



MINUTES of 04/23/2015 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

ATTENDANCE

Name

Representing

PRESENT

William Lehtola
Mark Binnall
Jarrett Conner
Robert Spain
Luz Vega
Sharon Yager

Spencer
Auburn
Worcester
Millbury
Regional Ridership
Shrewsbury

ABSENT

Doug Belanger
Kelly Burke
Leon Gaumond Jr.
Alyssa Graveson
Rudy Heller
Dennis Lipka
Timothy McInerney
Kevin Mizikar
Daniel Morgado
John Ostrosky
Michael Pantos
David Schiller
Michael Ward

Leicester
Northborough
West Boylston
Douglas
Brookfield
Holden
Grafton
Grafton
Shrewsbury
Shrewsbury
Rutland
Charlton
Clinton

1. Chairman Lehtola called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

2. **Attendance**

3. Acceptance of Minutes

- Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the minutes for March 19, 2015.
- **Motion: I move the board accept the minutes of March 19, 2015.** Mr. Conner made the motion and Ms. Yager seconded. All other board members voted in favor. The motion was accepted.

4. Business from the Public

- Mr. Lehtola called for any business from the public and no one responded.

5. Business from the Board

- Mr. Lehtola called for business from the board and no one responded.

6. Administrator Report

- Mr. O'Neil informed the board a group of transportation professionals from Montreal, Canada visited the Hub on March 27, 2015. The purpose was to evaluate the Proterra buses in our fleet. A representative from Proterra was on-site and gave a presentation. The participants rode the buses to better evaluate their performance and to help them determine how many electric buses would best serve their service areas. Mr. Lehtola asked how many buses they were looking at buying. Mr. O'Neil replied five (5) or six (6). They do have a Canadian company called NOVA that makes electric buses, but he stated they were impressed by the longer run times and quicker charging on the Proterra buses. Mr. Lehtola asked if Mr. O'Neil would be going for a visit to Canada. Mr. O'Neil replied he is scheduled to do so in the Fall. Mr. O'Neil recognized the fine work done by Sarah Faustin interpreting for our visitors during their visit.
- Mr. O'Neil showed part of a news report generated by a Canadian TV station during the visit. Ms. Faustin stated the general theme of the report was to highlight the trip's findings in regards to electric bus technology. Ms. Faustin commented the participants were impressed with the technology and appreciated the first-hand experience of being here. Mr. O'Neil closed by updating the board on the progress of the retrofitted electric buses. He stated the buses are doing very well.
- Mr. O'Neil reviewed the work being done at the 42 Quinsigamond Ave site. On the southern end of the site, the foundation is being constructed. Four hundred plies have been installed. Grade beams, rebar and clean-fill will be installed as well. Mr. O'Neil spoke to the vast size of the three (3) acre building site. He informed the board of the ongoing soil testing. The northeast side of the site did have some additional hazardous waste which will be removed. The steel work is due in the summer, with our completion date still set for July 2016. The sale of Grove Street moves forward as the deadline closed on June 3, 2015. We have three (3) interested parties; Charter Reality, Liscotti, Galaxy, and Charter.

