
**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
June 17, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, June 17, 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 (37.76 votes)</i></u>	<u><i>Not Present (24.26 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	Stephanie Nunez	
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 12:03 PM; majority vote of 37.76 present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comments were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Moved and seconded (Huntley/Simmons) to approve the meeting minutes from the May 20, 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		
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
Longmeadow	Lyn Simmons		
Northampton	Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra		
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham	Jessica Barr		
Springfield	Timothy Sheehan		
West Springfield			Stephanie Nunez
Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		

Motion passed by a vote of 34.68 with one abstention (West Springfield).

4. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF THE PVTA

Naomi Stein reported on PVTA's Economic Impact Analysis:

The approach of this study consisted of six phases:

1. System Overview: Develop a baseline understanding of the PVTA system and best practices in evaluating transit benefits and economic impacts.
2. Engagement and Survey Data: Ensure study is informed by the perspectives and local knowledge of PVTA staff, transit riders, and the PVTA Advisory Board
3. Economic Impact: Perform a comprehensive economic assessment of existing PVTA fixed route and paratransit services.
4. Analysis and Key Results: Apply economic modeling software to expenditure data, summarize analytical methods, and develop summary results to support communications.
5. Report: Clearly communicate study findings on the value of PVTA to the Pioneer Valley region.
6. Management and Reporting: Provide management and oversight to ensure project meets all reporting requirements and is delivered successfully.

Currently, we are in phase three and plan to complete phase six by September 30th.

5. **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT**

Lori Brodeur, Director of Finance, reported on the Budget to Actual:

REVENUE

<u>Fare Revenue</u>	Fare Revenue is under budget by 10% for fixed route and paratransit fares. This may level off by year-end, depending on the ridership of the Amherst/Worcester and Link413 routes that are collecting fares.
<u>Other Revenue</u>	Advertising, Interest and Insurance Recoveries are under budget by 13%. This is due mostly to invoice timing for advertising. This line is expected to end near budget.
<u>Transportation Subsidies</u>	Transportation Subsidies include -Federal Operating Subsidy, Local Assessments, State Contract Assistance, and other state operating subsidies. Total Transportation Subsidies are under budget by 2% due to timing of those draws.

EXPENSES

Administration

<u>Wages/Fringe</u>	Wages are on budget. Fringe is 26% under budget due to the pension reserve funding expense timing. There will be entries and adjustments at year-end, and we should be close to budget at that point.
<u>Services/Utilities</u>	Services are 17% over budget, due to additional snow removal this past winter. Equipment & Maintenance, Supplies, Utilities and Insurance are all under budget. We tend to have a lot of year-end invoice processing, so these amounts should level off as well. Lease & CAM charges are over budget due to an increase in utility costs and heating the shelters at Union Station.
<u>Interest Expense</u>	Interest Expense appears to be over budget due to the way the premium entry for the RANS is handled. This will end on budget.
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	Miscellaneous Expenses are markedly under budget due to the \$2M RANS paydown being included in this budget line. This entry will also be made at year-end and bring this line to budget.

Paratransit Operations Our Paratransit costs are currently under budget by 4%. This is expected to be right around budget by year-end. These costs are directly affected by the cost of gasoline.

Fixed Route Operations

<u>SATCo/VATCo</u>	SATCo/VATCo is currently under budget by 7%, but this is expected to be at budget by year-end.
<u>UMass Transit</u>	UMass is currently 13% over budget but will not incur any reimbursement for June. They will end right on budget.
<u>Shuttles</u>	Shuttle costs are 5% under budget. These costs are expected to end on budget and are also directly affected by the cost of gasoline.

We are showing a \$2.9 Million profit due to expense timing. \$2 Million of this amount is the RANS pay down and \$500,000 is the pension reserve payment. Both of these expenses will be recognized at year-end.

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Lori Brodeur: It is the actual funds received. Sometimes agencies still purchase passes if they have funds that need to be used.

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6. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT

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

Systemwide fixed route ridership continues to increase. Ridership for April was 1,047,693, up 5.6% over FY 25.

Ridership by operator for March:

- DGR 678K up 60K (9.7%) from April of 2025
- UMass 365K down 5K passengers (-1.4%) from April of 2025
- Hulmes 3423 up 531 passengers (18.3%) from April of 2025

Paratransit Ridership: FY 26 has been challenging for paratransit growth over the prior year. Ridership for April was 19,325, a decrease of 329 riders or 1.6% over the prior year.

Northern Tier Survey Report:

In March and April of 2025, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission conducted the Northern Tier Survey on PVRTA's behalf. The Northern System provides 39% of all fixed-route rides in the Pioneer Valley. Overall, 71% of service ratings indicated satisfaction with PVRTA service. The full report is included in your Board packet. Highlights of the survey include:

Satisfaction levels of 80% or higher for:

Driver conduct, Safety onboard the bus and PVT customer service

Satisfaction at 75-80% for:

Bus stop safety, driver enforcement of rules and cleanliness on board vehicles

Areas where improvement needs were noted include:

Service where “I desire”, travel time, on time performance and frequency of service.

Route Updates:

Link 413: This service continues to grow with ridership surpassing 700 total passengers for all three routes with most of the ridership (approximately 60%) occurring on the Pittsfield Northampton Route (904).

Route 901 service between Pittsfield and North Adams.

Route 903 service between North Adams and Greenfield

Route 904 service between Pittsfield and Northampton

B49: Began service on March 30th, this route providing service between Ware and Holyoke along state routes 9 and 202. Ridership on this route is consistently robust with an average of 31 passengers per day and a total of 1,560 passengers through June 8th.

G47 began service on May 18th. This route provides a direct connection between Northampton and Southwick and operates on 70-minute frequency Monday through Friday. Ridership on this route has averaged 46 passengers per day in the first 15 days of service with a total ridership through June 8th of 693 passengers. A promising start.

G1 beginning with the start of the summer service the G1 Chicopee/Sumner-Allen will be split up into two routes, the G1 Chicopee, and the G1 Springfield in an effort to minimize the impacts of the ongoing construction along the Sumner Avenue corridor and the X. Overall frequency and scheduling will remain close to the current schedule.

Safety and Security:

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

April saw a decline in the overall assault rate from the previous month and the previous year with six total assaults on drivers systemwide. To date in CY 2026, the rate both per 100K Revenue Miles and 100K passengers is the lowest we have reported since record keeping began.

Grants:

MA CEC Act4All 2 Paratransit Fleet Electrification Grant:

Work continues on this project with the Paratransit Electrification Master Plan having been completed. The design for the initial electrical upgrades is complete, and the project is scheduled to bid in the next few weeks.

Due to market challenges, the first four (4) paratransit electric vans were ordered early and have been delivered. They will be charged offsite until construction of the charging infrastructure is complete.

Tim Sheehan: The ridership numbers, they are back to pre-covid numbers. Did the state do projections of where RTAs should be with ridership? Are we the same with other RTAs for fare free. Not seeing increase of ridership due to fare free.

Sandra Sheehan: Ridership from 2024 to 2025 increased by 24%. In 2024, riders were paying a fare. In 2025 the system was fare free.

Tim Sheehan: Pre-covid timeframe, we had a higher level of ridership than a couple years of fare free. Thought there would be more of a demand for fare free.

Paul Burns: We need to look at everything related to covid.

Sandra Sheehan: We've seen an increase in ridership with the added service frequency. In the fiscal years pre-covid service had to be reduced in order to balance the budget thus, there was less service than what is being provided now

7. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, reported the following:

On the state level, the conference phase of the state budget commenced with the assignment of the Conference Committee members. The funding that is being discussed for FY27 includes the appropriations for FY27 from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund and the Fair Share Amendment as well as Supplemental Budget from the CY2026 Fair Share collection. This budget is basically level funded for transit operations.

On the federal level, the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations Subcommittee passed on May 21st the THUD Appropriations Act, 2027. The bill significantly cuts public transit and passenger rail funding, compared to the FY26 enacted levels. Specifically, the THUD Appropriations bill provides \$16.5 billion for public transit in FY27, a cut of \$4.6 billion (-22 percent) from the FY26 enacted level. The House Committee Advanced the Bill on June 5th.

PVTA staff participated in a safety and security meeting held at Union station centered around the youth disturbances that have occurred. The meeting included representatives from the Hampden County Juvenile Court, Probation Court, DYS, DCF, District Attorney's Office, Hampden County Sheriff's Office, Springfield Police Department, Springfield Public Schools, Family Advocacy Center, Amtrak Police, Union Station Security (MJ Norton), etc. Mayor Sarno and Representative Gonzalez were in attendance. The discussion centered on what actions can be taken to curtail youth disruptions at Union Station. It was agreed that in addition to the current measure PVTA takes, smaller committees will be established to address the core issues resulting in Union Station being a gathering spot for youth.

PVTA is in receipt of four electric and two 60' diesel transit buses. In addition, PVTA has taken delivery of four Ford Model 1 electric paratransit vans.

8. NEW BUSINESS

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

9. OLD BUSINESS

Cindy Tarail: Do we know what we are doing regarding the continuation of the fare free program?

Sandra Sheehan: Yes, we have issued a press release that money has been allocated in the House, Senate, and Governors Budget. We will be continuing the program and once we know the amount allocated, we will determine how long we can remain fare free.

10. 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		
Easthampton	Cynthia Tarail		
Holyoke	Stephen Fay		
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Westfield	Peter Miller		
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell		

Motion passed by a vote of 37.76.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 12:53 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETIER

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Advisory Board Minutes of 5-20-26

Minutes Approved: August 19, 2026