

**MINUTES OF PVTA'S  
ROUTE COMMITTEE MEETING  
November 13, 2023**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Route Sub-Committee of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board met on Monday, November 13, 2023 at 3:00 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.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Members: Peter Miller, Westfield; J.M. Sorrell, Williamsburg; Benjamin Hood, Palmer; Tim Sheehan, Springfield;

**NOT PRESENT:** Brian O'Leary, Belchertown

A quorum being present, Chairman of the Route Committee, Peter Miller, called the remote meeting of the Route Committee to order at 3:07 P.M.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were made.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 16, 2023**

Chairman Miller asked for a motion from the Route Committee to approve the meeting minutes of June 16, 2023.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Sheehan) to approve the meeting minutes of June 16, 2023.

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

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Abstained

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 3-0 vote with 1 abstention.

#### **4. APPROVAL OF THE 2023 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP) UPDATE**

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

PVTA is required to review the (PTASP) annually with a focus on the answering the following three questions;

1. Does the Agency Safety Plan address all relevant requirements?
2. Does the Agency Safety Plan reflect PVTA's transit system as it operates today?
3. Are the activities and processes described in the plan suitable to manage safety at PVTA?

The answer to all three questions was yes this year. However, the Safety Committee felt that the document would benefit from a general revision to eliminate redundancies and streamline references in the document to make it more user friendly. The result is an updated plan that is about 48% shorter than that of the prior year. The committee is hopeful that this updated document will be more user friendly than the previous document.

We are asking for approval of PVTA's 2023 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).

Chairman Miller asked for a motion from the Route Committee to approve PVTA's 2023 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Update.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Sheehan) to approve PVTA's 2023 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Update.

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

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Yes

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

#### **5. APPROVAL OF 2024 SAFETY TARGETS**

Paul Burns, reported the following:

A complete list of safety targets with 3 years of prior performance, where applicable, is located in the charts section of your packet. To comply with federal regulations several categories of safety targets were added this year. New categories include;

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target</b>
Physical assaults on operators	22
Non-physical assaults on operators	142
Physical assaults on other transit workers	1
Non-physical assaults on other transit workers	4
Customer injuries	85
Worker injuries	4
Other injuries	0
Major NTD incidents	4

motor vehicle accidents	85
pedestrian accidents	1
bicycle accidents	1

These categories continue to be tracked as in prior years.

Fatalities	0
Miles between breakdowns, fixed route	13,000
Miles between breakdowns, paratransit	35,000

Due to issues with the data in many of the new categories, the targets set for these categories are based on best estimates. Changes in the way data has been tracked through the claims system and changes in federal reporting requirements requiring us to track data we had not tracked previously make this more challenging. It will take several years to develop consistent targets in these areas. We are adjusting all our tracking systems to more accurately track real time data for 2023 and going forward.

Target setting in these categories is further complicated by changes in the operating environment and general changes in society at large. The rate of violent crime and bias crime appears to have increased overall over the last few years which seems to be contributing to what appears anecdotally to be an increase in assaults that include bias assaults across our system. FBI statistics show a 7% increase in bias crime from 2021 to 2022. Similarly, FBI crime statistics show increases in violent crime rates since the pandemic. While the targets set reflect what we believe is the current state of assaults in our system, our goal is always zero assaults on our operators and our passengers.

Motor vehicle accidents are another category where target setting is complicated by external factors and trends. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that the number of police-reported significant increases as follows; fatal traffic crashes increased by 10 percent from 2020 to 2021, while the estimated number of police-reported traffic crashes increased by 16 percent. Our goal as a system is to reduce the number of accidents wherever we can. As we move forward, we will refine the motor vehicle accident category further to identify accidents by type and cause.

Chairman Miller asked for a motion from the Route Committee to approve PVTA’s 2024 Safety Targets.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Hood) to approve PVTA’s 2024 Safety Targets.

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

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Yes

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

## **6. APPROVAL TO CONDUCT PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS**

Paul Burns reported the following:

With the increase in funding in this year’s budget we are beginning to add services where possible in both the short and long term. Given the staffing situation we are taking an incremental approach

to adjusting service on our routes. Ultimately our goal is to expand weekend service throughout the region, restore service that was reduced in response to staffing shortages, and increase frequency on all routes to 30 minutes or less across the system.

Initially, our focus is on enhancing service on the following routes as these changes can be implemented quickly with only limited impact on labor.

P21E: Improve frequency from 60 minutes to 45-minutes effective December 24, 2023, and further improving frequency to 30 minutes for the Spring Bid. This change will affect service Monday through Sunday.

G73E: All trips will serve Northampton with 45-minute frequency effective December 24, 2023, and further improving to 30-minute frequency for the Spring Bid. This change will affect service Monday through Saturday and will include adding new service on Sundays beginning December 24, 2023. These changes will initially result in five fewer trips each day serving the Holyoke Mall. However, the frequency change results in significantly more service to Northampton and eliminates confusion among some riders when not all trips go to Northampton now. As we increase frequency to 30 minutes in the spring, service to both the Holyoke Mall and Northampton will increase significantly.

Ware Palmer: Changes include reinstating the previous Ware and Palmer Circulators using 2 separate vehicles and providing a more comprehensive service in each town. Additional service to Wilbraham Big Y will be added bringing the total number of connections to Springfield to six each day.

These changes will take effect in December with the addition of weekend service planned for early Spring. The two new routes will provide similar service to what was provided prior to the 2017 service reductions.

In addition to the above changes requiring public hearing and Title VI analysis, we are also making changes to the following routes.

B17: minor schedule adjustments to provide consistent 45-minute service all day on Saturdays. Will eliminate a 90-minute service gap on Saturday mornings.

G1: All trips will service Chicopee Big Y.

R10: Schedule will be realigned to provide consistent 45-minute frequency weekdays with all trips serving Walmart and all but the first early morning trip serving Westfield State University.

R14: Minor schedule adjustments to increase efficiency and improve on time performance.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Hood) to approve conducting public hearings for route adjustments on the P21E, G73, and the Ware-Palmer Route.

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

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Yes

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

**7. APPROVAL TO CONDUCT A TITLE VI ANALYSIS ON P21E, G73, AND THE WARE-PALMER ROUTE**

Chairman Miller asked for a motion from the Route Committee to approve conducting a Title VI Analysis.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Sheehan) to approve conducting a Title VI Analysis on the P21E, G73, and the Ware-Palmer Route.

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

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Yes

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

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

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Miller asked for a motion from the Route Committee to adjourn.

**MOTION:** Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Hood) to adjourn.

Chairman Miller asked for a roll call vote.

J.M. Sorrell: Yes

Peter Miller: Yes

Benjamin Hood: Yes

Tim Sheehan: Yes

Motion passed, 4-0 vote.

The meeting of the PVTA Route Committee adjourned at 3:40 P.M.

**A TRUE RECORD**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**BRANDY PELLETIER**

Documents filed with Route Committee meeting packet:

- June 16, 2023 Route Committee Minutes
- 2023 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Update
- 2024 Safety Targets
- Proposed Route Adjustments on P21E, G73, and Ware-Palmer Route

**Minutes Approved: March 18, 2024**