridge; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative.

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Gina LePage King, BRTA; Rauley Caine and Accem Scott, BTM; Anuja Koirola, BRPC; and Patti Annechiarico.

| | Voting Shares | Present | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Adams | 2.8649 | 0.0000 | |
| Alford | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| Becket | 1.0274 | 1.0274 | |
| Cheshire | 3.7233 | 3.7233 | |
| Clarksburg | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | 38.5000 needed for quorum |
| Dalton | 2.5375 | 2.5375 | |
| Egremont | 1.0176 | 1.0176 | |
| Florida | 1.0007 | 0.0000 | |
| Great Barrington | 3.7475 | 0.0000 | |
| Hancock | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | 44.2152 when called to order. |
| Hinsdale | 1.3176 | 0.0000 | 45.2152 during agenda item 2. |
| Lanesborough | 2.4182 | 2.4182 | |
| Lee | 3.6022 | 0.0000 | |
| Lenox | 4.4327 | 0.0000 | |
| Monterey | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | |
| Mt. Washington | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| New Ashford | 1.0954 | 1.0954 | |
| New Marlborough | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | |
| North Adams | 6.5767 | 6.5767 | |
| Otis | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| Peru | 1.0353 | 0.0000 | |
| Pittsfield | 19.7465 | 19.7465 | |
| Richmond | 1.0007 | 0.0000 | |
| Savoy | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| Sheffield | 1.0512 | 0.0000 | |
| Stockbridge | 3.0633 | 3.0633 | |
| Washington | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | |
| West Stockbridge | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| Williamstown | 2.7319 | 0.0000 | |
| Windsor | 1.0093 | 1.0093 | |
| Rider Representative | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |
| Disability Community | 1.0000 | 0.0000 | |

1) **ROLL CALL**

D. McNally 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) **Advisory Board Orientation- PowerPoint review**

R. Malnati thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and showed the PowerPoint presentation "Advisory Board Orientation" including all of the duties of a BRTA Advisory Board Member. He explained the importance of both being a spokesperson for your community and of having a quorum at each meeting for voteable items. After the presentation, R. Malnati asked if anyone had any questions, there were none.

3) **Minutes of May 23, 2024 meeting-VOTE**

S. Lamb made a motion to accept the Minutes of May 23, 2024 and M. Riley seconded the motion. S. Lawrence and S. Youngkin abstained. The Minutes of May 23, 2024 meeting were passed.

4) **Minutes of August 28, 2024 meeting-VOTE**

J. Minacchi made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 28, 2024 meeting and M. Case seconded. M. Vicneire, F. Abbot, S. Lawrence, and S. Youngkin abstained. The Minutes of August 28, 2024 meeting were passed.

5) **Administrator's Report**

D. McNally stated that the Administrator Report was part of the Advisory Board packet, sent to all Board Members to review. R. Malnati mentioned there were some audits, and a couple of findings, which were included in the packet. BRTA received the final FTA Triennial report on Monday, September 23, 2024 with the corrective actions for deficiencies completed. R. Malnati also stated that BRTA is no longer selling Paratransit tickets as the online system is working but will still redeem tickets through the end of the year. A notice will go out in April or May letting customers know this change.

6) **Proposed Annual Meeting Schedule-VOTE**

J. Minacchi made a motion to accept the Proposed Annual Meeting Schedule as presented in the BRTA Advisory Board Packet and S. Youngkin seconded. All stated aye and the Proposed Annual Meeting Schedule was unanimously passed.

7) **BRTA Safety Plan update-VOTE**

R. Malnati shared FTA has made changes to the Safety Plan and issued guidance in August with more information to come. The BRTA Safety Committee did not have a quorum at their last meeting. At their next Safety Committee meeting, members will discuss the new requirements and vote to update the plan. BRTA will then review and the BRTA Advisory Board will vote on the updated plan. There will be no vote at today's Board meeting.

