

**BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD**

May 22, 2025

4:00 PM

BRTA Intermodal Transportation Center, Second Floor Board Room, 1 Columbus Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201

ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Present:

Sarah Fontaine, Adams; Ray Killeen, Cheshire; John Boyle, Dalton; Phillip Orenstein, Great Barrington; Mindi Morin, Lenox; Stuart Lawrence, New Marlborough; Sandra Lamb, North Adams; Mayor Peter Marchetti, Pittsfield; Alan Hanson, Richmond; Brian O'Grady, Williamstown; and Douglas McNally, Windsor.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Members Absent:

Bruce Schreiber, Alford; William Elovirta, Becket; Jeff Levanos, Clarksburg; Melanie Vicneire, Egremont; Neil Olsen, Florida; Sherman Derby, Sr., Hancock; Raymond Huntoon, Hinsdale; Mary Reilly, Lanesborough; Andrea Wadsworth, Lee; Frank Abbott, Monterey; Brian Tobin, Mt. Washington; Sherri Youngkin, New Ashford; Brandi Page, Otis; Terry Walker, Peru; Justin Kaczowski, Savoy; Nadine Hawver, Sheffield; Jamie Minacci, Stockbridge; Michael Case, Washington; Andrew Potter, West Stockbridge; and Brian Morrison, Rider Representative.

Also, present: Robert Malnati, Sarah Vallieres, and Gina LePage King, BRTA; Ben Hansen and Bobby Quintos, BTM; and Patti Annechiarico.

	Voting Shares	Present	
Adams	2.76	2.76	
Alford	1.00	0.00	
Becket	1.08	0.00	
Cheshire	3.66	3.66	
Clarksburg	1.00	0.00	38.50 needed for quorum.
Dalton	2.47	2.47	49.64 when called to order
Egremont	1.02	0.00	
Florida	1.00	0.00	
Great Barrington	3.69	3.69	
Hancock	1.00	0.00	
Hinsdale	1.29	0.00	
Lanesborough	2.29	0.00	
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	1.00	
North Adams	6.15	6.15	
Otis	1.00	0.00	
Peru	1.04	0.00	
Pittsfield	20.93	20.93	
Richmond	1.00	1.00	
Savoy	1.00	0.00	
Sheffield	1.05	0.00	
Stockbridge	2.95	0.00	
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 announced to the board that this will be his last year serving as the administrator. There are no internal candidates for this position. The Finance Committee has been meeting to strategizing this transition and asked the Board if anyone is interested in participating on the Search Committee to let him know. The Finance Committee will make the final selection of who will be on the Search Committee. There will be a commitment of time: reviewing documents, resumes, setting up interviews and then making a recommendation to the Advisory Board.

Discussion:

J. Boyle asked if the final decision is made by this board in open session to which R. Malnati replied yes. D. McNally said that the posting of the position for the job will be at the end of May, with a closing date of June 30th. He also asked if the advertisement would include a salary range? D. McNally shared the Finance Committee researched the salaries of other Massachusetts RTAs to determine the BRTA salary range should be \$140-160K.

3) **MINUTES OF April 24, 2025 MEETING - VOTE**

B. O'Grady made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 24, 2025 meeting and J. Boyle seconded the motion. The minutes of April 24, 2025 meeting was approved with the abstentions of P. Orenstein, R. Killeen, M. Morin, and S. Fontaine.

4) **FY2026 Draft Budget - VOTE**

R. Killeen made an announcement before any discussion happened. He stated he has a special status from the state and a working relationship with BTM. He asked the Board if they would like him to leave for the FY2026 Draft Budget because of conflict of interest and come back after the discussion. D. McNally said to R. Killeen that you are more than welcomed to stay but abstain from voting.

