



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Moving Our Region Forward

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Worcester Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Meeting Minutes November 21, 2019

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

AB MEMBERS ATTENDANCE

Present: Mark Binnall - Auburn, Kristen Las – Shrewsbury, Nancy Garr-Colzie - Worcester Disabled Commuter Population, Barbara Connelly – Grafton, Judith O’Connor – Millbury, Brian Bullock-Holden, Adam Menard – Auburn Alt, Ron San Angelo – Southbridge, Jacob Sanders – Worcester, Doug Belanger-Leicester, and William Lehtola - Spencer. Brian Pigeon-Worcester (Alt) entered at 8:34 a.m. and Michael Suprenant entered at 8:45 a.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: To accept the executive minutes for August 15, 2019

By: Doug Belanger. 2nd: Mark Binnall.

Vote: All In favor (12 in favor 0 opposed).

Motion: To accept the minutes for October 17, 2019

By: Jacob Sanders. 2nd: Mark Binnall.

Vote: All In favor (12 in favor 0 opposed).

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Thielker, Chairperson Ridership Advocate Committee inquired about bus schedule listings and choices for alphabetical listing as opposed to stop listing. Mr. Parker stated that the system goes by stop order on the route.

BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

Chairperson Lehtola welcomed Nancy Garr- Colzie to the WRTA Advisory Board as the representative for Disabled Commuter Population. Mark Binnall commented on a discussion pertaining to scheduling for van rides. Mark Binnall stated that pre-programmed audio was not always playing on all van rides. Ron San Angelo gave examples of other RTA’s that have more user friendly websites. Mr. Lipka acknowledged that the website could use updating and Ms. Lyver explained that other needed work is being done on the website and it would be finished by December. Any changes will be reviewed as to their feasibility at that time.

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

Jacob Sanders thanked the Administration and Operations personnel for their efforts to accommodate the Fire Department regarding a recent funeral event.

AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Lipka spoke about their efforts to replace Al Hargrave as he is retiring in 2019. Mr. Lipka commented that the recent independent audit was successfully completed and the WRTA Audit and Finance Committee had been briefed. Ron San Angelo requested a copy of the Auditor's letter. Mr. Lipka stated that the documents requested would be sent. Doug Belanger gave a brief summary of the committee's review of the Annual Audit report.

Doug Belanger stated that the WRTA Audit and Finance Committee voted to recommend to the Advisory Board the Audit Report as presented.

Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board votes to accept the recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee to accept the Annual Audit report for FY'19 on November 21, 2019.

By: Doug Belanger 2nd: Mark Binnall.

Voted: All in favor (13 in favor 0 opposed)

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Chairperson Belanger updated the board on the committee's progress. The committee is still in the process of discussing the position of Administrator. Mr. Lipka's contract will be up in June of 2020 and the committee is seeking to meet again in early December 2019. Doug Belanger commented that there was a generous timeline for considerations.

OVERVIEW JANUARY'S PROPOSED SERVICE MODIFICATIONS (taken out of order)

Mr. Lipka stated that the proposed service modifications are to improve ridership, performance efficiencies, on-time performance, and are "cost neutral". If approved the modifications would start on January 25, 2020. The Advisory Board is asked to vote to approve the service modifications. Mr. Lipka introduced Mr. Burnham from CMRPC who would be presenting the findings from the public meetings. The recommendations and public feedback discussed serve to inform the board members and are used in consideration for any possible vote.

Proposed changes to Routes, 2, 3/3A, 5, 7, 15, 24/24A, 27,30.

Route 2 – Alter schedule to align with flight arrival/departure times for trips to Worcester Airport.

Route 2 – **amended: not to adopt** earlier inbound trip schedule (Sunny Hill Drive) and last trip one hour earlier.

Route 3/3A - Route 3 will carry trips done by 3A and North High at peak times will be serviced by Route 5.

Route 5 - Add service to DTA offices at the Southwest Commons.

Route 7 – Remain on Park Ave for specific trips during school pickup and drop-off times at Columbus Park Elementary.

Route 15 - Eliminate 5:25 a.m. short trip to UMass, add midday and PM peak trip times.

Route 24/24A – Shift Front Street portion to Foster Street with Main Street stops staying the same. Inbound bus stop on Commercial and Foster Streets reactivated.

Route 27 – Extra bus added to the schedule, change schedule to 40 minutes Midday and PM Peak trips.

Route 30 – Will become 40 minutes service with two buses and with Route 31 there will be 20 minute service along West Boylston Street.

Mr. Lipka stated that the public meetings had an overall positive response and general attendance was small. Many ideas for service improvements were discussed in this open forum. Mr. Lipka informed that board that the administration is well focused on growth areas. Mr. Lipka commented on a recent meeting with the Worcester Airport regarding possible shuttle service for passengers as there was no demand for employee services which would support fixed route service. Talks will continue regarding viable options as well as marketing strategies. Mr. Lipka informed the board members how administration is aware of the Rt 20 project and is setting up to be proactive should the need arise.

Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board approves the service modifications, as amended on November 21, 2019 and to the implementation of the service modifications as of January 25, 2020.

By: Doug Belanger 2nd: Ron San Angelo

Voted: All in favor (13 in favor 0 opposed)

UPDATE FY2020 BUDGET

Mr. Lipka informed the board that he is still reviewing administrative staff levels.

UPDATE OF FY`20 GRANTS

Mr. Lipka informed the board that \$3.5 million is the number of the entire pool of grant funding to be issued. This money is outside of the State Contract assistance received but will be divided by those RTA's applying and once selected by the state from within that pool. The WRTA has submitted four (4) grants that met the necessary considerations. Ms. Diane Shea is almost back full time and any outstanding issues should be wrapped up by December 1, 2019. As part of her new role Ms. Shea will be coordinating, tracking, and generating grant details for the financial team therefore more reporting will be forthcoming.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To Adjourn at 9:53 a.m.

By: Doug Belanger, 2nd: Mark Binnall

Vote: All in favor (13 in favor 0 opposed)

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on December 19, 2019 at 8:30 a.m., located at the Hub, 60 Foster Street, Worcester, MA 01608 3rd floor.