
**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
May 20, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 12:00 P.M. remotely as allowed by Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, an act extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency which, among other things, further extends temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to June 30, 2027.

	<u><i>Present (50.75 votes)</i></u>	<u><i>Not Present (11.27 votes)</i></u>
Agawam	Cindy Sullivan	
Amherst	Paul Bockelman	
Belchertown		Ezekiel Baskin
Chicopee	Steve Huntley	
East Longmeadow	Emily Constantino	
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail	
Granby		Glen Sexton
Hadley		David Moskin
Hampden		Becky Moriarty
Holyoke	Stephen Fay	
Leverett		Tom Hankinson
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons	
Ludlow	Anthony Alves	
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra	
Palmer	Benjamin Hood	
Pelham	Jessica Barr	
South Hadley		Lisa Wong
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan	
Sunderland		Becky Torres
Ware	Nancy Talbot	
West Springfield	Mayor William Reichelt	
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord	
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell	
ADA Representative		Vacant
Rider Representative		Vacant

A quorum of 31.01 votes being present, Chair J.M. Sorrell called the remote meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:00 PM; majority vote of 50.75 present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Luna Cave: Would like to request a bus stop on Bradley Road near Plumtree Road in Springfield. Any advice on how to submit a request to get the information in front of the proper person to make this happen.

Dylan Bolus: Would also like to advocate for a stop on Bradley Road, ideally within walking distance of the church. I live near there and cannot easily access any places and a stop here would be great.

Judas Jacin: Would also like to advocate for a stop on Bradley Road in Springfield.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Moved and seconded (Huntley/Mayor Sciarra) to approve the meeting minutes from the March 18, 2026 Advisory Board Meeting.

Chair Sorrell 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	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		
Belchertown			
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow	Emily Constantino		
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden			
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons		
Ludlow	Anthony Alves		
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham			Jessica Barr
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	Nancy Talbot		
West Springfield	Mayor William Reichelt		
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		

Williamsburg
ADA Representative
Rider Representative

J.M. Sorrell

Motion passed by a vote of 49.73 with one abstention (Pelham).

4. **REPORT OF PVTA SUB-COMMITTEES**

Steve Huntley reported for the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee:

The Finance & Audit Committee met on Monday, May 18th. The committee voted to approve the Minutes from March 9th. The committee received a detailed presentation on PVTA's FY27 Budget which will be presented at this meeting and voted to recommend approval of the FY27 Budget to the full board.

JM Sorrell reported for the Compensation Sub-Committee:

The Compensation Committee, which consists of Peter Miller, Lyn Simmons, and myself, met to discuss Administrator Sheehan's FY26 Evaluation as well as a new contract and salary compensation which we will go into detail later in the agenda.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Huntley/Mayor Sciarra) to accept the Reports of PVTA Sub-Committees.

Chair Sorrell 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	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		
Belchertown			
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow	Emily Constantino		
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden			
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons		
Ludlow	Anthony Alves		
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham	Jessica Barr		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	Nancy Talbot		

West Springfield	Mayor William Reichelt
Westfield	Peter Miller
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative	
Rider Representative	

Motion passed by a vote of 50.75, all in favor.

5. **APPROVAL OF FY27 BUDGET**

Administrator Sheehan indicated that the FY27 budget has been prepared using the Governors FY27 proposed budget breakdown for RTAs. This is the most conservative figure available currently. The likelihood of a budget amendment is high as there is a supplemental budget currently in conference:

RTAs Total Funding \$217.5M
 CTF \$94M
 Fair Share \$123.5M
 \$66M Operations
 \$8.5M Workforce Development/etc.
 \$10M Connectivity Grants
 \$4M CTGP
 \$35M Fare Free Program

2026 Supplemental \$60M
 \$35M RTA
 \$10M Connectivity Grants
 \$15M Microtransit

Lori Brodeur, PVTA's Director of Finance, presented the FY27 Budget:

EXPENSES

Administration

Wages/Fringe 3% salary increases for all Admin employees except Travel Training.
 Two part-time employees for Travel Training have been added, so that line is a 10% increase. Travel Training is grant funded.

Additional funding of the pension reserve for FY27 has been removed due to budget constraints.

The budget includes an 8% increase for health insurance, but those rates are not finalized yet.

Overall Wages and Fringe are decreasing 13% due to no pension reserve funding for FY27.

