

**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
September 20, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 12:00 P.M. remotely in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, supplemental state budget provisions for Fiscal Year 2023, authorizing public bodies to continue to hold entirely remote meetings, or so-called “hybrid” meetings, upon the provision of “adequate, alternative means” of public access, until March 31, 2025.

	<u>Present (37.77 votes)</u>	<u>Not Present (24.23 votes)</u>
Agawam		Michael Squindo
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary	
Chicopee	Steve Huntley	
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler	
Easthampton		Cindy Tarail
Granby		Glen Sexton
Hadley	David Moskin	
Hampden	Becky Moriarty	
Holyoke		Gloria Caballero-Roca
Leverett		Peter D’Errico
Longmeadow	Mark Gold	
Ludlow		Derek DeBarge
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra	
Palmer		Benjamin Hood
Pelham		David Shanabrook
South Hadley		Jeff Cyr
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan	
Sunderland		Geoff Kravitz
Ware		Nancy Talbot
West Springfield		Allyson Manuel
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham		Paula Dubord
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell	
ADA Representative		Vacant
Rider Representative		Vacant

A quorum of 31.01 votes being present, Chairman of the Advisory Board, Doug Slaughter, called the remote meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:15 PM; majority vote of 37.77 present.

Chairman Slaughter stated:

- This meeting is being held virtually as allowed by HB.58 An Act making appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023, which, among other things, extends the expiration of the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025.
- The meeting is being recorded for the purpose of creating minutes.
- Please mute yourselves when not speaking.
- Participating members of the Board meeting videos should remain “on” throughout the meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Slaughter asked if any members of the public would like to make a public comment on an Agenda Item.

No public comments were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Slaughter asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the meeting minutes from the August 23, 2023 Advisory Board Meeting.

Motion: Moved and seconded (O’Leary/Gold) to approve the meeting minutes from the August 23, 2023 Advisory Board Meeting.

Chairman Slaughter asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none; asked for a roll call vote to approve the minutes.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam			
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley	David Moskin		
Hampden			Becky Moriarty
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Mark Gold		
Ludlow			
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer			
Pelham			
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware			
West Springfield			

Westfield	Peter Miller
Wilbraham	
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative	
Rider Representative	

Motion passed by a vote of 36.77 with 1 abstention (Hampden, 1.00 vote).

4. PVTA’S FY 23 AUDIT REPORT

Chairman Slaughter reported that the Auditors have conducted the desk as well as the on-site review of PVTA finances. PVTA staff had a preliminary meeting with the auditors. They have determined there are no findings in the financial statements and practices. The Auditors will have a management letter recommendation. For the most part the audit is complete. The only issue is the fixed assets. The additions for the fiscal year which includes, new buses, supervisory and support vehicles and other items/improvements valued at \$5K or more were not reconciling with the balance sheets created from the capital grant spreadsheets.

Internally, PVTA determined there are some errors with the capital grant sheets. The Controller was able to correct these errors by reconciling the grant spreadsheets with the FTA grant information found in the TrAMS system (FTA’s grant management system). Working together with the Auditors and the Controller, PVTA was able to align the Fixed Asset capital listing (cost and accumulated depreciation) to the general ledger late on Friday. The Auditors will be proposing an audit adjustment for this.

Because of these delays with the Fixed Asset Capital listing, the audit was not completed before today’s Advisory Board Meeting. David Irwin, the Audit Director with Adelson & Company, has asked if it is possible for the Advisory Board to grant the Finance and Audit Committee the authority to approve/accept the year end audit at a meeting to be held on October 4th at 1:00 p.m. between the Auditors and the Finance and Audit Committee in order to meet the deadline to the state on October 6th.

Mark Gold: The Advisory Board should see the Audit Report to ratify the authority given to the Finance & Audit Committee.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Gold/Sorrell) for the Advisory Board to authorize PVTA’s Finance & Audit Sub-Committee the authority to review and approve PVTA’s FY 23 Audit Report on behalf of the PVTA Advisory Board to submit to the State.

Chairman Slaughter asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none; asked for a roll call vote to approve the minutes.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam			
Amherst			
Belchertown			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
			David Moskin

Hampden	Becky Moriarty
Holyoke	
Leverett	
Longmeadow	Mark Gold
Ludlow	
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra
Palmer	
Pelham	
South Hadley	
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan
Sunderland	
Ware	
West Springfield	
Westfield	Peter Miller
Wilbraham	
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative	
Rider Representative	

Motion passed by a vote of 36.03 with 1 abstention (Hadley, 1.74 vote).

