

**PVTA
Pioneer
Valley
Transit
Authority**

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**MINUTES OF PVTA'S
PARATRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING
February 22, 2016**

The Paratransit Committee meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Monday, February 22, 2016 at the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Office located at 2808 Main Street in Springfield, MA, at 10:00 A.M.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT:

Richard Theroux, Agawam; Carolyn Brennan, East Longmeadow; Mark Gold, Longmeadow; Paula Dubord, Wilbraham; Brian O'Leary, Belchertown; Marilyn Ishler, South Hadley; Paul Burns Johnson, Palmer;

Other's Present: Becky Moriarty, Hampden; Steve Huntley, Chicopee; Mary MacInnes, PVTA; Josh Rickman, PVTA; Brandy Lamour, PVTA; Price Armstrong, PVTA; Robin St. Amand, PVTA; Paul Anziano, Hulmes Transportation; David Elvin, PVPC; John Bennett, General Public;

NOT PRESENT:

A quorum being present, Chairperson of the Paratransit Committee, Carolyn Brennan, called the Paratransit Committee meeting to order at 10:06 A.M.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 27, 2016

Chairperson Brennan asked for a motion from the Committee to approve the Paratransit meeting minutes held on January 27, 2016.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Ishler/O'Leary) to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 Paratransit Committee Meeting.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

2. ON TIME PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS FOR PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Josh Rickman, Manger of Planning and Operations reported the following on-time performance improvement options for paratransit service:

Impact of a cap by community; this product estimates the number of senior van trips that would be completed by community if the cap was implemented. The cap would reduce the Senior Van ridership by approximately 60%. To estimate the impact all senior van service trips from January 1 through December 31 were exported, then the number of trips during this period were reduced by 60%.

Service delivery cost; the figures presented are audited numbers from FY15. The second graph comes from the 2012 Comprehensive Service Analysis that compared PVTA's cost to peer agencies.

Origin and destination by community; origin and destination numbers represent ridership from January 1 to December 31 of 2015. This product provides a map of the member's community and a spreadsheet with the total number of trips to other PVTA communities. The maps highlight the community in Green, abutting communities in yellow, and other regional locations in white.

PVTA service delivery compared to other RTA and Authorities; information was gathered from six other New England transit authorities on how their senior van service operates. A summary of each property is provided and broken down into service provision model, funding and service area and service hours. This is presented into a graph which compares providers based off of their size and the number of available service hours. To bring PVTA van service closer to other agencies service delivery methods, an adjustment to the number of hours and days could be considered. The service could be provided to seniors from 10AM to 2PM every weekday. This would reduce the number of service hours from 37.5 to 20 per week. Furthermore 10AM to 2PM would not impact the peak demand of ADA riders. Alternatively, the service could be reduced on only certain days of the week. Service could be provided on Monday, Wednesday or Friday's. These service days could also be broken down into geographic areas to not overly burden the system on specific weekdays.

Medical transport only for senior van; roughly half of all senior van trips are for medical purposes. This product estimates the number of trips that would be completed if only medical trips were provided. Using ridership data from January 1st to December 31st, a fifty percent reduction in the number of trips was applied to each community.

Changing eligibility to sixty five plus; PVTA receives Mobility Assistance Vans from the State currently which are to be utilized by individuals over the age of sixty.

Eliminating Regional Trips; as demonstrated through the agency comparison memo PVTA provides a senior service that is more robust than most authorities. On average more than 80% of all senior trips are accomplished within town trips or to abutting communities. This option would be accompanied by funding for communities interested in providing transportation within their community. A town would be given \$10 per senior van trip provided in FY16. If agreed, PVTA would not provide any senior van service in that community and the town would take over the responsibility for transporting their seniors in town and to other PVTA communities. PVTA would also be willing to donate vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life to enhance the resources available for these participating communities.

Mr. Rickman presented senior van service delivery options:

1. Eliminate Regional Transportation Trips, retain in town and abutting community trips
 - Provide select Council on Aging's (COA) funding for provision of senior van service in their community
 - Provide select COA's vans for transportation
2. Reduce the number of hours or days that senior van service is provided
 - Operate on non peak hours
 - Operate on certain days
3. Provide medical only transportation to seniors
 - Roughly half of all senior van trips are for medical purposes
 - Municipalities responsible for all other trip purposes
4. Institute cap on senior van service as recommended by PVTA
 - Variable cap based off of January Board Presentation

Mark Gold asked for a cost comparison of the funding that each state gets for providing van service.

Mr. Rickman stated we can get that information but the purpose of this is not necessarily to save funds but to improve our on-time performance (OTP). Our on-time performance has been running at about 90% and in our contract with Hulmes Transportation our contract states we need to have a 95% on-time performance. We are limited to changes we are able to make in our ADA service. There has been a 15% increase in senior van service this year and if we do not put a program in place now we need to make a decision for going forward.

Richard Theroux stated he believes we have more of a policy decision to make as Mr. Rickman said; the service is going to continue to grow.

Paul Burns Johnson stated that suppose we eliminate senior service, majority of seniors will transfer to ADA service. Until we understand the numbers we need to see who would be ADA eligible.