- Mr. O’Neil introduced Mr. Church who informed the board every three (3) years, the WRTA must file with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) its 2015 Title VI Report for compliance with FTA Circular 4702.1B. The report is due June 1, 2015, and pertains to the compliance of meeting requirements for Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as outlined in the Circular. The report is currently ninety-five percent (95%) complete and requires a vote from the agency’s “governing board” before it is submitted to FTA. A copy of the completed report will be provided when it is finished after the FTA Triennial Review is done and clarification on the outstanding issue of the Title VI Report is resolved. Mr. Church stated we will provide the board with the completed paperwork for the May 21, 2015 meeting in compliance with your request.
- Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to approve the submittal of the Title VI Program to the FTA.
- **Motion:** I move the board approve the WRTA’s 2015 Title VI Program and authorize the Administrator to submit said program to the Federal Transit Administration as required by the FTA Circular 4702.1B.
- Mr. Lehtola asked if there was any discussion. Mr. Conner objected to having the letter signed until the completed report was submitted to the board. He suggested this be done at the May 21, 2015 board meeting.
- **The motion was amended with the following:** the signing of the letter commence upon the board receiving the completed paperwork.
- **Mr. Spain made the motion and Ms. Yager seconded.** All other board members voted in favor of the amended motion. The amended motion was accepted.
- Mr. O’Neil informed the board of the recent subcommittee meeting concerning the FY `16 budget. He explained numerous meetings can be arranged with the committee to go through all the figures. Board members suggested booking two (2) meetings, but agreed one (1) meeting might be all that is necessary. Mr. O’Neil replied he would block out two (2) hours per meeting and move forward from there. We are looking for a final vote at the May 21, 2015 board meeting. Ms. Yager had a question about the 5310 funding changes. She explained that Shrewsbury uses the funding to provide cab rides outside of the ADA area. Mr. Lehtola stated we should be able to work out some options as to provide for town services.
- Mr. O’Neil introduced Mr. Coyne who gave an overview of the FY`16 budget. The entire budget can be viewed by clicking on the following link: [2016 Fiscal Operations Budget](#).

- The FY`16 budget is \$23.8 million representing an increase of 0.6 percent over FY`15 budget. There were no increases in health insurance for CMTM; diesel fuel has decreased from \$3.14 per gallon to \$2.77 per gallon, which will remain under contract until 2017. Mr. Coyne explained no contract negotiations figures for the union have been estimated at this time. When the next union contract is settled, the budget will have to be revised for that purpose. Budget committee meetings will be set-up according to the board's needs. The budget items are broken down by the following categories listed below with their brief explanations and board member comments.
- The fixed route budget is \$17.1 million with an increase of 1.2 percent from FY`15. The main reasons for the increase are service contracts for both Clever Devices at \$42,000 and Scheidt and Bachman at \$66,000 (fareboxes). These service contracts are necessary since warranties on both products have expired. Mr. Coyne also commented the WRTA vehicle insurance has increased due to accident claims. The demand response budget is \$4.6 million with a 1.5 percent decrease from FY`15. The decrease is due to the shuttle drivers who were transferred over to the fixed route budget. The purchase transportation line item has also decreased due to efficient paratransit scheduling. Mr. Coyne explained this line item refers to our supplement service (Yellow Cab) for the disabled recipients.
- The customer service center budget is \$410,000 which is a fifty (50) percent increase over FY`15. This is due to an increased focus on customer service. The goal is to provide consistence coverage by cross-training between PBSTM and customer service. The staff size for both the PBSTM and Customer Service units will increase from nine (9) to eleven (11) full-time, and decrease part-time workers from four (4) to three (3). One temporary worker will also be budgeted.
- The administration's budget will be \$1.3 million which is a 10.9 percent decrease from FY`15. The main reason for the decrease comes from bringing our IT contracted services in-house. A bigger increase will not be seen in CMTM budget as the cost was absorbed into our current budget. Mr. O'Neil stated the board asked for the IT funding to be scaled down and we have done so. Mr. Lehtola commented IT was a contracted position and that Mr. Hamman did an excellent job for the WRTA.
- The debt service & management fee line item will be increased by \$20,000. The five-year (5) contract with First Transit, assuming a 2.5 percent increase equals about \$10,000. Mr. Lehtola asked how many persons are covered under this fee. Mr. O'Neil replied those covered are the general manager and the assistant general manager. Mr. Coyne explained we have not seen any interest rate increases and the WRTA presently has no old debt.
- The revenue summary for farebox revenue will increase to \$165,000 or 4.9 percent over FY`15. MassDOT CTS grant increased \$12,000 or 20.4 percent and this will cover the two (2) Elder Bus services and the Holden Worcester service.
- Administration revenues increased \$17,000 or eleven (11) percent over FY`15. This is mainly due to the sale of surplus vehicles. We were awarded sixteen (16) vans through the MAP program and nine (9) were funded through section 5307 purchased through a

consortium with other RTA's. The first group will go to SCM Elderbus and CMTM. The next group will go to the various councils to replace the ones who meet the four (4) year or 125,000 mile service life limits. We will use two (2) vendors for the purchase of our buses; Alliance Bus Sales and Shepherd Brothers. One (1) van will be a MV-1 which fits in with Mr. O'Day's service area, as they receive a lot of single ride pick-ups.

