
**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
November 16, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, November 16, 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>Present (33.28 votes)</u>	<u>Not Present (28.72 votes)</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown		Brian O'Leary
Chicopee		Steve Huntley
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler	
Easthampton		Cindy Tarail
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		Jeff Cyr
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 12:05 PM; majority vote of 33.28 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 October 4, 2022 Advisory Board Meeting.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Dubord/Squindo) to approve the meeting minutes from the October 4, 2022, 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			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Mark Gold		
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham			
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 33.28.

4. REPORT OF PVTA'S SUB-COMMITTEE'S

Doug Slaughter reported that the Finance & Audit sub-committee met on Monday, November 14th. The Committee voted to approve the minutes of September 29, 2022 as well as voted to accept the Budget to Actual Report.

The committee discussed the “Try Transit” grant program which will provide prepaid fares for all PVTA fixed route and paratransit trips November 25, 2022 through December 31, 2022. The program is designed to encourage new customers to “Try Transit” by offering no cost trips to shop or dine at local businesses, visit with friends and family, and commute to work during the holiday season.

Peter Miller, Chairman of the Route sub-committee reported that the committee met on November 15th. The committee voted to approve the minutes of June 16, 2022.

The committee received a report on PVTA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (STASP) and voted to recommend to the full Board, approval of the 2022 PTASP Update and approval of the FY23 Safety Targets. The committee also recommends to the full Board, approving the Title VI Equity Analysis Report for Labor-Related Staffing Service Adjustments on the G2E, B6, B7, and X90.

Chairman Slaughter asked the Board for a motion to accept the report of PVTA’s Sub-Committee’s

Motion: Moved and seconded (Squindo/Sorrell) to accept the report of PVTA’s Sub-Committee’s.

Chairman Slaughter asked if the Board had any discussion.

J.M. Sorrell: The Try Transit Program sounds like a great program. I have shared the program’s information with my community and State Representatives and encourages the Board to do the same.

Chairman Slaughter asked if there was any further 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			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
Hadley			
Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
Holyoke			
Leverett			
Longmeadow	Mark Gold		
Ludlow			
Northampton			
Palmer	Benjamin Hood		
Pelham			
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 33.28.

5. TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP)

Paul Burns, Director of Transit Operations, reported on PVTA's Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP):

2023 Update:

PVTA is required to review the PTASP annually with a focus on 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?

In reviewing the plan for 2023, the answer to questions 2 and 3 was yes. The answer to question 1 was no as a result of new changes mandated in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The following provides an overview of the changes made to the PTASP to ensure the current version addresses all relevant requirements.

1. Safety Committee Updates due to Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
 - a. Changes in membership
 - b. Changes in review and approval responsibility
 - i. The Safety Committee is now responsible for initial approval of the Agency Safety Plan
2. Safety Targets
 - i. Updating targets based on FY22 performance
3. De-escalation Training
 - i. Incorporating De-escalation Training as an element of the PTASP
 - ii. Adding FTA Assault prevention trainings
 - iii. Adding De-escalation training to the Disability Awareness program
4. Include strategies to minimize exposure of the public, employees etc. to infectious diseases or hazards.

Additionally, other changes were made to ensure consistency with updated processes and in response to the FTA's recent Safety Management Inspection at the MBTA.

Changes made for consistency with updated processes:

5. Employee Safety Reporting Program

- i. Changes to better align with the current actual process
- ii. Inclusion of screenshots from the ESRP
- iii. Inclusion of Employee Reporting Systems at each of the Operators within the Agency Safety Plan

Finally, new processes added in response to the FTA Review of MBTA’s Agency Safety Plan: include;

- 6. Inclusion of breakroom drop-in meetings by the Chief Safety Officer or designee

PTASP Safety Targets 2023:

At its November 2nd meeting, the Safety Committee voted to adopt the following Safety Targets for FY 2023:

Fatalities	0
Incapacitating Injuries	0
Miles Between Breakdowns Fixed Route	19,500
Miles Between Breakdowns Paratransit	34,500
Preventable Accidents/ 100,000 miles Fixed Route	1.5
Preventable Accidents/ 100,000 miles Paratransit	.7

The targets were set after examining the five-year rolling averages for each category as well as the prior year goal attainment. Operator input was solicited at the Safety Committee with input received from both front-line employees and management, as well as directly from each operator. Factors such as changing operating environment, pandemic impacts and anticipated construction activity were all considered in setting these targets.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Changes also mandate that the Safety Committee establish targets for risk reduction in three specific areas, reduction of vehicular and pedestrian accidents, and mitigation of assaults on transit workers. However, The Committee is awaiting additional guidance from FTA. Once the National Public Transportation Safety Plan is updated, that will provide guidance on how these targets should be defined then, the Committee will define those targets further and incorporate them into the PTASP.

We are asking the Board to approve PVTA’s 2022 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan update and the FY23 Safety Targets.

Chairman Slaughter asked the Board for a motion to approve PVTA’s Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).

Motion: Moved and seconded (Sorrell/Gold) to approve PVTA’s Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

- Approval of 2022 PTASP Update
- Approval of FY 2023 Safety Targets

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

Yes

No

Abstained

Agawam	Michael Squindo
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter
Belchertown	
Chicopee	
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler
Easthampton	
Granby	
Hadley	
Hampden	Becky Moriarty
Holyoke	
Leverett	
Longmeadow	Mark Gold
Ludlow	
Northampton	
Palmer	Benjamin Hood
Pelham	
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 33.28.

6. TITLE VI EQUITY ANALYSIS REPORT FOR LABOR-RELATED STAFFING SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS ON THE G2E, B6, B7, AND X90

Peter Kuusisto, PVPC Transit Planner, reported the following:

At its June meeting, the Board authorized public hearings and a Title VI analysis on labor related staffing reductions that were implemented on a temporary basis in December of 2021. The Title VI analysis found that “all four route changes are Disproportionate Impacts on people of color and disparate burdens on low-income riders.”

While the findings indicate disparate burdens and disproportionate impacts on each route, the analysis also concluded that, the routes were chosen based on the least impact on the overall system, while maintaining the span of service and geographic service area. PVRTA reviewed all other SATCo routes by their revenue hours, then by existing headway and finally by average Passengers per Revenue Hour. These routes fit PVRTA’s priorities with the fewest riders impacted without impacting the geographic service area. As a result, no mitigation strategies are proposed at this time. Our focus instead is on ultimately restoring service on the X90, B7 and B6. Service on the G2E will not be restored as that route is easily incorporated into the existing G2 with little impact on riders. Much of

the G2E ridership was SATCo drivers utilizing the route to access Union Station. SATCo has implemented alternate methods to facilitate drivers' transfers.

A full copy of PVTA's Title VI Equity Analysis Report for Labor Related Staffing Service Adjustments on the G2E, B6, B7, and X90 has been filed with the minutes of this meeting.

Chairman Slaughter asked the Board for a motion to approve PVTA's Title VI Equity Analysis Report for Labor Related Staffing Service Adjustments on the G2E, B6, B7, and X90.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Gold/Sorrell) to approve PVTA's Title VI Equity Analysis Report for Labor Related Staffing Service Adjustments on the G2E, B6, B7, 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			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
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Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
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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 33.28.

7. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Lisa Seymour, Chief Financial Officer, reported the following:

Revenue:

The farebox revenue is down by 7.8% which is better than it has been in the last few months. The school passes have not been billed during this period but are being billed for December as the contracts have been finalized.

Advertising sales are up by 39.3% and insurance recoveries have been more than budgeted increasing the variance by 127.7%. Other operating subsidies have not been billed as of yet but, this number will even out as the year progresses.

The federal operating grant which includes the ADA and Preventative Maintenance line item has not been billed. PVRTA also, has not billed any expenditures under the for CARES grant as of yet.

Expenses:

Administration is down slightly due to two positions being vacant at the moment. Paratransit vendor is down slightly due to the amount of trips performed.

Fuel is overbudgeted for Paratransit although it was budgeted at 30% over normal. This is due to the gasoline fuel cost variable. It is hoped the price will come down in the next few months.

SATCO/VATCO and UMass are under budget due to service reductions implemented because of workforce shortages.

Allocated IT support is behind on billing although this expense will even out in the next few months.

8. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT

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

Fixed Route Ridership: September ridership was barely higher in 2022 than in 2021, with a weak start to the semester on UMass routes offset by gains on VATCo routes. Despite this, September was still the busiest month in 2022 systemwide and for each garage individually and system wide.

September 2022 ridership was 628K, up 0.3% from 626K in September 2021.

- SATCo ridership was at 313K even with September 2021
- UMass was at 238K down 4k from September 2021
- VATCo was at 77K up 6k from September 2021

Route Updates:

R10: SATCo staff have worked to streamline runtimes on this route and consolidate all slack time to the end of each run. Beginning with the Winter Bid, run times will be reduced initially increasing layover time at Union Station and Westfield State University or the Olver Transit Pavilion. The change is expected to save between 15 and 30 minutes or more on each run depending on route specifics, time of day etc. There were no changes to the schedule other than one late-night arrival time at Union Station; the 10:06pm arrival is changed to 10:10pm. We will analyze the actual time savings once the changes take effect and may find that we are able to improve service to Westfield for future bids. The changes is expected to significantly decrease travel time between Westfield and Union Station.

