

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

March 27, 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:

Ray Killeen, Cheshire; John Boyle, Dalton; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Mary Reilly, Lanesborough; Mindi Morin, Lenox; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Mayor Peter Marchetti, Pittsfield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Brian O'Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally, Windsor.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Sarah Fontaine, Adams; Bruce Schreiber, Alford; William Elovirta, Becket; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; Neil Olsen, Florida; Benjamin Elliott, Great Barrington; Sherman Derby, Sr., Hancock; Raymond Huntoon, Hinsdale; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Brian Tobin, Mt. Washington; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Stuart Lawrence, New Marlborough; Brandi Page, Otis; Terry Walker, Peru; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Justin Kaczowski, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Michael Case, Washington; Andrew Potter, West Stockbridge; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative.

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

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.76	0.00	
Alford	1.00	0.00	
Becket	1.08	0.00	
Cheshire	3.66	3.66	
Clarksburg	1.00	0.00	38.5000 needed for quorum
Dalton	2.47	2.47	
Egremont	1.02	1.02	
Florida	1.00	0.00	
Great Barrington	3.69	0.00	47.45 when called to order.
Hancock	1.00	0.00	
Hinsdale	1.29	0.00	
Lanesborough	2.29	2.29	
Lee	3.55	0.00	
Lenox	4.42	4.42	
Monterey	1.02	0.00	
Mt. Washington	1.00	0.00	
New Ashford	1.07	0.00	
New Marlborough	1.00	0.00	
North Adams	6.15	6.15	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.04	0.00	
Pittsfield	20.93	20.93	
Richmond	1.00	0.00	
Savoy	1.00	0.00	
Sheffield	1.05	0.00	
Stockbridge	2.95	2.95	
Washington	1.00	0.00	
West Stockbridge	1.00	0.00	
Williamstown	2.52	2.52	
Windsor	1.04	1.04	
Rider Representative	1.00	0.00	
Disability Community	1.00	0.00	

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) **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

R. Malnati asked the Board to the packet and to let him know if there were any questions about the Administrator's Report. BRTA has received the executed contract from MassDOT for the Connectivity Grant for the vehicles. This will put things in motion for operations to start ordering items needed (ex. Lifts) and to transfer the vehicles from PA.

3) **MINUTES OF February 18, 2025 MEETING-VOTE**

M. Morin made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 18, 2025 and J. Minacci seconded the motion. The minutes of February 18, 2025 meeting were approved with the abstentions of M. Vicneire and B. O'Grady.

4) **Non-ADA Communities Fare Free – VOTE**

R. Malnati mentioned in the Advisory Board Packet there was an iBerkshire article about the BRTA Finance Committee meeting regarding this vote for Non-ADA Communities going fare free from April 1, 2025- June 30, 2025 and includes both the non-ADA Paratransit services and the pilot Rural Senior Medical rides. This is a way to offer services to member communities that don't have a fixed route bus and can use and learn about BRTA. The current ADA Paratransit services are free under the Fare Free grant received from MassDOT. BRTA has accumulated some extra funding (\$7000) for Non-ADA communities to be fare free. The Finance Committee approved the idea which now needs to be voted on at this Advisory Board meeting as it pertains to fares.

J. Minacci asked if funding would be broken down by town or by one lump sum or would it be just if needed, to which R. Malnati replied this is for anyone eligible for this type of transportation during this time. For paratransit, it is the complete application and approval process. The Rural Senior Medical rides it is a one-page application for people over 60. D. McNally stated any town will be eligible to receive the funding.

R. Malnati also said if this is passed, it would be marketed with posters to Town Halls, COAs, emails, social media and press releases.

B. O'Grady made a motion to accept Non-ADA communities transportation would be fare free from April-June 2025, J. Boyle seconded the motion. All stated aye and the motion passed.