- Federal operating assistance decreased by \$173,000 or 3.8 percent over FY`15. This is due to the elimination of JARC, which will not be available going forward. We had some funding remaining from last year's grant and we applied it to the FY`15 budget. There will be a slight increase in the section 5307 monies going forward to off-set the government transitioning of this grant. No further monies have been allotted to cover what the JARC covered. Mr. Coyne stated local assessments increased \$110,000 or 2.6 percent over FY`15.
- Mr. Coyne stated our state contract assistance will be level funded at \$11.2 million. He explained the state contract assistance is based on the \$80 million in the Governor's budget. Our share, which is level funded, is at \$11.2 million. Mr. O'Neil stated any additional funding will not be known until after June 2015. This is when the legislature completes its work on the FY `16 budget. Mr. O'Neil explained if additional funding is approved, then we will come back to the board with a budget amendment.
- Board members had the following questions regarding the budget overview. Mr. Lehtola asked for a report on the exact deduction numbers regarding the fuel efficiency of the buses. Mr. Coyne replied he would generate such a report. Mr. Lehtola questioned if the large increase in customer service would stabilize in the future. Mr. O'Neil stated he was comfortable with the change, as it promotes the needed consistence in service. Mr. O'Neil added the budgets of PBSTM and Customer Service have been combined and efforts with cross-training increase stability. He indicated this budget would most likely be stable after next fiscal year. Mr. Lehtola stated he was not objecting to the increase at this time. Mr. O'Neil informed the board a memorandum of understanding with the colleges is due to be signed. The cost of a route would be \$120,000 and would be open to the public.
- Mr. Coyne briefly explained the CMRPC contract, which is signed with the WRTA every year. This contract in not voted on by the board, but its cost and its funding is contained within the budget. Funding breaks down to eighty (80) percent from capital grants and twenty (20) percent from the operating budget. Mr. Coyne explained CMRPC requested an increase of \$60,000, of which \$12,000 would come from the operating budget. CMRPC demands have increased due to the IT changes (increased reporting), and this has been done with no increase to their staff. Mr. Conner asked that an outline of the services and their funding streams be presented to the board. Ms. Yager commented a link on the website regarding their reports would help the town and communities when applying for grants and funding. Mr. Lehtola stated the planning meetings held show what we go through.
- A summary of the Monthly Operations Report for March 2015 has been provided. The

entire WRTA Monthly Operations Report can be viewed at the following link: [WRTA March 2015 MOR.pdf](#).