8) **FY 2024 Draft Financial Statements-VOTE**

R. Malnati stated the Finance committee met with the auditor, reviewed all of the Financial Statements and Supplementary Information. He discussed how the BRTA is funded: 6% fare box; Federal and State 80%, Local Assessment 11%, and 3% is other (rent, advertising, etc.). The lion share of the funding comes from Federal and State, making BRTA a highly subsidized entity. This is noted in the Audit under Economic Dependence. R. Malnati went through the Financial Statements with the Advisory Board noting the Auditors provided a clean opinion for the Audit. D. McNally mentioned the dependence on funding from both the State and Federal sources to operate. Customers pay a very small portion of this through the fare boxes.

S. Lamb made a motion to accept the FY 2024 Draft Financial Statements and J. Minacchi seconded the motion. All stated aye and the FY 2024 Draft Financial Statements were unanimously passed.

9) Cash Report May, June, July, and August 2024-VOTE

S. Lamb made the motion to accept the Cash Reports for May, June, July and August as presented in the BRTA Advisory Board Packet and J. Boyle seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Cash Reports for May, June, July, and August were unanimously passed.

10) BUDGET YTD

R. Malnati provided an overview of the budget through August. Overall, the budget looks good and pointed out the pages in review in the packet to the board. BRTA was fare free in June and July, and fares were up in August by 8%. The negatives were all timing issues.

11) Ridership YTD

R. Malnati stated in August there were 50,855 riders. June and July were up 22% from the previous year. There will probably see a substantial increase with the Fare Free event coming up for the Holidays. BRTA joined the with many other MA RTAs to apply for a grant for additional fare free funding. If awarded, BRTA would be fare free from January-September 2025 with just under \$700K funded by the Fair Share Tax from the State. Wheelchair ridership and bicycles carried have increased on the fixed route.

Discussion:

E-bicycles on fixed route racks. BRTA will look into this.

12) Topics for Future Advisory Board Meeting

R. Malnati mentioned S. Vallieres went to the CTAA (Community Transportation Association of America) Expo in Florida and secured a Micro-Transit feasibility study at no cost through CTAA. Preliminary meetings have occurred. The study will conclude March 2025 and a presentation will be shared with the Advisory Board. Micro-Transit has been a topic of interest nationally, but BRTA is concerned with self-sustainability of this type of project.

Topic of Interest- Massachusetts last mile problems.

Discussion:

Commuter Service to Greenfield and Northampton. R. Malnati shared where we were in this project and the availability of the funding. MassDOT is contracting to inspect and make the 8 buses roadworthy. BRTA applied for additional funding and is working on schedules, graphics, and software. There was a question whether there is a demand for this type of service and was answered yes through survey and people's requests.

13) Next Meeting Date/Time

R. Malnati scheduled the next meeting for October 24, 2024, at 4:00 PM.

14) Adjournment

J. Minacci made motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Boyle. All stated aye and the meeting ended at 4:42 PM.

Meeting Materials:

BRTA Advisory Board Packet

BRTA Public Notice and Agenda

BRTA FY 2024 Financial Statements and Supplementary Information

BRTA Advisory Board Orientation PowerPoint Presentation- Visual

BRTA Advisory Board Votes from September 26, 2024:

| Town | 3)Minutes of May 23, 2024 Meeting-VOTE | 4) Minutes of August 28, 2024 meeting-VOTE | 6) Proposed Annual Meeting Schedule-VOTE | 8) FY 2024 Draft Financial Statements-VOTE | 9) Cash Report May, June, July, and August 2024- VOTE | 10) Adjourn |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|--|--------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| Becket | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Cheshire | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Dalton | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Egremont | Yes | Abstained | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Lanesborough | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Monterey | Yes | Abstained | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| New Ashford | Abstained | Abstained | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| New Marlborough | Abstained | Abstained | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| North Adams | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Pittsfield | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Stockbridge | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Washington | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Windsor | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |