

**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
PARATRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING
March 17, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Paratransit Sub-Committee of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board met on Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 2:00 PM remotely in accordance with the Governor's State of Emergency Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, relieving from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that it conduct its meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, permitting a public body to allow remote participation by all members.

PRESENT:

Members: Mark Gold, Longmeadow; Paula Dubord, Wilbraham; Steve Huntley, Chicopee; Becky Moriarty, Hampden;

NOT PRESENT:

Brian O'Leary, Belchertown

A quorum being present, Chairman Steve Huntley called the meeting to order at 2:10 P.M.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2021

Chairman Huntley asked for a motion from the Paratransit Committee to approve the meeting minutes of May 19, 2021.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Gold/Dubord) to approve the meeting minutes of May 19, 2021.

Chairman Huntley asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for a roll call vote.

Mark Gold: Yes

Paula Dubord: Yes

Becky Moriarty: Yes

Steve Huntley: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

4. APPROVAL OF DIAL-A-RIDE EXPANDED HOURS 6-MONTH PILOT

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

While Paratransit ridership is increasing, staffing appears to be increasing faster than ridership is returning. Currently, the system has ample capacity to enhance Dial-A-Ride service. Additionally, because MV's operations are more efficient than in the recent past, we believe these operational efficiencies will allow us to continue this enhancement as ridership increases.

We have already extended service hours to 7:00 pm Monday through Friday, and we are asking the Board to approve a six-month pilot, beginning April 1, to extend Dial-A-Ride service to Saturdays. The only restriction on Saturday service would be that for the duration of the pilot, Dial-A-Ride would be available only in communities that also have paratransit service.

Mark Gold: Would this apply to the Tri-Town's?

Paul Burns: This would not include those communities.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Moriarty/Dubord) to approve a 6-Month pilot program for Dial-A-Ride that will expand Dial-A-Ride hours Monday through Friday until 7:00pm as well as the addition of Saturday Service 8:00am – 7:00pm with the restriction that Saturday Service is available only in communities that also have paratransit service.

Chairman Huntley asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for a roll call vote.

Mark Gold: Yes

Paula Dubord: Yes

Becky Moriarty: Yes

Steve Huntley: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

5. PARATRANSIT UPDATE

Paul Burns reported the following:

Paratransit ridership continues to increase steadily when compared to the previous year. February's ridership is 52.1% higher than one year ago, the highest percentage increase so far this year. Paratransit ridership had increased to 60% of pre-pandemic levels through December. January and February ridership is lower than December's level, but this is a normal seasonal trend, exacerbated somewhat by the Omicron surge of the pandemic in January. By February, ridership has begun to show steady gains, which have continued into early March.

Status of service adjustments related to staffing for MV: Effective 11/1/2021, we implemented a plan to prioritize ADA trips and capped Dial-A-Ride service on some days to ensure ADA trips were not missed. We also temporarily suspended the NOHO Senior Shuttle's same-day service.

Paratransit driver salaries were increased in January to make them more competitive. The salary increase and the new advertising campaign have significantly increased drivers applying to MV and being hired. Currently, MV is fully staffed for current operating needs and has significant numbers of applicants in the pipeline to support future needs.

Paratransit Riders Council:

Terms for some members of the Paratransit Riders Council are set to expire. The PVTA representative to the Advisory Board for the communities noted have been notified of the potential vacancy. Because the PRC had difficulty obtaining a quorum, the nomination process is slightly delayed; Members must be appointed or reappointed by April 30. The current member cannot fill the seat for Chicopee as that member neither resides in Chicopee nor has a reasonable tie to the community, so we will be seeking a new member to fill that seat.

Member communities can reappoint the existing member or choose a new member to serve on the committee. If the appropriate community appoints no member, PVTA will appoint a member to fill that seat.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Huntley reported that there is no other business to discuss.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Huntley asked for a motion from the Paratransit Committee to adjourn.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Gold/Moriarty) to adjourn.

Chairman Huntley asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for a roll call vote.

- Mark Gold: Yes
- Paula Dubord: Yes
- Becky Moriarty: Yes
- Steve Huntley: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

The meeting of the Paratransit Committee adjourned at 2:27 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

**ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETIER**

Documents filed with Paratransit Committee meeting packet:

- May 19, 2021 Paratransit Committee Minutes

Minutes Approved: 9-21-22