

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

January 30, 2025

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:

Sarah Fontaine, Adams; William Elovirta, Becket; Ray Killeen, Cheshire; John Boyle, Dalton; Mary Reilly, Lanesborough; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Mindi Morin, Lenox; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Stuart Lawrence, New Marlborough; Mayor Peter Marchetti, Pittsfield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Brian O’Grady, Williamstown; Douglas McNally, Windsor; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Bruce Schreiber, Alford; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Neil Olsen, Florida; Benjamin Elliott, Great Barrington; Sherman Derby, Sr., Hancock; Raymond Huntoon, Hinsdale; Frank Abbott, Monterey; Brian Tobin, Mt. Washington; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Brandi Page, Otis; Terry Walker, Peru; Neal Pilson, Richmond; Justin Kaczowski, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Michael Case, Washington; and Andrew Potter, West Stockbridge.

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

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.8649	2.8649	
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	0.0000	
Florida	1.0007	0.0000	
Great Barrington	3.7475	0.0000	50.2526
Hancock	1.0000	0.0000	when called to order.
Hinsdale	1.3176	0.0000	
Lanesborough	2.4182	2.4182	
Lee	3.6022	3.6022	
Lenox	4.4327	4.4327	
Monterey	1.0000	0.0000	
Mt. Washington	1.0000	0.0000	
New Ashford	1.0954	1.0954	
New Marlborough	1.0000	1.0000	
North Adams	6.5767	0.0000	
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	0.0000	
West Stockbridge	1.0000	0.0000	
Williamstown	2.7319	2.7319	
Windsor	1.0093	1.0093	
Rider Representative	1.0000	1.0000	
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) CERTIFIED LOCAL ASSESSMENTS, WEIGHTED VOTE REVIEW

R. Malnati provided an overview of the how the local assessments are created using the financial statements from the outside auditing firm and trip data, including fixed route and paratransit. BRTA assesses the communities' portion of the remaining costs after federal, state, and fare box funds, which is the local assessment. The local assessment also has the weighted votes for the Advisory Board. The more service the community receives, the higher the vote.

Discussion:

R. Killeen asked if the numbers are derived on miles used, opposed to passenger usage, and how this year's Fare Free grant is factored into the budget, to which R. Malnati stated that both are factored into the Net Cost of Service and the local assessments are for FY24.

M. Reilly asked if the weighted voting share were monthly or set for the year, to which R. Malnati shared annually.

D. McNally called for a motion. S. Younkin made a motion to accept the Certified Local Assessments and Weighted Votes, J. Minacci seconded the motion, and was approved unanimously.

3) MINUTES OF OCTOBER 24, 2024 MEETING-VOTE

M. Morin made a motion to accept the Minutes of October 24, 2024 meeting and M. Reilly seconded the motion. The Minutes of October 24, 2024 meeting were approved with the abstentions of A. Wadsworth, S. Fontaine, and B. O'Grady.

4) ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

R. Malnati stated that R. Caine has left the position of General Manager for BRTA's Operating Company to become the General Manager of PVRTA's Operating Company. He introduced B. Quintos as our new General Manager, all welcomed him aboard and R. Malnati said he is doing a great job. B. Quintos shared that he was the BTM Operations Manager for the past year and he is a retired executive from BP Oil.

Discussion:

S. Lawrence asked about Federal funding freeze and if BRTA is affected from it. R. Malnati stated that we are watching it closely as BRTA has grants that are open and approved. On Tuesday, when the news broke, we drew the remainder of Operating Assistance for this year's cash flow. BRTA was in communication with Senator Markey's office today. We will continue to operate and move forward with the budget.

5) UPDATED SAFETY PLAN-VOTE

R. Malnati gave an overview of BRTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and the changes that were made due to FTA guidance.

S. Lawrence made a motion to accept the Updated Safety Plan and J. Minacci seconded the motion. The Updated Safety Plan was approved with the abstention R. Killeen, due to his participation on the BRTA Safety Committee.

