
**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
June 22, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at 12:00 P.M. 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.

	<u><i>Present (31.88 votes)</i></u>	<u><i>Not Present (30.12 votes)</i></u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary	
Chicopee		Steve Huntley
East Longmeadow		Erin Koebler
Easthampton		Mayor Nicole LaChapelle
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		Michael Sullivan
Springfield	Tim Sheehan	
Sunderland		Geoff Kravitz
Ware	John Carroll	
West Springfield		Allyson Manuel
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord	
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell	
ADA Representative		Vacant
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson	

A quorum of 31.01 votes being present, Chairman of the Advisory Board, Douglas Slaughter, called the remote meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:11 PM; majority vote of 31.88 present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Slaughter asked if any members of the public would like to make a public comment. 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 May 18, 2022 Regular Advisory Board Meeting.

Motion: Moved and seconded (O’Leary/Squindo) to approve the meeting minutes from the May 18, 2022, Regular 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	Michael Squindo		
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer			
Pelham	David Shanabrook		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Tim Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	John Carroll		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson		

Motion passed by a vote of 31.88.

4. REPORT OF PVTA’S ROUTE SUB-COMMITTEE

Brian O’Leary, Chairman of the Route Sub-Committee reported that the committee met virtually on Thursday, June 16, 2022. The Committee voted to approve the minutes from the March 18, 2022 meeting. The committee received a report on service adjustments for the G2E, B7, B6, and X90 due to labor shortages and voted to recommend to the Board approving going out to public hearings for service adjustments on these routes as well as for a Title VI Analysis.

Chairman Slaughter asked the Board for a motion to accept the report of the Route Sub-Committee.

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

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

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo		
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer			
Pelham	David Shanabrook		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Tim Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	John Carroll		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson		

Motion passed by a vote of 31.88.

5. **APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR:**

• **TITLE VI ANALYSIS FOR LABOR-RELATED SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE G2E, B7, B6, & X90**

• **LABOR-RELATED SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE G2E, B7, B6, & X90**

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

We are looking for authorization to hold Public Hearings for the Title VI Analysis and Public Hearings for labor-related service adjustments for the G2E, B7, B6 and X90.

The schedule changes noted below continue to be in effect for SATCo. As a result, we need to extend these service adjustments beyond 6 months. Because the service changes will last longer than 6 months, we will need to conduct public hearings on these changes in accordance with our Title VI and Public Participation Policies.

SATCO (effective date 12/12/2021)

Route Affected	Change
T23, T24, T5 T1, T3, T20	Consolidation of school trippers, including replacing some trippers with modified service on fixed routes in the appropriate areas
G2E	Suspension of service on this route in its entirety
B6	Frequency reduction from every 20 minutes to every 30
B7	Frequency reduction from every 15 minutes to every 20
X90	Changed to hourly service with some reduction in frequency

Chairman Slaughter asked the Board for a motion to approve PVTa to hold Public Hearings for the Title VI Analysis and Public Hearings for labor-related service adjustments for the G2E, B7, B6 and X90.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Sorrell/O’Leary) to approve PVTa to hold Public Hearings for the Title VI Analysis and Public Hearings for labor-related service adjustments for the G2E, B7, B6 and X90.

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

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo		
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			

Northampton	
Palmer	
Pelham	David Shanabrook
South Hadley	
Springfield	Tim Sheehan
Sunderland	
Ware	John Carroll
West Springfield	
Westfield	Peter Miller
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative	
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson

Motion passed by a vote of 31.88.

6. PVTA FY23 SUB-COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Slaughter asked if there was any additional interest by Board Members to join PVTA's Sub-Committees for FY23. Hearing none. Chairman Slaughter appointed the following Members/Chairperson positions to PVTA's Sub-Committees for FY23:

PVTA Finance & Audit Committee Members

1. Steve Huntley (Chairperson)
2. Doug Slaughter
3. Gloria Caballero
4. Michael Squindo
5. Brian O'Leary

PVTA Paratransit Committee Members

1. Mark Gold (Chairperson)
2. Paula Dubord
3. Steve Huntley
4. Michael Squindo
5. Cindy Tarail
6. Brian O'Leary
7. Becky Moriarty

PVTA Route Committee Members

1. Peter Miller (Chairperson)
2. Timothy Sheehan
3. J.M. Sorrell
4. Benjamin Hood
5. Brian O'Leary

Compensation Committee

1. Mark Gold (Chairperson)
2. Doug Slaughter
3. John Carroll

PVTA Futures Committee Members

1. J. M. Sorrell (Chairperson)
2. Doug Slaughter
3. Brian O'Leary

Chairman Slaughter asked for a motion to accept the Sub-Committee Appointments.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Carroll/Sorrell) to accept PVTA's FY23 Sub-Committee Appointments.

Chairman Slaughter asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo		
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary		
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer			
Pelham	David Shanabrook		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Tim Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	John Carroll		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson		

Motion passed by a vote of 31.88.

7. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT

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

Fixed Route: Systemwide, April 2022 ridership was 579K, up 52% from 381K in April 2021. May 2022 ridership was 433K, up 22% from 355K in May 2021.

As of May 2022, the average monthly recovery for PVRTA is 61%. This is similar to the average monthly recovery for Massachusetts RTAs at 62% and the MBTA at 63%.