Services/Utilities

Janitorial and security costs are contracted costs, remaining relatively flat, except for an increase in administration janitorial to bring back in line with original FY26 budget due to timing.

Service Charges Mobile Fares and Admin are both credit card fees, still affected by fare free service. This is increasing 14% due to additional Link413 route that we are charging fares for.

Overall Services increase is 1%.

Overall Supplies have a 4% increase due to market costs.

Electric Gas & Water is increasing by 13% due to unsure market conditions. Overall Utilities increase is 5%.

Lease charges increase at 4% every year.

Miscellaneous

Administrative travel is adjusted for additional staff seminars, increasing by 19%.

Interest expense is expected to decrease around 27% due to lower interest rates, as well as a lower RANS note in FY27.

Overall Admin expenses are decreasing by 38%, due to not paying down RANS in FY27 and no additional pension funding for FY27.

Paratransit Operations

Contractors

The Paratransit Operator budget is increasing by 16% due to the new CBA agreement and additional salary increases for those employees, based on the Union agreement.

Several of the shuttle contractors have significant increases due to additional service, including weekend service.

Fuel costs are increasing significantly and very volatile and difficult to forecast in this environment. We estimated gasoline costs at an average of \$3.75 per gallon, in hopes that per gallon costs will go down over the year.

Overall Paratransit expenses are increasing at 17%.

Fixed Route Operations

SATCo/VATCo

There is a 3% decrease in subsidy costs due to hiring more drivers and incurring less overtime.

Fuel costs are increasing significantly. Our contractor is forecasting diesel fuel at \$3.22 per gallon, an increase of around \$1M, 42% over FY26.

Overall, the budget is showing a decrease in SATCo/VATCo costs of 1%. This factors in additional grant funded projects as well as significant decreases in printed tickets and security costs due to a favorable contract.

UMass Transit

The PVTA subsidy to UMass is increasing by 8%.

Fuel is increasing by \$115K or 29%.

Overall, there is a 9% increase in total expenses over FY26.

Shuttles

There is a 12% increase in Shuttle costs, due mostly to fuel cost increases.

Overall Fixed Route is decreasing by less than 1%.

Total Expenditures are decreasing slightly by ½%.

REVENUE

Fare Revenue

Service is budgeted as fare free for FY27. Fares are being collected at the Amherst/Worcester and Link413 routes. There is a slight increase in revenue on these two routes over FY26.

Other Revenue

Interest revenue is decreasing by 18%, due to lower interest rates received on our investment accounts.

Overall Other Revenue is decreasing by 15%.

Transportation Subsidies

Operating Subsidy-Federal is ARPA funds, which are depleted as of FY26.

Operating Subsidy-Local are local assessments, increasing by 2.5%.

Operating Subsidy- State is decreasing by 9%. This is level funded to FY26, without additional supplemental funds. This funding may change after the state budget is finalized.

Operating Subsidy- Try Transit funding is decreasing by 15% to \$8.85M in FY27.

Other Federal- Cares of \$5.3M to cover the budget shortfall for FY27.

Other Operating Subsidy is increasing by 60% due to additional Operating grants for state funded routes, as well as Travel Training, ADA, and Five College funded route.

Total Transportation Subsidies are decreasing very slightly, less than ½% due to the Federal funding/Cares Funds. Without these Federal Funds, there would be an 8% decrease in Transportation Subsidies.

PVTA FY27 Budget Overview:

Pioneer Valley Transit Authority	Approved Revised FY26 Budget	% Increase FY27 over FY26	Proposed FY27 Draft Budget
EXPENSES			
Administration Wages/Fringe	3,124,255	-12.5%	2,732,777
Administration Services/Utilities	3,406,492	-61.3%	1,316,719
Fixed Route Service	52,357,915	0.3%	52,492,277
Paratransit Service	11,156,365	17.4%	13,101,096
Allocated Insurance	984,660	7.1%	1,054,137
Allocated IT Support, Towers	220,007	10.0%	242,000
Total Expenses	71,249,694		70,939,005
REVENUES			
Farebox	1,170,039	0.5%	1,176,243
Advertising	285,000	0.0%	285,000
Interest and Insurance Recoveries, Misc.	1,226,926	-17.9%	1,006,926
Operating Subsidy, Other	1,303,126	60.4%	2,089,655
Operating Subsidy - Fare Free	10,358,445	-14.6%	8,850,000
Federal Operating Grants ARPA	667,352	-100.0%	0
State Contract Assistance	45,602,581	-9.0%	41,480,070
Local Assessments	10,636,225	2.5%	10,902,130
Total Revenue	71,249,694		65,790,025
Net Profit (Loss)	0		-5,148,981
Additional Federal Operating Grant	0		5,148,981
Adjusted Budget Deficit	0	0	0

Motion: Moved and seconded (Huntley/Fay) to approve PVTA's FY27 Budget as presented.

Chair Sorrell asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		

Belchertown	
Chicopee	Steve Huntley
East Longmeadow	Emily Constantino
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail
Granby	
Hadley	
Hampden	
Holyoke	Stephen Fay
Leverett	
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons
Ludlow	Anthony Alves
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra
Palmer	Benjamin Hood
Pelham	Jessica Barr
South Hadley	
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan
Sunderland	
Ware	Nancy Talbot
West Springfield	Mayor William Reichelt
Westfield	Peter Miller
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell
ADA Representative	
Rider Representative	

Motion passed by a vote of 50.75, all in favor.

6. ADMINISTRATOR'S FY26 EVALUATION AND SALARY COMPENSATION

Chair of the Compensation Committee, JM Sorrell reported:

A total of 13 Administrator Evaluation forms were received, which is a record high. All the responses were either exceeded or meets in all categories. There were no categories which did not meet standards.

Administrator Sheehan's base salary is long overdue for amelioration. The Compensation Sub-Committee deliberated and came to middle ground in negotiating both the raise for FY26 and Administrator Sheehan's salary for FY27. Presented in the packet is a document that shows other RTA administrators' salaries by comparison. Note the ridership numbers for PVRTA show how large the organization is compared to other RTAs.

The Compensation Sub-Committee voted to recommend to the Board amending Administrator Sheehan's FY26 salary with a six percent raise. Her salary is currently \$162,998.27. An additional 6% increase would amount to \$9,779.82, bringing her salary to \$172,778.08, if approved.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Miller/Huntley) to approve Administrator's FY26 evaluation and approve a 6% salary increase for FY26.

Chair Sorrell asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		
Belchertown			
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden			
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons		
Ludlow	Anthony Alves		
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham	Jessica Barr		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	Nancy Talbot		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative			

Motion passed by a vote of 46.34, all in favor.

7. APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATOR'S CONTRACT

Chair of the Compensation Committee, JM Sorrell reported:

The Compensation Committee reviewed and negotiated Administrator Sheehan's 5-year contract, editing the previous contract to meet new needs.

Most of the new proposed contract has similar wording to the current contract which expires on June 30, 2026. Notably, we decided to increase Administrator Sheehan's automobile allowance to \$9000 annually, or \$750 per month. If Administrator Sheehan is able to use a company vehicle on

any given month, she will do that instead of billing for the monthly allowance. This gives her flexibility because sometimes the company vehicles are in demand for other staff.

For FY27, we will ask the full Board to support a 4.5% raise, so Administrator Sheehan's salary will be \$180,553 annually beginning July 1, 2026.

Peter, Lyn, and I carefully deliberated to reach this proposed agreement, and it is a bit lower than what Administrator Sheehan advocated for while she agreed it was fair and she would very much like to continue serving in the role over the next five years.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Sheehan/Tarail) to approve Administrator Sheehan's 5-Year Contract as presented with a salary of \$180,553 beginning (FY27) July 1, 2026.

Chair Sorrell asked for a roll call vote.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		
Belchertown			
Chicopee	Steve Huntley		
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden			
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons		
Ludlow	Anthony Alves		
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham	Jessica Barr		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware	Nancy Talbot		
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative			

Motion passed by a vote of 46.34, all in favor.

8. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT

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

Systemwide fixed route ridership continues to increase.

Ridership for March was 997,905, up 9.7% over FY 25.

Ridership by operator for March:

- DGR 677 up 75K (12.4%) from March of 2025
- UMass 318K up 14K passengers (4.5%) from March of 2025
- Hulmes 3009 up 179 passengers (6.3%) from March of 2025

Paratransit Ridership for FY26 has been challenging for paratransit growth over the prior year, March showed a rebound in ridership as the weather improved. Ridership for March was 19,565, an increase of 652 riders or 3.4% over the prior year.

Paratransit ridership continues to struggle this year with some months showing slight increases over the prior year and others showing decreases. Overall, through March paratransit ridership is down 2143 passengers from FY or 1.4%

Safety and Security:

Both verbal and physical assaults on drivers remain at the generally low levels seen in calendar year 2025 and remain significantly reduced from prior years in both number and rate.