Mr. Gold stated that this is financial information for both services. If we reduced dial-a-ride what would happen to these numbers. We need to understand what is the cost of adding additional funds or what is the savings in eliminating senior service.

Mr. Burns stated that 50% or more of our senior trips in Palmer are regional and does not see how grouping medical trips together will work.

Mr. Gold asked what kind of fares for fixed route would be needed to subsidize paratransit service.

Mary MacInnes, PVTA Administrator, stated subsidizing paratransit service with fixed route fares would be unfair to the fixed route passengers.

Mr. Gold stated that financials shows on the overall spreadsheet as an overall organization, not separating fixed route and paratransit service.

Mr. Gold asked what is considered not on time, fifteen minutes or an hour, etc.

Mr. Rickman stated that the window depends on what the person calls for. ADA service has a one hour pickup window and the night before the trip the passenger will get a twenty minute pickup window of when they can expect to be on the van.

Steve Huntley asked if we can expand the pickup window.

Mr. Burns Johnson stated that if there are more ADA riders now, we are not going to see an increase in OTP. The problem is going to be the same. People are just going to transfer to ADA service.

Mr. Gold stated that a rider would rather be late than have their service eliminated.

Ms. MacInnes stated that we are not looking to take away service from anyone; we are looking to manage trips better.

Mr. Gold stated that he does not believe that operating on certain days is going to fix anything.

Brian O'Leary stated that communities could be broken down by day for when they operate.

Mr. Burns Johnson stated that for option three, he does not believe cutting shopping trips for seniors is going to work. These are vital trips for some seniors. The minute we put a cap on senior service they will transfer to ADA.

Mr. O'Leary stated that we track medical trips, can we track shopping trips.

Mr. Rickman stated that we have survey result numbers but we cannot ask ADA passengers for a trip purpose.

Mr. Burns stated that he thinks capping senior trips needs to come off the table. This is the wrong first step and we need to examine the other options. If we did this we are driving people towards ADA service.

Mr. Rickman stated that a benefit of going off peak is we have staff available from 9am to 3pm to accommodate the trips.

Paula Dubord stated that we need to get adult day trips off dial-a-ride and changing service hours from 9am to 3pm seems the easiest option.

Chairperson Brennan stated that just taking care of adult day health trips is not going to solve this long term with the seniors.

Mr. Huntley asked PVTA to look at contacting those on Mr. Rickman's chart to see what other agencies OTP is as well as a sense of what their window of pick up time is.

Paul Burns Johnson made the motion to eliminate the cap option, option 4, from further discussion or possibility for consideration in the immediate future.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Burns Johnson/Ishler) to eliminate the cap option, option 4, from further discussion or possibility for consideration in the immediate future.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Paul Burns Johnson made the motion to negotiate a reduction in the on-time performance ratio from 95% to 90% and to explore eliminating PVTA providing adult day health trips and exploring one of the options left on the table (options 1, 2, & 3).

Motion: Moved and seconded (Burns Johnson/Dubord) to negotiate a reduction in the on-time performance ratio from 95% to 90% and to explore eliminating PVTA providing adult day health trips and exploring one of the options left on the table (options 1, 2, & 3).

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Marilyn Ishler made the motion for PVTA to strongly look at times from 9am to 3pm for PVTA to operate senior service.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Ishler/Burns Johnson) for PVTA to strongly look at times from 9am to 3pm for PVTA to operate senior service.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Paul Burns made the motion to not consider just providing medical trips to seniors as an option, eliminating option 3.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Burns Johnson/Theroux) to not consider just providing just medical trips to seniors as an option, eliminating option 3.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Gold stated that he cannot support this without additional data.

Chairperson Brennan clarified that a vote in favor would remove option 3 as one of the options.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any further discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Richard Theroux voted in favor, all other committee members voted against the motion.

Vote: 1 in favor, 6 opposed.

Motion failed.

Paul Burns Johnson made the motion to eliminate option 1 from consideration as an option of discussion.

Motion: Moved and seconded (Burns Johnson/Ishler) made the motion to eliminate option 1 from consideration as an option of discussion.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Gold stated that he thinks we should not eliminate this option because it would mean we are focusing just on 9am – 3pm.

Chairperson Brennan asked if there was any further discussion, hearing none, asked for all those in favor to say aye.

Paul Burns Johnson voted in favor, all other committee members voted against the motion.

Vote: 1 in favor, 6 opposed.

Motion failed.

The committee discussed the reality of a one hour pick up window for options 2 and 2A as well as the additional funds that would be needed for option 6.

Chairperson Brennan stated that if PVTA could send the information requested in this meeting to the committee and each committee member should compile a list of questions from the additional data to Mr. Rickman.

Chairperson Brennan scheduled the next Paratransit Committee meeting for Tuesday, March 15th at 11:00am at PVTA.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Brennan reported that there was no other business to discuss.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Paratransit Committee Meeting adjourned (Theroux/Ishler) at 11:59 A.M.

A TRUE RECORD

ATTEST:


BRANDY LAMOUR

Documents filed with Paratransit Committee Meeting packet:

- Paratransit Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2016
- On-Time Performance Improvement Option handouts

Paratransit Minutes Approved 3/29/16