



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Moving Our Region Forward

Union Station Hub 60 Foster Street Worcester, MA 01608

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**Worcester Regional Transit Authority
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes April 18, 2024**

Chairperson Belanger called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

AB MEMBERS ATTENDANCE VIA TELECONFERENCE

Present by Zoom webinar: Brian Pigeon – Worcester Alt. Mark Binnall – Auburn, Robert Spain – Millbury, Douglas Belanger – Leicester, Heather-Lyn Haley – Leicester Alt, Michael Ward – Clinton, Shannon Smith – Grafton Alt, Kevin Mizikar - Shrewsbury, Kelly Bol – Northbridge, Austin Cyganiewicz-Rutland, Robin Grimm – Sturbridge, Marcelino Guerra - Southbridge, (DP). Members entering after call to order: Jasmin Rivas – Southbridge, Winifred Octave – Worcester (RCP), Kendra Faldetta- Northborough.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: To accept the minutes for March 21, 2024

By: Robert Spain. 2nd: Mark Binnall. Vote: All in Favor (13 in favor 0 opposed) vote passed.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC - There was no business from the public.

FY'25 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Thomas Coyne reviewed the WRTA Fiscal Year 2025 Consolidated Budget as recommended by the Audit and Finance Committee. As discussed at the Audit and Finance Committee meeting and requested by the board the estimated fare revenue at \$4,533,426 is being replaced with the appropriate CARES ACT monies. The CARES ACT balance for FY'25 is \$16,017,058 and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) balance for FY'25 is \$2,812,085.

The FY'25 consolidated budget figures were recapped as follows: Total Expenses FY'25 are \$37,250,134 up 8.2% from FY'24 at \$34,435,512. Net Cost of Service: FY'25 is \$26,068,314 up 0.6% from FY'24 at \$25,918,635. State Contract Assistant is holding the same as FY'24 at \$19,931,480 and local assessments increase by 2.5% as indicated by law. MassDOT Discretionary Grant line item shows no figure due to pending approval of that budget. Thomas Coyne reviewed what their Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN) is and used for. RANs are short-term loan usually repaid from a named revenue source within a period of one year. The WRTA receives various monies from the State on different payment schedules so RANs are necessary to cover these differences.

AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE - Douglas Belanger stated the A&F Committee recommends the board accepts the budget as presented.

Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board votes to accept the recommendation of its Audit and Finance Committee and approve the fiscal year 2025 budget in the amount of \$37,250,134 as presented on April 18, 2024. By: Robert Spain, 2nd: Mark Binnall. Roll Call Vote:

- Brian Pigeon** yes
- Doug Belanger** yes
- Robert Spain** yes
- Kevin Mizikar** yes
- Mark Binnall** yes
- Robin Grimm** yes
- Michael Ward** yes
- Austin Cyganiewicz** yes
- Kendra Faldetta** yes
- Jasmin Rivas** yes
- Kelly Bol** yes
- Shannon Smith** yes
- Winifred Octave** yes
- Marcelino Guerra** yes

All in Favor (14 in favor 0 opposed) vote passed.

Communities Served:

Auburn	Brimfield	Douglas	Grafton	Millbury	North	Paxton	Southbridge	Wales	West Boylston
Barre	Brookfield	Dudley	Holden	New Braintree	Brookfield	Princeton	Spencer	Warren	West
Berlin	Charlton	East	Holland	Northborough	Oakham	Rutland	Sturbridge	Webster	Brookfield
Boylston	Clinton	Brookfield	Leicester	Northbridge	Oxford	Shrewsbury	Sutton	Westborough	Worcester



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UPDATE FROM PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR TITLE VI PROGRAM

Nick Burnham, Manager of Transit Operations and Planning spoke about the public hearings for the WRTA’s Title VI Program. There were no comments to report and the document, if approved would be submitted to the FTA. The document outlines how the level and quality of the WRTA’s services are provided for those that are covered under the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The document is being submitted for approval by the WRTA Advisory Board.

Motion: The WRTA Advisory Board votes to approve the 2024 Title VI Program. By: Robert Spain, 2nd: Mark Binnall. Roll Call Vote:

- Brian Pigeon** yes
- Doug Belanger** yes
- Robert Spain** yes
- Kevin Mizikar** yes
- Mark Binnall** yes
- Robin Grimm** yes
- Michael Ward** yes
- Austin Cyganiewicz** yes
- Kendra Faldetta** yes
- Jasmin Rivas** yes
- Kelly Bol** yes
- Shannon Smith** yes
- Winifred Octave** yes
- Marcelino Guerra** yes

All in Favor (14 in favor 0 opposed) vote passed.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORTS

Josh Rickman gave an overview of the hiring efforts by CMTM. CMTM is transitioning 5 to 6 persons to full-time while 5 new employees are undergoing training. The WRTA continues to work with new groups on partnering for employees. Josh Rickman spoke about a concept to improve reliability. The WRTA is working with Sched who will conduct the necessary study on bus scheduling and run times. Josh Rickman spoke about achieving a systemwide goal of 80% for on-time performance. The administration’s concepts/recommendations will be brought to the board by the summer of 2024. Josh Rickman explained how this process will assist in fulfilling his reliability goal presented to the board.

MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mark Binnall asked about adding noise to the new electric buses. Josh Rickman confirmed that the administration would look into options. Chairperson Belanger complimented the Union, CMTM and the WRTA Administration regarding the employee efforts. Chairperson Belanger asked for an update on new buses and vans. Nick Burnham, Manager of Transit Operations and Planning gave an overview of the vehicles forthcoming. Seven 35’ battery electric buses are due in the Spring of 2025 and three vans are due end of July 2025. In the summer of 2026 seven vans are due and will be assigned to CMTM. There was discussion about the charging locations and power backups. The WRTA is seeking to locate charging stations (outside) at the M&O. Power backups will also be addressed as this process unfolds. Josh Rickman addressed comments about long term goals for clean vehicle options. Josh Rickman commented on how transitioning plans reach to the year 2050. The WRTA will be looking at all options regarding clean energy to find the best match.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To Adjourn at 8:45 a.m.
By: Robert Spain, 2nd: Mark Binnall
Vote: All in favor (14 in favor 0 opposed)

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on May 16, 2024 at 8:00 a.m., via hybrid teleconference due to the Governor’s State of Emergency provisions for public meetings extended.

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth R Pokoly

Communities Served:

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Berlin	Charlton	East Brookfield	Holland	Northborough	Oxford	Rutland	Sturbridge	Webster	Worcester
Boylston	Clinton		Leicester	Northbridge		Shrewsbury	Sutton	Westborough	