



## MINUTES of 2/18/2016 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

### ATTENDANCE

#### Name

#### Representing

#### PRESENT

William Lehtola  
Mark Binnall  
Kelly Burke  
Cheri Carty  
Leon Gaumond Jr.  
Dennis Lipka  
Kristen Las  
John Ostrosky  
Brian Palaia  
Jacob Sanders  
Robert Spain  
Luz Vega  
Michael Ward

Spencer  
Auburn  
Northborough  
Brookfield  
Sturbridge  
Holden  
Shrewsbury  
Shrewsbury  
Oxford  
Worcester  
Millbury  
Regional Ridership  
Clinton

#### ABSENT

Doug Belanger  
Jarrett Conner  
Christine Furno  
Patrice Rousseau  
Rudy Heller  
Nancy Lucier  
Timothy McInerney  
Doug Willardson  
Daniel Morgado  
Michael Pantos  
Ron San Angelo  
David Schiller  
Sharon Yager

Leicester  
Worcester  
Douglas  
Douglas  
Brookfield  
West Boylston  
Grafton  
Grafton  
Shrewsbury  
Rutland  
Southbridge  
Charlton  
Shrewsbury

1. Chairman Lehtola called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. **Attendance**

### 3. Acceptance of Minutes

- Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the minutes for January 21, 2016.
- **Motion: I move the board accept the minutes of January 21, 2016.** Mr. Ostrosky made the motion and Mr. Binnall seconded. All voted in favor and the motion was accepted.
- Ms. Burke entered the board meeting at 8:32 a.m.
- Mr. Gaumond, Jr. entered the board meeting at 8:39 a.m.
- Mr. Ward entered the board meeting at 9:20 a.m.
- Ms. Cheri Carty left the board meeting at 9:35 a.m.

### 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 welcomed Ms. Carty from Brookfield to the board meeting. He informed the board that she would be seating in for Mr. Heller in his absence.

Mr. Binnall commented on the need and convenience of having a “live person” covering the phones during van operating hours. Mr. Carney and Ms. Kosterski explained the current system and conveyed that a “live person” is available. It was stated that the specific phone inquiry could not be returned because no message/contact information was made available at the time of the call. Mark Binnall addressed the board regarding purchase and installation of a talking sign system. Mark Binnall explained that the signage would have a plug-in audio feature so that the visually impaired would be able to get bus schedule information. Mr. Carney accepted the research information and stated that the feasibility of such a system would be looked into. Mark Binnall requested the handrails on the new facility not be painted black. Mr. Coyne commented that the handrails are silver in color. Mark Binnall requested another site tour of the new facility. The Chairperson and board members agreed on April or May as presently there are too many work crews on the site.

Mr. Ostrosky commented on a rider’s complaint about Route 15 being off schedule on Monday or Tuesday of this week. Mr. Ostrosky stated he was told they walked over to Umass to catch the Route 24 bus. Mr. Carney discussed the importance of having riders call in to the WRTA feedback line as soon as possible. He informed the board that on Monday the buses ran on a Holiday schedule.

Ms. Vega asked if weekly passes could be implemented instead of monthly passes. Mr. Carney stated the Charlie card option (when paying cash) offers the best discounted rate for riders at \$1.30 per trip. He indicated the monthly pass has been determined to be the most feasible offering for the WRTA. Ms. Vega commented about requests for evening board meeting.

Members discussed scheduling options and Mr. Gaumond suggested the possibility of having public speak-outs. It was agreed that evening meetings would not be conducive to the member's schedules, as most members have their own public town meetings in the evenings.

Other: Report from Personnel Committee (taken out of order by the chairperson)

Mr. Lehtola introduced Mr. Lipka who is the chair of the personnel committee. Mr. Lipka informed the board that the committee voted on their recommendation regarding the finalist selections. Mr. Lipka explained both the Collins Center and the WRTA have completed the necessary vetting and reference checks. The candidates were listed as: Mr. Noah Berger and Mr. Jonathan Church. Board members agreed that the interviews would be done at 8:45 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. with deliberation to follow. Ms. Pokoly would send out resume packages for their review before the February 25, 2016 special advisory board meeting.

**Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board's Personnel Committee recommends Mr. Noah Berger and Mr. Jonathan Church as final candidates for the purpose of being interviewed, and for selection of the Administrator by the advisory board at a special advisory board meeting to be held on February 25, 2016, and on final selection, the advisory board authorize the personnel committee to begin contract negotiations.**

**Mr. Lipka motion to accept the recommendations and Mr. Binnall seconded.** All voted in favor and the motion to accept the personnel committee recommendations of candidates and authorization to begin contract negotiations was accepted unanimously.