5) **Rolling Stock Transfer-VOTE**

R. Malnati shared BRTA, FRTA, and PVTA is in the process of receiving the vehicles for the connectivity grant, from a property in PA. The asset transfer packet received from PA outlines the vehicle information and odometer readings to add them into our fleet asset list. A vote from the Advisory Board accepting these vehicles is required. This information will be submitted to FTA Region 1 for their approval. BCTA's Advisory Board approved this transfer, and they submitted the information to FTA Region 3 for their approval of the transfer. FRTA's Board approved their transfer and PVTA will vote on this at their next Advisory Board Meeting. Once everything is approved, all buses will be delivered from BCTA to PVTA for software installation and graphics. The remaining Useful Life of the BRTA buses are about \$33,500 using vehicle age and a normal depreciation schedule.

Discussion:

R. Killeen asked which agency is responsible to deliver the vehicles, to which R. Malnati explained a vendor will be hired and funded through the grant. M. Morin thought the odometer readings on the vehicles were high and asked what the life of the buses are. R. Malnati stated a million miles for this vehicle type. These vehicles went through midlife overhaul, including transmission and engines.

B. O'Grady made a motion to accept the Rolling Stock Transfer, S. Lamb seconded the motion, and all stated aye. The motion passed unanimously.

6) **Cash Reports January, February 2025-VOTE**

J. Minacci made a motion to accept the cash reports for January and February 2025 and J. Boyle seconded the motion. All stated aye and the January and February 2025 Cash Reports were passed.

7) BRTA Conference Attendance-VOTE

R. Malnati discussed the Zero Emission Conference in Binghamton and that BRTA was invited to go at no cost. This is a two-day event and surpasses the \$50/day Conflict of Ethics limit. He contacted Ethics and they provided the paperwork needed for the BRTA Advisory Board to approve. The importance of this conference is to network with other agencies regarding zero emission; participate in discussions of Federal grant funding ie. Low No Emission grant availability; hydrogen suppliers, and vehicle manufacturers. The board will be asked to approve BRTA to attend this conference because it exceeds the \$50.00 limit and will be paid for by the CTE. B. O'Grady made a motion to accept, J. Boyle seconded. All stated aye and the motion passed. D. McNally has a copy of this paperwork.

8) DBE Plan Update-VOTE

R. Malnati discussed and reviewed the federal language changes in the DBE Program and the updated BRTA DBE Plan, as presented in the Advisory Board Packet. The updates were minor but Federally required. P. Marchetti inquired about the language requirements of the DBE Program and R. Malnati responded BRTA is following Federal guidance. J. Minacci made a motion to except the plan update and J. Boyle seconded the motion. All stated aye and the motion passed.

9) BUDGET YTD

R. Malnati provided an overview on the Budget YTD. This is the first budget review since the budget amendment approved by the Advisory Board in January. The fixed route revenue is over \$30,000 due to fare free, but overall the budget is \$10K under in Administration. Some of the negative expenses, like Professional Services is a timing issues of bills. Overall, everything will fall in place.

10) RIDERSHIP YTD

R. Malnati reviewed the Ridership Report through January 2025 ridership continues to grow. YTD fixed route had a 10% increase and Paratransit had a 16% increase. The 4 routes that are the highest for wheelchair transports on the fixed route bus are: Routes 1, 34, 3 and 2. 85% of wheelchair transports are from these 4 routes proving that BRTA is proving services where it is needed.

11) Next Meeting Date\Time

D. McNally said the next meeting will be April 24, 2025 at 4:00 PM. R. Malnati mentioned that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) will be doing a presentation on the BRPC Micro-Transit Study.

12) Adjournment:

J. Boyle made a motion to adjourn, and M. Morin seconded the motion. All stated aye, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Meeting Materials:

BRTA Advisory Board Packet

Town	3) Minutes of the February 18, 2025 Meeting-VOTE	4) Non-ADA Communities Fare Free-VOTE	5) Rolling Stock Transfer-VOTE	6) Cash Reports January, February 2025-VOTE	7) BRTA Conference Attendance -VOTE	8) DBE Plan Update-VOTE	12) Adjournment
Cheshire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dalton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Egremont	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lanesborough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lenox	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Adams	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pittsfield	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stockbridge	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williamstown	Abstained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windsor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes