



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Moving Our Region Forward

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# WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING JUNE 21, 2018 MINUTES

## WRTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairperson Lehtola called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

## ATTENDANCE

Advisory Board Member present: Mark Binnall-Auburn, Rudy Heller-Brookfield, John Ostrosky – Shrewsbury, Harry Brooks-Leicester, Doug Belanger-Leicester, Brian Bullock – Holden, Robert Spain – Millbury, Jacob Sanders -Worcester, William Lehtola – Spencer. *Jacob Sanders left at 9:04am and John Ostrosky left 9:50am.*

## ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to accept the minutes for May 17, 2018. On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Robert Spain the vote was carried unanimously the Advisory Board accepted the minutes of May 17, 2018.

## BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Terry Kelly commented that exhaust fumes were leaking into some of the buses. Mr. Parker explained to the board how they check for exhaust fumes. Mr. Parker commented on how opening the windows on the bus can increase the likelihood of exhaust fumes coming in.

## ELECTION OF ADVISORY BOARD OFFICERS

The board discussed the election of Advisory Board officers and the following were agreed upon. Chairperson, Lehtola, Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Edward Augustus, Jr., Clerk, Mr. Robert Spain and Treasurer Douglas Belanger.

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to elect the officers for the WRTA Advisory Board for FY'19.

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority's Advisory Board votes to elect the following persons as officers for the WRTA Advisory Board for FY'19. Chairperson, Mr. William Lehtola, Vice-Chairperson Mr. Edward Augustus, Jr., Clerk, Mr. Robert Spain and Treasurer Douglas Belanger.

On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Mark Binnall the vote was carried unanimously the Advisory Board elected the Officers for WRTA Advisory Board for FY'19.

### ***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

## BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

John Ostrosky commented on the recent Telegram & Gazette article that focused on an elderly person with a walker. John Ostrosky asked how we accommodate people with walkers. Mr. Parker stated that the WRTA policy is for walkers to be folded when riding the bus. Unfolded walkers present a safety issue as they can become a projectile. Discussions about how there are times when a person with a walker (fully extended) can be strapped up in the handicap area. It was agreed that accepted policy for walkers is upheld by most riders as they recognize the importance of safety. Due to vacation scheduling the board agreed upon July 26, 2018 as the next date for the Advisory Board meeting.

Chairperson Lehtola announced to the board members that Mr. Church will be resigning from his position as Administrator on July 31, 2018. Chairperson Lehtola acknowledged that the letter of resignation was accepted by the Personnel Committee. Chairperson Lehtola expressed strong disappointment with the State's continued lack of sustainable funding for the WRTA. Board members discussed the cycle of challenges ahead for the WRTA should under funding continue.

Chairperson Lehtola recapped the current loss of Mr. Tom Coyne (CFO) and how his position serviced a dual purpose as both CFO and Assistant Administrator. Ms. Shea's recent promotion to Chief Financial Officer will be a stand-alone position. Chairperson Lehtola acknowledged the importance of seeking an Interim Administrator given both vacancies. Chairperson Lehtola wished Mr. Church much success and thanked him for his service to the WRTA.

Doug Belanger stated that the Personnel Committee will begin discussing and reviewing candidates for an Interim Administrator. Doug Belanger acknowledged the importance of a timely transaction into an Interim as well as the hiring process for the new Administrator. On behalf of the committee Doug Belanger commented on the need to expedite matters and proposed giving specific authority for hiring to the Personnel Committee.

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to give the Personnel Committee the authority to hire an Interim Administrator and a consulting firm.

**Motion:** The Advisory Board gives authority to the Personnel Committee to appoint and act as the Board in the screening and hiring of Interim Administrator and to act as the Board in the screening and hiring of a consulting firm for the process of hiring the new Administrator.

On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Robert Spain, the vote was carried unanimously the Advisory Board gives authority to the Personnel Committee to appoint and act as the Board in the screening and hiring of an Interim Administrator and to act as the Board in the screening and hiring of the consulting firm for the process of hiring the new Administrator.

## ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

### REPORTS

- a. *Update on approved FY`19 Senate Budget and update on Conference Committee Budget*  
Mr. Church reported that the Conference Committee is working out the differences within the budgets. No updates or timetables have been made available at this time. Mr. Church stated he is hopeful that by the end of June the figure will be released. Mr. Church reminded the board members that the most favorable Senate budget was at \$88 million, with \$4 million of that in the form of a competitive grant.
  
- b. *Update on discussion with MARTA on availability and use of Narcan by other Massachusetts RTAs.*  
No other RTA's use Narcan due to liability and insurance issues. They direct employees to call 911 then pull the bus over and wait. Brian Bullock asked for the Administration to review what the exact insurance liabilities would be regarding the use of Narcan on the buses. Mr. Church states he would review the issue.
  
- c. *Update on potential revenue stream for RTAs as discussed with MARTA*  
Mr. Church explained with the recent Supreme Judicial Court knockdown of the millionaire's tax, MARTA is not in a position to take on the proposed gas tax option. Jacob Sanders asked if the MARTA meeting functions as a brainstorming sessions for the RTA's. Mr. Church replied that annually a legislative luncheon meeting is used for that purpose. Mr. Church explained while MARTA does lobby our own legislators it primarily serves as an informational meeting for the RTA's
  
- d. *Update on FTA Comprehensive Review Site Visit held May 21-22, 2018*  
The site visit from the FTA Comprehensive Review has been completed. Ms. Shea informed the board that the review looked at 20 areas within the Authority's financial/program compliance. One of the areas noted for improvement was under our DBE procedures and policies. These are in the process of being revised and Mr. Church stated that the review was better overall then last review which was three (3) years ago.

### CMRPC – QUARTERLY OPERATIONS REPORT – YTD 2018

Mr. Nick Burnham of CMRPC gave a brief presentation of the Quarterly Operations Report. The report covers and compares the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of FY`18 to FY`17. Mr. Burnham reminded the Board that the present figures included the new fare structure which took effect on July 1, 2017. Total Revenues were down two percent and Total Ridership was down thirteen percent. Mr. Burnham explained how part of this stems from the recent service eliminations, heavy snow season, and new fares. Passenger per Revenue Mile was met on Route 19, Route 24 and Route 26.

Board members had questions regarding the specifics behind the number of missed trips and mechanical breakdowns. Bob Spain suggested a report to be issued so that the Board could review these going forward. Mr. Church stated he would look into this and report back to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Lehtola asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion by Doug Belanger, seconded by Mark Binnall and carried unanimously, the Advisory Board meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on July 26, 2018 at 8:30 a.m., located at the Hub, 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.