New Routes:

G73E ridership dropped slightly in September, but at 7,382 boards was still the second busiest month ever reported on the route.

B79 continues to operate using smaller vehicles due to the lack of drivers with CDL licenses. However, the route has experienced significant increases in ridership this semester with preliminary data indicating October ridership nearing 500.

The Job Corps Tripper route continues to have very low ridership averaging about 3 passengers per day.

Paratransit:

Paratransit ridership continues to increase steadily when compared to the previous year. September ridership of 15,134 was our highest post pandemic ridership month. October ridership decreased slightly to 14,761 which is still an increase of more than 1900 passengers or 15.2% over FY 21; paratransit ridership has recovered to 66% of pre-pandemic ridership.

Dial-A-Ride Service Enhancements:

The expanded Dial-A-Ride pilot, approved by the Board in March, continues to be successful. Public hearings on the Dial A Ride expansion will be held in person on December 6th with hearings at 11:00 am in the third-floor conference room and at 3:00 pm at the Bangs Center in Amherst.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator, Sandra Sheehan, reported the following:

The final Triennial Review Report was issued by FTA. PVRTA has until March 2023 to implement the corrective actions recommended. Some of those actions have already been implemented. For the others, we are working with operators and subgrantees to implement them.

The State Audit is in its final stages, last week, an exit interview was held to which Chairman Doug Slaughter attended. Recommendations will be included in the final report.

PVRTA has prepared the three-year financial outlook for submission to MassDOT. This is based on last year's financial reports and this year's budget. It is also the template use for the development of next year's budget.

The fifteen Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) were selected to receive the MassDOT Fare Free Pilot Program. These funds were made available under Section 1595-6370 of the FY23 Budget Act. The \$2.5M allocated by the Legislation will be used to implement free fixed route and paratransit services during the 2022 holiday season starting on November 25th and ending on December 31st. The goal of the award is to increase access to transit services across the Commonwealth. PVRTA's share of these funds is: \$744,523. PVRTA's Manager of Marketing and Public Relations has been working with staff from other RTAs to create a marketing package as well as a logo to distribute throughout the state as we inform people of the upcoming pre-paid service.

PVRTA attended a meeting requested by City Councilors from the City of Springfield on October 19th. There is a proposed Resolution in support of making the B7, G2, and B6 routes free. This resolution was proposed in April of this year. PVRTA indicated a preference for any funds available to be used to improve overall service. We stated our concerns regarding equity as only those individuals residing within a certain distance to these bus routes will benefit from such a program while the rest of the residents of the city would not. We presented the difficulties the drivers will have letting passengers on the bus without paying while other passengers not residents of the route

alignments will have to pay. We also expressed our concerns with some passenger behavior that was observed during the pandemic when fares were not being collected. The City Councilors present at the meeting were not deterred by our comments. They requested that we come up with a proposal of what we believe to be equitable and easy to manage.

Although PVTA preference is to use any available funds to improve service frequency, PVTA and PVPC staff have prepared a presentation of a low-income fare subsidy similar to what is currently being study at the MBTA and what some other systems across the country have implemented as part of their low income fare program. A follow up meeting has been scheduled with Councilor Justin Hurst on November 15th. He has asked for the cost of providing a full subsidy and partial subsidy. PVTA staff has indicated that any change to PVTA’s fare structure needs the approval of the PVTA Advisory Board.

There was an incident on the B43 and a portion of the incident has been posted on TikTok. The video gives the perception of racial profiling. The passenger in the video was asked to leave the bus for not complying with reasonable direction from the driver and for her derogatory and threatening language that was not shown in the TikTok video. The full PVTA video of the incident has been viewed with five of the Vice Chancellors of UMass as well as the Police Chief and the opinion is in no way racial profiling and that what is shown in the TikTok video is an abbreviated portion of the incident.

10. NEW BUSINESS

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

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			
Chicopee			
East Longmeadow	Erin Koebler		
Easthampton			
Granby			
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Hampden	Becky Moriarty		
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Longmeadow	Mark Gold		

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Springfield	Tim Sheehan
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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 33.28.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 12:58 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

**ATTEST: _____
BRANDY PELLETIER**

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Advisory Board Minutes of 10-4-22
- PVRTA's FY23 2022 PTASP Update
- PVRTA's FY23 PTASP Safety Targets
- PVRTA's Title VI Analysis Report for Labor Related Staffing Service Adjustments on the G2E, B6, B7, and X90

Minutes Approved: 1/25/2023