6) CASH REPORTS OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, AND DECEMBER 2024-VOTE

R. Malnati gave an update of the Cash Reports for October, November, and December 2024.

Discussion:

S. Lawrence asked about the Federal funding, to which R. Malnati explained Federal funding could be buses and is dependent on what the draw is. D. McNally shared Federal funds can roll over but State funds need to be used in the fiscal year.

B. O'Grady made a motion to accept the Cash Reports for October, November, and December 2024, S. Fontaine seconded the motion. All stated aye and the Cash Reports for October, November, and December 2024 were unanimously approved.

7) FY25 BUDGET AMENDMENT-VOTE

R. Malnati provided an overview of the FY25 Budget Amendment and reviewed all changes. The 413 Connector Project (BRTA/FRTA/PVTA) will not be ready until June, at the earliest. This project has been removed from the budget, income (Fixed Route Fares) and expense (Operating Advances), with the exception of June funds. The Auxiliary Transit Revenue decreased by \$10K, as Advertising Revenue was less than the budget. The State Grants line increased and the Federal Grants line decreased. The Fare Free Program funds were added as well as the 5311 Rural funds were \$83K more than anticipated. Federal funding decreased to balance. There was an increase in professional services, for website design and a decrease in insurance costs, as it was less than anticipated. Operating Advances decreased due to the removal of the 413 Connector Project. There is a net effect of the removal of \$449,483.85 out of the budget, including the below the line \$189,174 which pays for services up front and then are reimbursed through grants, including the sheriff's detail using State funds only. The bottom line is zero.

B. O'Grady made a motion to accept the FY25 Budget Amendment, and S. Youngkin seconded the motion. All stated aye and the FY25 Budget Amendment was unanimously approved.

8) RIDERSHIP YTD

R. Malnati discussed the Ridership Report through December 2024 and ridership is 10% higher than last year. In July, there were 58,000 riders and continues to improve. Paratransit has increased 15% from last year. People are using the services and being fare free helps.

Discussion:

D. McNally made a comment about reaching out to a reporter to do an article about the fare free event. R. Malnati discussed his interview on radio station WTBR. Customer Service is doing surveys in the lobby and on buses collecting customer input on where improvements can be made.

R. Malnati shared the Route 34 bus is the highest fixed route that transports wheelchairs. D. McNally stated customers are comfortable riding buses and the drivers make them feel comfortable.

R. Killeen asked about the pre-pandemic numbers as a comparison.

9) TOPICS FOR FUTURE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

R. Killeen talked about donating retired equipment to local fire stations as support vehicles in the community. D. McNally stated that there is an FTA Resolution for the Advisory Board to approve and authorize Bob as the BRTA Administrator to apply for federal funds, even though this language is specifically in MGL Chapter 161 B as part of the Administrator's position. A motion was made, but Mayor Marchetti pointed out that due to the fact the item was not on the agenda, the Advisory Board could not vote on it because of Open Meeting Law regulations. R. Malnati agreed and will be on the agenda for the next board meeting.

10) NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME

R. Malnati scheduled the next meeting for March 27, 2025 at 4:00 PM.

11) ADJOURNMENT

J. Minacci made a motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Boyle. All stated aye and the meeting ended at 4:48 PM.

Meeting Materials:

BRTA Advisory Board Packet
BRTA YTD December 2024 Ridership Report
BRTA Budget Amendment
FTA Resolution 1/30/25

Town	2) Certified Local Assessment	3) Minutes of 10/24/2024 Meeting-VOTE	5) Updated Safety Plan-VOTE	6) Cash Reports Oct., Nov., and Dec. 2024-VOTE	7) FY25 Budget Amendment -VOTE	11) Adjournment
Adams	Yes	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Becket	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cheshire	Yes	Yes	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dalton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lanesborough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lee	Yes	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lenox	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Ashford	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Marlborough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pittsfield	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stockbridge	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williamstown	Yes	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windsor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rider Representative	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes