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MINUTES OF PVTA'S  
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
January 22, 2020

The Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Administration Office located at 2808 Main Street in Springfield, MA, at 12:00 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL

	<i>Present (45.04 votes)</i>	<i>Not Present (17.04 votes)</i>
Agawam	Michael Squindo	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary	
Chicopee	Monica Blazic	
East Longmeadow	Carolyn Brennan	
Easthampton	Brendan Rogers	
Granby		Glen Sexton
Hadley		David Moskin
Hampden	Becky Moriarty	
Holyoke		Mayor Alex Morse
Leverett		Peter D'Errico
Longmeadow	Mark Gold	
Ludlow		Derek DeBarge
Northampton	Mayor David Narkewicz	
Palmer		Barbara Barry
Pelham		Karen Willard-Ribeiro
South Hadley	Michael Sullivan	
Springfield	Tasheena Davis	
Sunderland		Scott Bergeron
Ware	John Carroll	
West Springfield	Jim Czach	
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord	
Williamsburg		J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative		Jennifer Carbery
Rider Representative		Patrick Burke

A quorum of 31.01 majority vote being present, Chairman of the Advisory Board, Mayor David Narkewicz, called the meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:00 PM; majority vote of 45.04 present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz opened the floor for public comments. No public comments were made.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the meeting minutes from the November 13, 2019 Regular Advisory Board Meeting.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (O’Leary/Squindo) to approve the meeting minutes from the November 13, 2019 Regular Advisory Board Meeting.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none; asked all those in favor to say aye.

Becky Moriarty abstained.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

### **4. REPORT OF THE PARATRANSIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mark Gold reported that the Paratransit Sub-Committee met yesterday, January 21, 2020. The committee voted to approve the Paratransit minutes from November 12, 2019. The committee also received updates on NEXT, the Paratransit Rider’s Council, Dial-A-Ride and School Trips and their impacts on ADA.

NEXT continues to demonstrate consistent and steady improvement.

The Paratransit Rider Council (PRC) continues to meet and work to develop by-laws.

A significant number of Dial A Ride trips are being denied each month. PVRTA is looking into the possibility of enacting several strategies to help reduce the number of denials and expand the ability to provide more trips.

Westfield special education has been using the paratransit service to provide transportation to students in its transition program. We are continuing to provide the transportation to the program while we investigate our options.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to accept the report of the Paratransit Sub-Committee.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (O’Leary/Squindo) to accept the report of the Paratransit Sub-Committee.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none. Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked all those in favor to say aye.

**Motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

### **5. REPORT OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Chief Financial Officer, Lisa Seymour, reported that the committee met yesterday, January 21, 2020. The committee voted to approve the minutes of September 23, 2019 and voted to approve the FY20

Budget Amendment which includes discretionary funds received from MassDOT for \$600,241 for the B7 Express, P20 Express and the G1. The committee also received a Budget to Actual Report and an update on the progress on the Auditor's Recommendations.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to accept the report of the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sullivan/O'Leary) to accept the report of the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none. Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked all those in favor to say aye.

**Motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

## **6. FY20 BUDGET AMENDMENT**

CFO Seymour stated that the revised FY20 Budget includes discretionary funds received from MassDOT for \$600,241 for the B7 Express, P20 Express and the G1. The budget that was originally approved did not include this funding and a budget amendment is needed to account for these funds.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the FY20 Budget Amendment.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sullivan/Gold) to approve the FY20 Budget Amendment.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none. Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked all those in favor to say aye.

**Motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

## **7. YEAR TO DATE – BUDGET TO ACTUAL REPORT**

CFO Seymour reported the following:

This budget to actual report is an estimation on the first half of the year. The books are closed through September 2019 with progress being made by the Controller to get them closed in a timely manner.

The federal operating grant for preventive maintenance and ADA assistance historically has been billed at the end of the year. This is being changed to be billed quarterly to control cash flow.

We received discretionary funds from MassDOT for \$600,241 for the B7 Express, P20 Express and the G1.

We received the grant for FY20 for Travel Training in the amount of \$82,724 which is more than the \$71,251 that was in the Budget. The Beyond ADA Operating Assistance was granted in the amount of \$129,203 which is more than the \$40,411 that was in the Budget. We also received a new grant for the Quaboag Region Micro Transit in amount of \$193,304 to be matched with \$48,326 in local funds.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to accept the Year to Date – Budget to Actual Report.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Miller/Gold) to accept the Year to Date – Budget to Actual Report.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none. Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked all those in favor to say aye.

**Motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

## **8. REPORT OF THE COMPENSATION COMMITTEE**

Mark Gold reported that the Compensation Committee met yesterday, January 21, 2020. The Committee voted to approve the minutes from December 17, 2019. The committee also reviewed the Administrator’s Evaluation Forms. A total of 31 evaluations were returned. Nine evaluations from Advisory Board Members, nineteen from PVRTA Staff and three from Contractors providing PVRTA service. The overall response was that Ms. Sheehan is doing an above average job. The committee also discussed a contract renewal for Ms. Sheehan’s Contract which ends on June 30, 2020. The committee plans to meet in March and deferred recommendation on both compensation and a contract approval until then.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to accept the report of the Compensation Committee.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (O’Leary/Squindo) to accept the report of the Compensation Committee.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none. Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked all those in favor to say aye.

**Motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

## **9. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT**

Director of Transit Operations, Paul Burns, reported the following:

Ridership has slowed its decline but continues to trail the previous year. Due to an earlier data reporting error, monthly ridership from July through September had been slightly undercounted and has been corrected in this chart. There has been a cumulative 2.5% decline in ridership year-to-date. The narrowest monthly gap was in October, which saw a 0.9% decline from the previous October.

The following grant applications were all approved and fully funded.

- Beyond ADA Operating Assistance: this grant is a continuation and expansion of the “pilot” program implemented previously with several area Council’s on Aging. The grant will fund continued operation of those programs as well as provide funds to expand the program to Hadley.
- Quaboag Connector Software: this grant will provide a software platform that will allow PVRTA in partnership with the Quaboag Connector to provide micro-transit service in Palmer and Ware.
- Travel Training: this grant will continue the current program and allow for a second travel trainer.

Paratransit ridership continues to see approximately a 10% decline in passengers transported compared to the same time period in FY 2018.

NEXT continues to meet the monthly goal of 90% on-time for service. However, there continues to be issues with meeting this goal every day.

Improved Notification to Visually Impaired Paratransit Riders; PVTA has created an email notification system for visually impaired riders. Total participation is low. Despite outreach to over 300 riders who have identified a visual impairment, only five riders have indicated a desire to receive notifications by email to date.

The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) requires operators of public transportation systems that receive FTA grant funds to develop safety plans that include the processes and procedures necessary for implementing Safety Management Systems (SMS). This rule became effective on July 19, 2019 and requires that operators have a system in place by July 20, 2020.

PVTA's safety committee has been working on creating the document which will be presented at the March Advisory Board Meeting for approval and official adoption by the PVTA.

#### **10. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP)**

This item has been withdrawn from the January Advisory Board Meeting Agenda and will be discussed at the next Advisory Board Meeting in March.

#### **11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Sheehan reported the following:

At the federal level, the FY2020 transportation spending bill was passed by the House and the Senate and signed by the President. In terms of overall funding, the bill provides a total of \$87.2 billion in gross discretionary budget resources for the U.S. Department of Transportation, which is a decrease of \$393 million (about 0.4 percent) below fiscal 2019, excluding one-time emergency funding. The final bill provides a total of \$12.91 billion for the Federal Transit Administration – the obligation limitation of \$10.15 billion on contract authority provided by the FAST Act, and an additional \$2.76 billion in appropriations from the general fund. The overall total is \$550 million less than the 2019 enacted level with total general fund appropriations having dropped by \$761 million.

This is worth noting because it illustrates the significance of the additional \$453 million in bus funding – despite decreases in overall funding for both DOT and FTA, there was an increase in federal bus funding.

At the state level, there is language in the supplemental bill that would require CDL applicants to have a minimum of three years driving experience in order to apply for the CDL license. This is of major concern as UMass Transit's ability to hire enough qualified applicants each school year will be almost eliminated. MARTA worked with PVTA and UMass to request an adjustment to the sentence to read as follows:

*An applicant for a commercial driver's license shall be a duly licensed motor vehicle operator for a period of 3 continuous years, provided however, the provision of this sentence shall not apply if an applicant has been accepted for CDL training at a public university or public transit authority.*

It appears as there is no consensus on Beacon Hill for how to generate new money for transportation, House Speaker Robert DeLeo is committed to holding a vote on a revenue package in the coming months. DeLeo has indicated he wants the revenue issue completed before the House turns its attention to annual budget deliberations in April. There is also some debate as how the Governor's Transportation Climate Initiative may be getting in the way of the Legislature discussions over new revenues for transportation. There is an overall agreement that there is a need for transportation revenues.

PVTA staff met with MassDOT staff to conduct a Program Preview of the PVTA transit services for FY2020. The discussion included the budget, service performance measures and projections for the upcoming year. In addition, PVTA submitted a Capital Improvement Plan that includes capital projects for the next five years.

PVTA was selected to receive funds through the Discretionary funding Program for the RTAs provided in Section 82 of the FY2020 Budget. The funds are to implement a mobile pass and integrated itinerary planning technology program for Western Massachusetts through Bytemark. Bytemark currently has a contract with MassDOT, the mobile ticketing and any software customization beyond the BusPlus program is to be funded with the grant award. However, no monies were awarded for the continuation of services implemented with FY19 discretionary funds including the G1, B7S and the P20E.

PVTA's order of replacement transit buses is scheduled to go on-line on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at the New Flyer manufacturing plant in Minnesota. Vehicles are expected to be delivered at the end of April.

MARTA is discussing the possibility of a new formula for the distribution of the RTAs State Contract Assistance. It was agreed that there would be a minimum amount but, any new state funding could include a formula that takes into consideration ridership, total population and service coverage which is the total square miles for member communities.

## **12. NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz reported that there is no new business to discuss.

## **13. OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz reported that there is no old business to discuss.

## **14. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned (Sullivan/Squindo) at 12:47 P.M.

**A TRUE RECORD**

ATTEST:

  
**BRANDY PELLETIER**

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Regular Advisory Board Minutes of 11-13-19

**Minutes Approved: March 25, 2020**