Administrator Sheehan: Thank you. We can review the FY23 Audit Report at the November meeting and answer any questions the Board may have.

5. FARE REVIEW INFORMATION

Paul Burns, Director of Transit Operations, stated as you may recall, the Board in April of 2018, approved a fare increase from \$1.25 to \$1.50 effective on July 1, 2018. At that time, the Board also voted to review the fare structure at three-year intervals with a potential fare increase of between 5% and 25%. To support the Board’s decision-making process around a potential fare increase for FY 25, with assistance from PVPC, we will be conducting a fare equity analysis over the next few months.

Steve Huntley: Will no fare consideration be involved in the fare review.

Paul Burns: We will look at a no fare scenario in addition to low income fare and how we can perceive these equitably.

6. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT

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

Fixed Route Ridership:

Systemwide July 2023 ridership was at 431K, up 22.9% from 354K in July 2022.

SATCo and VATCo ridership was at 355K up 19.9% from 296 in July 22.

UMass was at 74K (up 29.8% from 57K in July 22)

Paratransit Ridership:

Paratransit ridership continues to increase steadily when compared to the previous year. August ridership was 14,531. A modest increase over the prior year of 1.8%.

Systemwide Recovery:

July systemwide ridership was 70.5% of ridership in July 2019.
 UMASS ridership was 87.8% of ridership in July of 2019.
 While SATCo and VATCo combined was 67.8% of July 2019.

Routes:

B7, B17 extension to the Wilbraham Big Y continues to be successful. For the month of August, 1092 passengers boarded at this stop for an average of 62 boards per day.

Safety and Security:

PVTA has launched an anti-assault marketing campaign that tells the consequences of various assaults and has hopes to reduce the number of assaults we are seeing.

Assaults on Transit Employees:

Month	Physical-Operator	Non-Physical - Operator	Physical-Other transit employee	Non-Physical - Other transit employee
March	1	12	0	0
April	1	12	0	0
May	2	18	0	1
June	4	10	0	0
July	1	8	0	0

7. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator, Sandra Sheehan, reported the following:

The Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities (MARTA) held its annual meeting last week. Various issues of interest were discussed during the meeting including:

- An update from legal counsel regarding PFMLA, Religious Accommodations, Open Meeting Law and the new reporting requirements required by MassDEP.
- Massachusetts adopted California’s Advanced Clean Trucks regulation known as CARB, which requires an increasing percentage of ZEV truck/bus sales starting with Model Year 2025 and ramping up through Model Year 2035, accelerating the market for medium- and heavy-duty ZEVs. Cummins, the diesel engine manufacturer for the transit industry has indicated they will not be able to meet the CARB requirements for 2025 thus PVTA and the other RTAs would not be able to purchase a diesel engine bus starting that year.
- CDL upcoming changes. MARTA has been working with the RMV and the MSP to address the upcoming changes to the CDL training course and test. Staff will be attending the training provided as well as setting up the new training course at the two registered training sites.

MassDOT has approved the equity funding allocation proposed by the RTAs. To ensure geographic equity, the percentage of Net Cost of Service covered by state contract assistance was increased to 75% for each RTA. Three RTAs, Lowell, MetroWest, and Nantucket were identified as meeting the

“proportionately low” language contained within the state budget. The three “proportionately low” RTAs were allocated additional state contract assistance in order to reach the statewide average of \$2.12 for every dollar of local assessments. This calculation allocated \$4.8M of new “fair share” funds resulting in an FY24 SCA level of \$110.7M statewide. The remaining \$39.3M in “fair share” funding was allocated via the previously adopted and implemented RTA performance-based funding formula (60% ridership, 30% population, 10% land mass. PVTA’s share of additional funds is approximately \$9.4M. It is our intent to commence additional service with the start of the winter schedule.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Slaughter reported that there is no new business to discuss.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Slaughter reported that there is no old business to discuss.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Slaughter asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Huntley/Sorrell) to adjourn.

Chairman Slaughter asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam			
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley	David Moskin		
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Mark Gold		
Ludlow			
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer			
Pelham			
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware			
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham			

Williamsburg
ADA Representative
Rider Representative

J.M. Sorrell

Motion passed by a vote of 37.77.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 12:54 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETIER

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Advisory Board Minutes of 8-23-23

Minutes Approved: November 15, 2023