R. Malnati asked the board to review the BRTA FY 26 Draft Budget that was handed out and explained the budget assumptions. The Governors, House and Senate budgets are advocating for fare free in FY 26 but the funding levels differ. As of now, fare free will end for BRTA at the end of September. In this budget, fare income for 9 months has been included. If fare free is fully funded by the State, in January BRTA can amend the budget as the Board did in FY 25. State Contract Assistance is level funded. The State Supplemental budget for FY 25, includes some funds that will flow down from the RTA's based on a formula. Federal funding will be \$4M as opposed to \$3.9M last year. FY 26 will utilize 5307 funds from FY 25 and FY26 and have a remainder of \$1M. The \$2.5M from FTA apportionment for the FY 27 budget, BRTA will be at a deficit without an increase of State funds. This fiscal cliff has been discussed with the Auditor as well as MassDOT. This will be a problem for other RTAs. The Berkshire Legislative Delegation knows that BRTA's FTA apportionments have decreased \$500,000 every year until the next US Census. BRTA's budget is solid for FY26. Staff wages increased 4% and the contribution to the pension will be the same as last year. Health insurance is up 15% and dental is up 5%. There is a 3 month overlap for the new Administrator, hiring in January 2026.

The Revenue Anticipation Notes for annual borrowing is 4.45%. The biggest expense is the Collective Bargaining Agreement at an increase of almost \$1 million in wages. There is also funding for the Sheriff's detail at the ITC.

Discussions

Is the federal grant FY 26 and if the \$4M is a level of certainty or not, to which R. Malnati answered yes.

D. McNally made a motion to accept the FY26 Budget and S. Fontaine seconded the motion. The FY26 Budget was approved with the abstention of R. Killeen.

5) **ELECTION OF OFFICERS - VOTE**

D. McNally stated the Board annually select a Chair and Vice-Chair, and he is willing to continue as chair if the board accepts.

R. Killeen made the motion to keep the current Chair, Doug McNally, and Vice-Chair, Brian O'Grady, in place. S. Fontaine asked if B. O'Grady is willing to stay on as Vice-Chair, to which he answered yes. J. Boyle seconded the motion, all stated aye and the motion passed unanimously.

6) **CASH REPORT APRIL 2025 - VOTE**

R. Malnati had the board review the report.

J. Boyle made a motion to accept the cash reports for April 2025 and R. Killeen seconded the motion. All stated aye and the April 2025 Cash reports were unanimously passed.

7) **Draft Meeting Schedule FY2026 - VOTE**

D. McNally mentioned that included in the packet was a draft meeting schedule. The schedule will have to be modified from June 26 to earlier as June 26 will be too late to take action for the replacement for R. Malnati. D. McNally stated June 9th or 10th for the next meeting where the board agreed to June 10th, Tuesday at 4 PM. It was determined no vote was needed.

8) **BUDGET YTD**

R. Malnati provided an overview of the budget through April. BRTA is \$30K over budget in fare revenue.

The income collected is more than the budget, even after state and federal grant adjustments. Administrative expense is under budget by \$44K, fixed route is under budget by \$84K, and paratransit is under about \$5K. BRTA is in decent shape through April.

9) **RIDERSHIP YTD**

R. Malnati reviewed the Ridership Report and stated that fixed route has had over 57,000 riders for April a 28.5% increase over last April. Last year we ended up with 535,000 riders for the year and we are hoping to beat that number. Year to Date the increase is 11.4 % and hoping to have over 600,000 riders by the end of the year. The wheelchair transports are still up where the route 34 remains number 1 with 44% of the total. Transports increased 28% from last year. Bike transports are slightly higher than last year 1.5%.

10) **Next meeting Date/Time**

June 10, 2025 @ 4 PM.

11) **Adjournment**

J. Boyle made a motion to adjourn, and M. Morin seconded the motion. All stated aye and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

MEETING MATERIALS

BRTA Advisory Board Packet
BRTA Draft Budget FY26

Town	3) Minutes of April 24, 2025, Meeting- VOTE	4) FY2026 Draft Budget- VOTE	5) Election of Officers- VOTE	6) Cash Reports April 2025- VOTE	11) Adjournment
Adams	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cheshire	Abstain	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dalton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Great Barrington	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lenox	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Marlborough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Adams	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pittsfield	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Richmond	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williamstown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windsor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes