
**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
December 7, 2016**

The Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Office located at 2808 Main Street in Springfield, MA, at 12:00 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL

	<i><u>Present (39.14 vote)</u></i>	<i><u>Not Present (22.85 vote)</u></i>
Agawam	Richard Theroux	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary	
Chicopee		Steve Huntley
East Longmeadow		Carolyn Brennan
Easthampton	Linda Talbot	
Granby	Jessica Langlois	
Hadley		David Moskin
Hampden		Becky Moriarty
Holyoke		Mayor Alex Morse
Leverett		Peter D'Errico
Longmeadow	Mark Gold	
Ludlow		Carmina Fernandes
Northampton	Wayne Feiden	
Palmer		Paul Burns
Pelham		Mark Santos
South Hadley	Marilyn Ishler	
Springfield	Anthony Wilson	
Sunderland		Sherry Patch
Ware	Nancy Talbot	
West Springfield	Jim Czach	
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham	Paula Dubord	
Williamsburg		David Mathers
ADA Representative		TBD
Rider Representative		TBD

A quorum of 31.01 majority vote being present, Vice Chairman Brian O'Leary called the meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:09 PM; majority vote of 39.14 present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice Chairman Brian O'Leary opened the floor for public comments.

No Public Comments.

3. X98 SERVICE CHANGES

Chairman of the Route Committee Brian O'Leary stated that it was the recommendation of the Route Committee for the Board to approve the proposed changes to the X98 and the Tiger Trolley.

Josh Rickman, Manager of Planning & Operations, stated that PVTA is proposing that all X98 route Northampton Cross-town trips begin 30 minutes later than currently scheduled. There will be a bus every 30 minutes (either the X98 or R44) from the Academy of Music/Masonic St. to Stop & Shop and Hampshire Plaza (instead of these two buses leaving at the same time every 60 minutes) from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. No service reduction is proposed. Public hearing for this proposed change was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2016 from 4:30-5:30 PM at the City Council Chambers in Northampton.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if the Board had any questions on the X98 proposed changes. Hearing none. Vice Chairman O'Leary asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the X98 changes as presented.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Theroux/Feiden) to approve the X98 changes as presented.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

4. TIGER TROLLEY SERVICE CHANGES

Mr. Rickman stated that to improve the availability of service on the Tiger Trolley, PVTA is proposing that this bus travel from South Hadley to the Holyoke Transportation Center via the Route 116 Bridge and Lyman Street, rather than the Route 202 Bridge as it does currently. All existing stops in South Hadley will continue to be served and new stops on Lyman Street will be available. Also, the South Hadley Public Library will be re-designated a Transit Access Point (TAP), which requires the traveler to call 413-285-8195 between 9:00 AM and 4:45 PM to request pick up. No service reduction is proposed. A public hearing for this proposed change was held at the South Hadley Public Library on Thursday, October 6, 2016 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

The Tiger Trolley was introduced to service in August of 2014. The purpose of this shuttle is to provide access from downtown Holyoke to housing, commercial, and other destinations in South Hadley.

The Tiger Trolley is also a pilot project for the PVTA, as it operates as a "flex" route. The Tiger Trolley "flexes" to serve designated Transit Access Points (TAP) which are off route. These TAPs include Lathrop Village (residential area), United Methodist Church, Raymond Center (Medical facility), and the Senior Center. Individuals can be picked up at a TAP by calling PVTA at least a half hour before the bus they want to use departs from the Holyoke Transportation Center or up to 7 days in advance.

The Tiger Trolley is considered a community circulator. This means that the route should transport a minimum of 5 passengers per revenue hour. During the 22 months of operation, the Tiger Trolley has not surpassed 3.4 passengers per revenue hour.

This proposal recommends changing the Tiger Trolley's route to provide better access for Holyoke residents to increase overall ridership to minimum standards. Currently, the Tiger Trolley uses the Mueller Bridge (Route 202) to connect to South Hadley. The original intent of this route was to serve Lathrop Village, as well as provide direct service to the South Hadley Public Library. However, there has been very little ridership from the Lathrop Village complex. The proposal will instead route the Tiger Trolley through the Flats in Holyoke on Lyman Street and use the Vietnam Memorial Bridge (Route 116) into South Hadley.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if the Board had any questions on the Tiger Trolley proposed changes. Hearing none. Vice Chairman O'Leary asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the Tiger Trolley changes as presented.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Ishler/Slaughter) to approve the Tiger Trolley changes as presented.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

5. APPROVAL OF SMART CARD IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. Rickman gave a presentation on PVTA's Fast Break Smart Card and reported the following:

A limited pre-test of approximately 200 Fast Break Cards was conducted during the summer and fall of 2016 with students of Springfield Technical Community College. The purpose of the pre-test was to establish technical operability practices and field test the function of the cards and fare box equipment as well as to develop a training program for bus drivers and staff for the handling and integration of data from the smart cards into PVTA's overall fare information and reporting database.

