

**Worcester Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board**  
**Meeting Minutes October 23, 2025**  
**Hybrid WRTA Hub 60 Foster St. 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room & Zoom Webinar**

1. **Chairperson Belanger called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.**
2. **Clerk Robin Grimm called the roll**

Stephen Rolle – Worcester, Brian Pigeon Alt – Worcester, Douglas Belanger – Leicester, Bradford Howard Alt – Charlton, Remote Attendance members: Brian Bullock – Holden, Robert Spain – Millbury, Suzanne Lewandowski – Alt, North Brookfield, Robin Grimm – Sturbridge, Jennifer Gingras Alt – Westborough, Carol Grueneich Alt - Northborough, Mike Kennedy CWD – Millbury, Attending after roll call: Mark Binnall - Auburn, Remote Attending members: Nelly Medina RCP – Worcester, Adam Menard Alt – Auburn.

3. **Approval of Minutes from September 18, 2025**

**Motion: To accept the minutes for September 18, 2025 By: Mike Kennedy. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Robert Spain. Vote by Roll Call: (10 in favor, 0 opposed) vote passed.**

Steve Rolle	yes	Robin Grimm	yes	Suzanne Lewandowski	yes
Brain Bullock	yes	Jennifer Gingras	yes	Bradford Howard	yes
Douglas Belanger	yes	Carol Grueneich	yes		
Robert Spain	yes	Mike Kennedy	yes		

4. **Business from the Public**

Adam Thielker, participating remotely, asked for an update on the improvements for access. The Administrator gave a brief update on the progress of the VIP meeting and the talks. Also requested were the approved plans for the lobby design. Administration will send a copy via email. The June and/or July board meeting minutes include an overview of that plan. David Webb thanked the board for the upgrades to the buses and looks forward to the apps coordinating with them. David Webb questioned how long the fare-free period would continue. Chairperson Belanger explained that any decisions regarding fares were addressed annually during the budgeting process, in consideration of State funding. The WRTA remains fare-free until June 30, 2026.

5. **WRTA Rebrand - - Jamie Winters, Director of Marketing & Communications**

A presentation was given on the new logo and its design concept. Based on the survey responses, the WRTA Administration feels this design best incorporates optimism, while upholding its heritage and geographical importance. The double interlocking heart will be in retroreflective white for safety, and the recognizable blue, as the primary color, was also chosen. The new slogan, connecting the brand to service, will be “moving the Worcester region forward with heart,” in an orange palette. Every bus will have the WRTA’s website/ phone number on the back of the bus above the last window. Exterior advertising options will change as full and half wraps become more popular. There will be an increase in the available internal advertising space. Digital internal displays are programmed for ads tailored to specific locations along the route. The Administration will give an update on advertising changes to the board at a later date. The WRTA will be working on additional marketing materials and a website update. Chairperson Belanger suggested radio ads featuring spot-the-bus prizes. The launch date is February 13, 2026. The next step will be to finalize the bus stop design in coordination with the bus stop study.

6. **Administrators Report - Josh Rickman, WRTA Administrator**

- **The Fixed Route Technology Upgrade** remains on schedule for rollout on January 1, 2026. Installation of the infotainment screens is now on the buses, with testing to follow until possibly December. Bus announcements are time-point-only at this time. One can track the bus on the screen while on board. English and Spanish are utilized. The map screen on the bus also shows transfers to another route. The mobile data terminal and dispatch monitoring platform were also pictured. The Administration thanked CMTM for their cooperation during these installations.
- **The VIP Task Force** had two meetings in September in which the administration assigned tasks based on the feedback received. The task force will meet again in mid-November to review the outcomes of

**Communities Served:**

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

the assigned tasks and to gather further feedback. Many of the technologies used require GTFS-RT information to support applications' use or design. The WRTA is working to provide the means to gather and share the general transit feed specification (real-time) so that further enhancements can be forthcoming. Mark Binnall asked about installing platform signage. Real-time signs should be on the platform between January and February 2026. Nelly Medina spoke about an existing App for the visually impaired that uses beacons and GPS to assist. Nelly Medina also spoke about the need for transit wait stations. The WRTA is working to obtain the GTFS-RT required for Apps and to review the feasibility of using the MBTA's QR Code system.

- **Paratransit Rider Forums** has a new platform to provide direct access to WRTA Administration and will feature new ways to engage via Zoom. The meetings will be held quarterly with specific administrative updates and reports. Breakout rooms will be available for more detailed and one-on-one discussions. Mike Kennedy commented on some confusion amongst the public about the format change for the TPAG meeting. Mike Kennedy stated how the changes are productive.

**7. Advisory Board members and Other(s) as directed by the Chairperson**

The Administrator addressed questions about the construction schedule. The schedule will be discussed within the next two weeks, and customer service will be moved to the platform. The Administration will inform the board once everything has been finalized. New bus orders will be ½ hybrid and ½ diesel, with the addition of 40-foot buses, which will provide about 8 additional seats.

**8. Adjourn**

**Motion: To Adjourn at 8:54 a.m. By: Robert Spain, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Mark Binnall Vote by Roll Call: All in Favor (12 in favor 0 opposed) vote passed unanimously.**

Steve Rolle	yes	Robin Grimm	yes	Suzanne Lewandowski	yes
Brain Bullock	yes	Jennifer Gingras	yes	Bradford Howard	yes
Douglas Belanger	yes	Carol Grueneich	yes	Mark Binnall	yes
Robert Spain	yes	Mike Kennedy	yes	Nelly Medina	yes

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next WRTA Advisory Board Meeting will be on November 20, 2025, at 8:00 a.m., Hybrid: in-person at 60 Foster Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room & Zoom Webinar.

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth R. Pokoly

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