



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Moving Our Region Forward

Union Station Hub 60 Foster Street Worcester, MA 01608

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## WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 16, 2017 MINUTES

### WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairperson Lehtola called the meeting to order at 8:31a.m.

### ATTENDANCE

Advisory Board Members present: Douglas Belanger – Leicester, John Ostrosky - Shrewsbury, Mark Binnall - Auburn, Rudy Heller – Brookfield, Jacob Sanders - Worcester, William Lehtola - Spencer, Noted activity of board members: *Dennis Lipka – Holden, entered at 8:39a.m., Leon Gaumond, Jr. – Sturbridge, entered at 8:43a.m. and Ron San Angelo – Southbridge at 8:51a.m.*

### ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the minutes for January 19, 2017. On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Rudy Heller and carried unanimously, the advisory board accepted the minutes of January 19, 2017.

### BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

John Ostrosky recommended that administration speak with John O’Dell in regards to solar funding. Mr. Church commented on an upcoming meeting with Mr. O’Dell and acknowledged working with board member, Jacob Sanders. Doug Belanger recommended placing the Conduct Policy on the WRTA website. Doug Belanger praised the Administration for their handling of the recent snow storm which resulted in no negative media coverage. Jacob Sanders inquired into the policy for clearing out shelters and bus stops. Mr. Church informed the board members that shelters owned by the WRTA are contracted to be cleared.

### BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms. Fuller commented that the shelter/ bus stops on Belmont Street, Memorial Hospital were not cleared sufficiency during the last snow storm. Mr. Church stated he would be willing to open a dialog with any needed parties regarding clearance issues.

### ***Communities Served:***

Auburn	Brimfield	Douglas	Grafton	Millbury	North	Paxton	Southbridge	Wales	West Boylston
Barre	Brookfield	Dudley	Holden	New Braintree	Brookfield	Princeton	Spencer	Warren	West
Berlin	Charlton	East	Holland	Northborough	Oakham	Rutland	Sturbridge	Webster	Brookfield
Boylston	Clinton	Brookfield	Leicester	Northbridge	Oxford	Shrewsbury	Sutton	Westborough	Worcester

## ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

### FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM LAST MEETING

- a. *Letter in Mr. Lawson's personnel file in recognition*  
Mr. Church confirmed the letter of recognition into Mr. Lawson's personnel file.
- b. *Letter to Town of Shrewsbury Selectmen with copies to Planning Board and Daniel Morgado regarding bus shelters at Lakeway Commons.*  
Mr. Church spoke about an upcoming walk through appointment with the developer of Lakeway Commons. Mr. Church informed the board that a letter would be forthcoming.
- c. *Charlton Cable Access Television*  
Mr. Church informed the board of his promotional interview at the Charlton Cable Access station. Mr. Church stated he will look into show bicycling as a possible further outreach.
- d. *WRTA website walk through*  
This item will be addressed at a future board meeting.
- e. *Keeping the buses clean campaign*  
Mr. Church confirmed there are signs posted on all the buses and across the electronic media within the WRTA.
- f. *WRTA Conduct Policy Update*  
Mr. Church informed the board that contrary to last month's discussions, the Conduct Policy was submitted to their attorney for review.

### FINANCIAL

- a. *Preliminary FY'18 WRTA Budget*  
Mr. Coyne reviewed the preliminary FY'18 WRTA budget with the board. The WRTA is projecting just under a nine hundred and seven thousand dollar (\$907,000) budget deficit. Mr. Coyne informed the board that since 2014 the RTA's have been expecting a two million dollar increase per year from the State Legislation. The RTA's have been level funded at only eighty-two million for the last two years. The WRTA proposed budget is level funded for FY'18. The following is a list of the attributing factors regarding the budgets deficit; rising costs of operations, decrease in ridership, losses of three hundred and thirty-nine thousand dollars (\$339,000) in fare revenue, decrease in State Contract Assistant of five hundred and sixty thousand dollars (\$560,000), and sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) in Advertising revenue.
- b. *Recommendation of Audit & Finance Committee – Fare and Service Modifications*  
Mr. Coyne reviewed the options for fare and service modifications with the board. As directed by the Audit & Finance Committee a third proposal was added for review by the full board. Any proposed fare changes would take effect on July 1, 2017, with the start of the new fiscal year. Board members acknowledged that fare increases alone would not cover the projected deficit and that service cuts would be needed as well. Board members discussed the hub loop's free ride status but tabled the discussion for the March board meeting.

Mr. Lehtola commented that Option One with additional reductions in service was a better choice. Board members discussed the importance of fiscal responsibility for long-term viability of the WRTA. Board Members commented on the importance of there being increases to transit funding from the legislative delegation.

**Motion: selects Option Three as the five-year fare modification plan.**

**On motion by Ron San Angelo seconded Doug Belanger and voted 8-1, the advisory board selects Option Three as the five-year fare modification plan.**

**Motion: the advisory board authorizes the administration to hold public hearings in regards to the selected Option Three fare modification and the service modifications as presented by administration.**

**On motion by Dennis Lipka seconded Rudy Heller and carried unanimously, the advisory board authorizes the administration to hold public hearing for the fare and service modifications.**

#### ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Dennis Lipka and carried unanimously, the advisory board meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

#### NEXT MEETING DATE

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on March 16, 2017 at 8:30 a.m., located at the WRTA Hub, 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.