Paratransit ridership continues to increase steadily when compared to the previous year. May ridership is 32% higher than one year ago. While monthly ridership recovery has slowed slightly due to normal seasonal variations, paratransit ridership has recovered to 63% of prepandemic ridership in May.

Dial-A-Ride Service Enhancements: The expanded Dial-A-Ride pilot continues to do well. There have been no operational issues reported and all Dial-A-Ride trip requests have been accommodated. Saturday Dial-A-Ride trips have increased from an average of 8% of all Saturday trips in April to 14% of all Saturday trips in May. Weekly Dial-A-Ride trips show a slight but consistent increase from April through May, with daily Dial-A-Ride usage increasing from 19% to 21% between April 1st and May 31st.

Staffing continues to be a problem for many transit systems and PVRTA is no exception. Each of PVRTA's operators is experiencing labor shortages to some degree. PVRTA has launched a broad-based media campaign to support hiring efforts for each operator, including radio, social media, email, and other advertising media to raise awareness of our staffing needs.

- **VATCo:** Returned to normal operating schedules on May 15, 2022.
- **SATCo:** Continues to struggle with staffing.
- **Quaboag:** is experiencing significant staffing challenges and is currently operating the B79 on a reduced service schedule during the summer break.
- **UMASS:** Continues to experience a significant driver shortage. They are continuing to recruit and train drivers, however, they are assessing their situation and considering whether and how to reduce service if needed for the fall semester.
- **Hulmes:** Continues to have some issues with staffing although they are currently able to maintain service with the staff they have in place.
- **MV:** Fully staffed for current service levels. They continue to hire and recruit staff for anticipated increased ridership as well as expected attrition.

Job Corps Service: The Board approved providing service on one vehicle from HTC to Big Y in Chicopee to provide connections from the G1 and X90 with a return from Big Y to Job Corps at the March meeting. We have met with Job Corps and agree preliminarily that we will operate twice daily, bringing students to Job Corp for approximately 7:30 AM and returning them from Job Corp to Big Y and then HTC starting at 4:00 PM. The initial plan is to implement this service effective September 6, 2022, operating similar to a school year schedule through June 2023 with service Monday through Friday.

New Route Updates:

The G73E exceeded 6,900 passengers in April, an all-time high for the route. Ridership dropped again in May but remained over 6,000.

The B79 dropped slightly to 253 passengers in April, the second highest month of ridership during full-fare service.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator, Sandra Sheehan, reported the following:

PVTA sent a request to the House of Representatives delegation asking for support of a letter sent by the RTA Caucus to the House Conferees to increase state support to maintain RTA service levels and to retain, train and recruit our workforce. PVTA asked to support the increased allocation to provide essential operating funds to RTAs and eliminate language for grants associated with reduced or fare free pilot programs. The request for \$96.5M in RTA operating funds includes the House language and the Senate funding level.

Since our last Board Meeting, PVTA staff has been providing FTA additional information as a follow up to the enhanced review of the ECHO drawdowns for all the expenses associated with the CARES and ARPA funding grants. PVTA had a total of 33 drawdowns with the last one being completed at the end of April. This week, FTA staff informed PVTA that all expenses have been determined to be eligible under the CARES funding. FTA will be requesting that capital expenditures be allocated to the capital line item in the grant program once the grant is amended. An exit conference has yet to be scheduled.

PVTA and MV staff continue to provide information to the Auditor of the Commonwealth as part of the performance audit of PVTA that its being conducted. This audit is also performed every three years. Currently bi-weekly meetings are being held with the audit team to discuss PVTA's operation of the paratransit program. At the end of this audit a report will be issued. This audit is designed to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the paratransit program.

The Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (PRAC) audit of the use of the CARES and ARPA funds continues its second phase which includes interviews with key staff and response to additional inquiries. The objective of this audit is to determine the extent to which recipients: (1) Spent pandemic response funds in alignment with program goals and objectives; and (2) Believe that federal funding impacted (positively or negatively) their ability to respond to the pandemic. The interviews conducted were specific to the impacts this funding provided to transit operations in our region.

PVTA submitted a grant application under FTA's 5339(c) Low or No Emission Vehicle Program to fully electrify and modernize the Cottage Street bus facility to accommodate a phased conversion to 100% battery-electric bus fleet, and to purchase eight battery-electric buses to replace traditional diesel-powered buses that have exceeded their useful life.

In addition, PVTA applied to FTA's 5339(b) Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program for the proposed Bus Bay Expansion Project at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass) Bus Maintenance Facility. The project includes the construction of two 60-foot and two 40-foot maintenance bays with hydraulic lifts to allow for safe servicing and repair of buses serving the Five College community.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Slaughter reported that PVTA is anticipating the order for holding virtual meetings to be extended and will know more next week to determine how the August Board Meeting will be held.

11. OLD BUSINESS

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

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Slaughter asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

Chairman Slaughter asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo		
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter		
Belchertown	Brian O’Leary		
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer			
Pelham	David Shanabrook		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Tim Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	John Carroll		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative	Jake Hasson		

Motion passed by a vote of 31.88.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 12:43 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETIER

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Regular Advisory Board Minutes of 5-18-22

Minutes Approved: August 17, 2022