While February 2026 showed significant increase over 2025 (from 6 to 9) the overall rate for the first three months of 2026 is slightly lower in 2026 from .93 per 100k passengers in 2025 to .91 2026. The rate per 100k vehicle miles traveled is the same at 1.65. The overall trend of assaults on drivers continues to be positive.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, reported the following:

Administration Funding information: The Administration's Reauthorization FY27 budget request for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) seeks \$16.3 billion for public transportation, a 23% reduction from FY26 enacted levels. The administration is eliminating the advanced appropriations, Section 5339 BBF, greatly reducing funding for capital, safety, and low-emission bus grants.

House Funding Information: On Monday, the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee released its five-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal. This proposal is called the BUILD America 250 Act,

- 5307 total contract authority will be \$87b over five years - \$16.8b per year
- 5311 funding crosses the \$1b/year threshold
- For 5339, there will be a 62% formula/38% discretionary in Section 5339(a) - with a 5% rural set-aside. Also in 5339, state set-aside increases from \$4 million per state to \$6 million, with the aim to improve smaller transit agencies gain access to more federal formula funding
- Streamlining oversight and triennial review for smaller systems

- Spare ratio is eliminated
- NTD streamlining

The State Audit of the Battery Electric Buses is still on-going. A draft report was issued by the state auditors. PVRTA has provided a response to the findings listed in the draft report. PVRTA disagrees with their findings as PVRTA and its contractors have:

- Proactively identified and mitigated safety hazards specifically related to the operation and maintenance of the battery-electric bus (BEB) fleet.
- Maintains a rigorous standard to ensure that only qualified employees are assigned to work on and maintain the diverse rolling stock.
- Utilizes robust monitoring processes for both fixed-route and paratransit contract operators. These systems ensure PVRTA meets all requirements mandated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).

Once a final report is issued, a copy will be sent to the Chairman of the Board.

The Link 413 service continues to grow with ridership surpassing five hundred total passengers for all three routes with most of the ridership (approximately 61%) occurring on the Pittsfield Northampton Route (904).

The G49 began service on March 30th, this route provides service between Ware and Holyoke along routes 9 and 202. Ridership on this route has gotten off to a strong start with 776 riders in the first five weeks. Ridership during that period has been strongest in Holyoke, Belchertown, and Ware with more than 300 boards in Holyoke, 191 in Belchertown and 149 in Ware. There is also consistent and steady ridership in South Hadley. Overall, these initial numbers are a very positive sign.

The B47 began service last Monday on May 18th after some initial delays. This route provides a direct connection between Northampton and Southwick. It operates on a 70-minute frequency Monday through Friday and provides access to employment, health care, shopping, and education in a previously underserved corridor in our service area. Additionally, this route connects with FRTA service in Southwick and Southampton, improving connections between the transit authorities.

PVRTA and other RTAs will be assisting GATRA during the FIFA World Cup. Ten vehicles will be made available to operate hotel shuttle service during the soccer matches. Operators, supervisors, and mechanics as well as staff serving as transit ambassadors will be participating in the seven matches scheduled at the stadium starting June 13th to July 9th. The staff at PVRTA's Customer Service Center will be assisting with call overflow during the soccer matches.

This past weekend, the SATCo operators volunteered to make and serve pancakes at Springfield's World Largest Pancake Breakfast. The event also celebrated the city's 390th anniversary and America's 250th Anniversary. The Operators received an Award from the Spirit of Springfield in recognition of their outstanding service to the event. They also received a Citation from the Mass House of Representatives for volunteering their time. They have been volunteering, representing PVRTA for the past 34 years!

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Sorrell reported that there is no new business to discuss.

11. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Sorrell reported that there is no old business to discuss.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sorrell asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Fay/Miller) to adjourn.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstained</u>
Agawam	Cindy Sullivan		
Amherst	Paul Bockelman		
Belchertown			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow			
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden			
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Leverett			
Longmeadow			
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham	Jessica Barr		
South Hadley			
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
Sunderland			
Ware			
West Springfield			
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		
ADA Representative			
Rider Representative			

Motion passed by a vote of 34.40, all in favor.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 1:08 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETTIER

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Advisory Board Minutes of 3-18-26
- FY27 Budget
- Administrator's Evaluation Summary & Comment Sheet
- Administrator Sheehan's 5-Year Contract: 7/1/2026 – 6/30/2031

Minutes Approved: June 17, 2026