## **6. Administrator Report**

### Revised FY`16 Budget

Due to the board's decision, the FY`16 Budget was revised to meet the January 2016 services changes and labor negotiations. The revised FY`16 presentation can be viewed at the following link: [FY16 Consolidated Budget revised Feb 2016](#). The FY`16 Budget is a balanced budget and it is anticipated that the FY`17 budget will continue this trend. Mr. Sanders questioned the amount coming from the state for FY`17. Mr. Coyne explained that budgeting would be at the \$82 million figure for all 15 RTA's. Mr. Coyne commented that the next Audit and Finance meeting could be held as soon as March 2016. Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the revised FY`16 Budget as presented.

Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board approves a revised FY`16 budget in the amount of \$24,470,259. This revised budget reflects an increase from the original FY`16 budget in the amount of \$635,597. This budget revision is needed to account for costs associated with an agreed upon labor contract and January 2016 service changes.

**Mr. Lipka motion to accept the FY`16 revised budget and Mr. Spain seconded.** All voted in favor and the motion was accepted.

### M & O Construction

The entire building has been enclosed now and pictures of some of the recent construction were shown. The following list is an update on the construction process.

- Siding on buildings outside -blue
- Installation of windows
- 95% inside masonry walls has been completed
- Sheet rock and painting of interior areas
- Fire proofing the building continues

Mr. Coyne informed the board of a potential timing issue regarding Nation Grid's delivery and installation of the needed transformers for the site. Mr. Lipka commented on right of ways and about renting or owning the transformers. Mr. Coyne stated he would review all suggestions and update the board as the chain of communication continues.

### M & O Environmental Clean-up

The coal tar extraction will continue to the area where the construction trailers are. The budget shortfall for the sites environmental clean-up remains at \$3.080 million. Mr. Coyne is working with all parties to acquire the necessary funding to close the gap. He recently accompanied Senator Moore and Representative Donahue for funding meetings at the Statehouse. Mr. Coyne will keep the board updated as the process continues. The extension from MassDOT related to the \$14 million environmental cleanup has been received.

### Annual Performance Measures

Drew Spiliotis from CMRPC gave the Annual Performance Measures for FYs 2014 to 2015. The annual performance measures presentation can be viewed at the following link: [WRTA FY 2014 & 2015 Comparison](#). In ridership between 2014 and 2015, there was a two percent increase overall and a twelve percent increase on Saturdays. Fixed route cost & contracted services increased from four to five dollars per ride in the same time period. The passenger per revenue mile goal of 2.5 was met on some city routes, in general, but not on suburban routes. The system's goals were assessed when the company was expecting ridership to return to FY 2002 levels before state cuts to funding and a reduction in service. Board members discussed the need to reevaluate the present goals as the system expansion and ridership growth is occurring more gradually. Mr. Binnall requested a report on Routes 10, 25, 29, and 42. Mr. Lehtola stated that a report would be provided on those routes.

### Legislative Luncheon

Mr. Coyne invited board members to the annual MARTA legislative luncheon which is scheduled for March 8, 2016 in Boston. Mr. Coyne informed the board that transportation was the responsibility of each member and the deadline to notify was March 3, 2016.

### Letter to Board about Elder Shopper Program

Mr. Lehtola stated the board received a letter about the Elder Shopper Program. He asked for a motion to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to possible litigation concerning the Elder Shopper Program.

**7. Executive Session - The board went out of open meeting at 9:37 a.m.**

- In open session, the Board voted to meet in executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to possible litigation in regards to the Elder Shopper Program.
- **Motion: I move the Board meet in executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to possible litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on any possible litigating position of the WRTA and the chair so declares, with the Board returning to open session and then to adjournment. A roll call vote was taken to allow the executive session meeting.**
- **Mr. Lipka made the motion and Mr. Spain seconded.** A roll call vote was taken to approve this action: 9:36 a.m.

Bob Spain	yes
Mark Binnall	yes
Jacob Sanders	yes
William Lehtola	yes
Brian Palaia	yes
Dennis Lipka	yes
Luz Vega	yes
Kristen Las	yes
Leon Gaumond	yes
Kelly Burke	yes
Michael Ward	yes

- The Board Members went into open session meeting at 9:48 a.m.

**8. Adjournment**

- Mr. Lehtola asked for a motion to adjourn.
- **Motion: I move the board adjourn. Mr. Sanders motion to adjourn and Mr. Binnall seconded.** All voted in favor and the motion to adjourn was accepted. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

**9. Next Meeting Date**

The next board meeting will be on March 17, 2016 at 8:30 a.m., located at the hub 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.