PVTA will be phasing the roll out of the smartcard for the following reasons:

- Big Y was not willing to sell the passes using the computers that sell the smart cards. Limited geographic availability of the Smart Card.
- Soft Roll out will ensure technical issues will be limited. Limiting issues will build customer confidence in the ability and success of the card.
- Phasing also allows the PVTA to provide more in depth education to the PVTA Customers included LEP populations

Phase one (February through July 2017) Smart Card Features

- Sale and reloading of up to three 31-day regular passes (\$45.00 each) or E&D passes (\$22.00 each)
- Balance protection registration available at E-fare portal via www.pvta.com and customer service windows.
- Limited Use Cards sold and loaded at Customer Service windows with up to two regular 31-day passes (no balance protection; no E&D passes).
- The \$3 acquisition fee will be waived during Phase 1

Phase two (August through December 2017) Smart Card Features:

- All Phase 1 features will be available.
- Features on existing and newly sold cards will be expanded to include stored value pre-loading up to \$100 of stored value to allow card holders to pay for single fares, transfers, and 1 day passes (purchased at fare box).
- 3-day pass function will be added.
- The \$3 acquisition fee will be implemented.

Phase three (January through June 2018): Rollout at Retail Outlets. PVTA will establish up to 10 additional outlets where Fast Break Cards may be purchased and reloaded (and Fast Break E&D Cards can be reloaded). These are likely to be grocers, drug stores, or discount merchandise stores located near high-volume PVTA bus stops, and which also offer diverse geographic coverage. As with the phase two municipal sales locations, these phase three locations will also be located in environmental justice neighborhoods. All features and functions introduced in Phases one and two will be available.

PVTA will evaluate Fast Break Card use patterns and survey customers (both card users and non-users) as part of the implementation program to better understand customer needs, opportunities for program improvement, and to update the disparate and disproportionate impact analysis and mitigation measures of this equity analysis. This will include:

- Determination of the number and percent of users of each fare media and changes;
- Review of fares before the change and after program implementation;
- Comparison of differences for each fare media between users of color and overall users
- Comparison of differences for each fare media between low-income users and overall users

Fair Equity Analysis: Disproportionate Impact Assessment. “If a PVTA planned transit fare rate, fare media or major service change results in low-income Populations bearing a variance that is 20 percentage points greater in comparison to non-low-income populations, the resulting effect will be considered a low-income disproportionate impact.” PVTA Public Hearing Policy (September 23, 2015).

Some of the new purchase options and features for the Fast Break Card require the card holder to have a bank account and/or credit card. For purposes of this analysis, a “banked” customer is one who has a checking or debit account with a traditional bank or financial institution.

Internet access is required to use some features of the Fast Break Smart Card and Limited Use Card, including online purchase of either card, manual replenishment, and “auto buy” automatic replenishment of the Smart Card. Also, balance protection registration for stolen or lost cards requires card registration via an online service with PVTA (E-fare).

The Census 2013 data show that low-income persons, who are the vast majority of PVTA customers, have significantly less internet access than average: just 48.4% of people who earn less than \$25,000 per year or less have internet access.

Based on these general population characteristics, it is reasonable to estimate that at least 20% or more of PVTA customers, the majority of who are low-income, do not have regular internet access and would therefore be impacted by this requirement. Therefore, additional mitigation measures have been developed and are described below to assure that customers will have equal access to

the convenience features of the Fast Break Card, consistent with the PVTA Disproportionate Impact Policy

Potential disproportionate impact of Fast Break Smart Card fees and minimum stored value impacts and mitigation. The Fast Break Smart Card will require the card holder to pay a \$3.00 acquisition fee. The Smart Card also has the following fee schedule for replacement if lost before expiration: \$3.00 for first loss; \$5.00 for second loss; \$15.00 for third and all subsequent losses. Therefore, a customer who wishes to use a Smart Card must have \$3.00 on hand to acquire. As a mitigation measure, this \$3.00 minimum balance at time of acquisition can be applied to cash fare or pass products immediately.

PVTA's implementation of the Fast Break Card program is equitable with the mitigation proposed in this analysis. The analysis presented in this report demonstrates that the addition of the Fast Break fare media options will not disparately affect more than 20% of customers of color, and it will not disproportionately affect more than 20% of low-income riders with the mitigation measures proposed, which is consistent with PVTA's publicly developed policy for impact thresholds.

As the Fast Break Program is implemented, PVTA will conduct regular follow up customer surveys at intervals of no less than one per year to monitor the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures and develop and implement any new ones that may be necessary to address Title VI impacts.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked the Board if they have any questions on the Smart Card implementation.

Richard Theroux asked if this change also applies to paratransit.

Mr. Rickman stated this is just for Fixed Route, not paratransit.

Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none. Vice Chairman O'Leary asked for a motion from the Board to approve implementation of the Smart Card as presented based on review of PVTA's fair equity analysis, the Board believes there is no disproportionate impact on the protected groups for the phased roll out of the Smart Card.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Miller/Slaughter) to approve implementation of the Smart Card as presented based on review of PVTA's fair equity analysis, the Board believes there is no disproportionate impact on the protected groups for the phased roll out of the Smart Card.


Vice Chairman O'Leary asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned (Ishler/Slaughter) at 12:42 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST: 
BRANDY PELLETIER

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- X98 Proposed Service Changes
- Tiger Trolley Proposed Service Changes
- Smart Card Presentation

MINUTES APPROVED MARCH 29, 2017