



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Moving Our Region Forward

Union Station Hub 60 Foster Street Worcester, MA 01608

508.453.3403 Fax: 508.752.1676 therta.com

WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 19, 2017
MINUTES

WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairperson Lehtola called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Advisory Board Member present: Mark Binnall-Auburn, Kristen Las – Shrewsbury, Brian Bullock – Holden, Barbara Connelly – Grafton, Jacob Sanders-Worcester, William Lehtola – Spencer.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the minutes for September 21, 2017. On motion by Jacob Sanders, seconded by Mark Binnall and carried unanimously, the Advisory Board accepted the minutes of September 21, 2017.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Kathleen Huntington expressed concern regarding the lack of security on Sunday mornings at the Hub. Ms. Huntington claimed a fight had broken out on Sunday morning on our property. Administration will look into any possibilities of expanding hours in the morning, however there is no public access to the lobby on Sunday mornings. Ms. Huntington inquired as to the withdrawal of the bus shelter by Mechanics Hall. Jacob Sanders commented on the replacement of the shelter as being in conjunction with the City of Worcester’s Main Street Reconstruction Project. Ms. Huntington asked if fixed route service could be extended to ten and/or eleven at night. Chairperson Lehtola stated budgeting constraints prohibits this option. Ms. Huntington asked for a specific bus stop to be moved on East Mountain Street. Mr. Parker indicated that a petition would have to go through City Hall and he would follow-up with Ms. Huntington regarding her request.

BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

Chairperson Lehtola commented on the criticism in a recent newspaper article about the design of the WRTA Hub. Chairperson Lehtola stated that the land for the Hub is owned by the City of Worcester and the design efforts were done in conjunction with officials from the City of Worcester.

Chairperson Lehtola welcomed Mr. Brain Bullock to the WRTA Advisory Board. Mr. Bullock will serve as the Town of Holden’s Representative.

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

ADMINISTRATIVE

a. Moving Together 2017 conference

Mr. Church reviewed the presentation he gave at the conference. The presentation centered on the company's data regarding the use of their Proterra all-electric buses. Mr. Bullock suggested that off-peak times be used for charging the all-electric buses. Mr. Bullock also commented on negotiating with the electric supplier for a better price. Mr. Church replied that rates for electricity are tied to the City's rate. Off-peak charging would be sustainable only with the newer generation of Proterra buses. Mr. Church explained that the overnight charge option may become the wave of the future but he would like to see more road miles logged before considering the possibility of such an investment. Mr. Church restated that the WRTA has no plans to purchase all-electric busses in the upcoming fiscal years.

b. APTA Annual Conference – Administrator Scholarship Award

Mr. Church announced that he was awarded a scholarship to attend his Transit Senior Executive Planning Training in Washington, D.C. earlier this year. Because the WRTA Advisory Board supported this effort, the American Public Transit Foundation honored Mr. Church with an award at the 2017 Annual APTA conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Church presented the award for review to the board members.

FINANCE

c. Update on Commonwealth Budget for FY'18 – Status of Overrides for Transit

Mr. Church stated that the revised budget will be given to the board when the Senate has completed the State Budget. Mr. Church informed the board they are hopeful the final total figure will be \$80.4 million. The Senate is due to vote on the item Thursday, October 19, 2017. This figure will present the WRTA with a two hundred and eighty thousand (280,000) dollar deficit from the original budget voted in May 2017. Mr. Church gave the figures history (expected but not approved to be given by the legislature) for the RTA's funding from the point of the forward funding change to today. FY'15 \$80 million, FY'16 \$82 million, FY'17 \$84 million, FY'18 \$86 million. The RTA's continue to receive below the necessary funding levels from FY'16 through FY'18.

d. Potential Grant Funding – Micro Transit Accelerator Challenge

The application for the grant is due by Friday, October 27, 2017. Administration is looking at planning options for the WRTA system as it would apply to Micro Transit considerations. Brain Bullock asked for a copy of the grant application for informational purposes. Mr. Church responded that he would provide it via email.

MARKETING/EVENTS

e. New plan to promote the Ambubus among local police and fire agencies

Ms. Lyver stated that efforts are underway to assist with a protocol regarding deployment of the Ambubus. This would be used by outside officials and the WRTA operations.

f. Update on the potential Stuff-a-bus campaign/update on recent attended events

This campaign is still under negotiations to coordinate with the Railers at one of their game nights.

g. Update on advertising and potential new clients

There are three signed contracts for November 2017 which will generate seventeen thousand (17,000) dollars. Digital signage is being explored as an option on the busses as well as the Hub property.

h. Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is being put together and will be emailed as well as posted on the website. Programs, visits, and promotional contacts will continue to be used to obtain a more comprehensive mailing list.

i. Plan to update the website

Website changes have been minor and additional larger scale changes are being evaluated. All changes to the website would meet necessary compliance.

j. Mobile Ticketing App

A meeting has been set-up to explore options for mobile ticketing applications. Considerations include cost of investment and possible tie-ins options with the MBTA commuter rail.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

k. Focus for FY 2019; Administrative Strategy

Mr. Church spoke briefly regarding a new framework for the mission statement and how public hearings would be included in the planning process.

OTHER

a. CMRPC – Operations Report

Mr. Burnham from CMRPC reviewed the FY'18 First Quarter Operations Report. The report encompassed July, August, and September FY'18 compared to the same months in FY'17. Numbers reflected both the service changes in June and the fare changes in July 2017.

b. PBSTM – Customer Service Report

Ms. Kusterski from PBSTM reviewed the First Quarter Customer Service Report. This encompassed July, August, and September FY'18 compared to the same months in FY'17. Numbers reflected both the service changes in June and the fare changes in July 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion by Jacob Sanders, seconded by Barbara Connelly and carried unanimously, the Advisory Board meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on November 16, 2017 at 8:30 a.m., located at the hub 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608 3rd floor.