- ❖ The Farebox Revenue total for March FY`15 was 2.73% higher compared to March FY`14. Fare box revenue for March FY`15 was \$172,453, which was 6.51% higher than last March's total of \$161,912. Monthly pass revenue increased 12.78% compared to March FY`14 and up 17.09% year to date. Charlie Card stored value also increased this month, up 9.61% versus March 2014 and up 5.83% year to date.
- ❖ Ridership for March FY`15 was higher than March FY`14 by 5.56% (about 17,500 trips). Ridership in March showed a twenty-six (26) percent increase from ridership in February FY`15 (263,684). The increase is likely due to improved weather conditions and that March had four (4) more total days of service than February. Overall, ridership is up about 4.7% for the year (about 129,500 more trips).
- ❖ Passengers Per Revenue Mile current goal is 2.5. Passengers per Revenue Mile for March FY`15 was 1.97, which is slightly lower than last year (1.99), but higher than February FY`15 (1.76). FY`15 YTD shows a 1.5% decrease in Passengers per Revenue Mile over FY`14 YTD. Eleven (11) routes surpassed this goal: Route 1 (3.52), Route 5 (2.70), Route 6 (3.95), Route 7 (2.66), Route 9 (2.85), Route 11 (3.21), Route 19 (3.07), Route 24 (4.01), Route 26 (4.0), Route 27 (4.18), and the Downtown Loop (2.59).
- ❖ Passengers per Revenue Hour current goal is thirty (30). Passengers per Revenue Hour for March FY`15 was 22.98, which is slightly higher than last year (22.62) and higher than February FY`15 (20.50). Also, FY`15 YTD shows a slight decrease (less than 1%) in Passengers per Revenue Hour over FY`14 YTD. Seven routes surpassed this goal: Route 6 (39.16), Route 11 (34.91), Route 19 (42.57), Route 24 (34.95), Route 26 (41.10), Route 27 (51.83), and Route 31 (34.19).
- ❖ Missed Trips system-wide for March FY`15 improved to twenty-eight (28) missed trips, compared to thirty-three (33) missed trips in March FY`14 and 71 missed trips in February FY`15. Routes 5 and 27 had the highest number of missed trips (four (4) missed trips each). The top reasons for missed trips were: buses were late twenty-one (21) and breakdowns two (2).
- ❖ Set-backs system-wide showed there were 36 set-backs in March FY`15, an improvement compared to 47 in March FY`14 and 91 set-backs in February FY`15. The most common reasons for these set-backs was buses were running late or due to breakdowns. Set-backs were mainly issued to prevent missed trips. Routes 4, 25, 26, and 30 had the highest number of set-backs this month (3 set-backs each). The main reason was the route was running more than thirty (30)

minutes late. The trips that required set-backs were varied during weekday service hours.

- A summary of the WRTA Data Slides Customer Service Report March 2015 has been provided. The entire report can be viewed at the following link: [WRTA Board Report CS March 2015](#).
 - ❖ The Customer Service Center located at 60 Foster Street had a total of 7,521 visits in March 2015 as compared to 8,142 visits in March 2014. The largest number of visits continues to be to purchase passes or tickets (38%) followed by requests for general information (31%), schedules (28%), and other inquiries (3%). Reports from Salesforce software show a total of 8,789 fixed route cases opened in March 2015 with a total of 8,791 fixed route cases closed. Also, a total of 3,151 paratransit cases were opened with a total of 3,159 cases closed in the same month.
 - ❖ In March 2015 a total of seventh-eight (78) complaint cases where opened. Customer Service was able to close eighty-eight (88) complaint cases (some complaint cases carried over from February). The vast majority of complaint cases, eighty (80) percent continue to originate via telephone, fifteen (15) percent via the WRTA website form and five (5) percent via e-mail.
 - ❖ In Community Outreach, Customer Service continues its effort to collaborate with local organizations. In March staff made presentations to nine (9) local organizations. Presentations continue to focus on the use of our system, highlighting the benefits of using Charlie Cards and to encourage the use of dollars and quarters when paying cash fare. We continue to outreach to schools, colleges, immigrant organizations, libraries, and employers.

7. Executive Session - The board went out of open meeting at 9:20 a.m.

- In open session, the Board voted to meet in executive session for the purpose to discuss collective bargaining. The motion for this action was as follows:
- **Motion: I move that the Board meet in executive session for the purpose to discuss collective bargaining, with the Board returning to open session and then to adjournment. A roll call vote was taken to allow the executive session meeting.**
- **Mr. Spain made the motion and Mr. Conner seconded.** A roll call vote was taken to approve this action: 9:20 a.m.

Luz Vega	yes
Mark Binnall	yes

Jarrett Conner	yes
Bob Spain	yes
Sharon Yager	yes
William Lehtola	yes

- The Board Members went into open session meeting at 10:06 a.m.

8. Adjournment

- Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to adjourn.
- **Motion: I move the board adjourn. Mr. Conner motion to adjourn and Mr. Spain seconded.** All voted in favor and the motion to adjourn was accepted. The meeting adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

9. Next Meeting Date

- The next board meeting will be on May 21, 2015 at 8:30 a.m., located at the hub 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608 3rd floor.