

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

April 13, 2023

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert Sullivan, Chair, City of Brockton	Michael Lambert, Administrator
Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon	Linda Sacchetti, CFO
Dottie Fulginiti, Town of Easton	Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater	Charles C. Stevenson, General Counsel
Robert Thayer, Consumer Rider Representative	Kathy Riddell, BAT

Chairman Sullivan called the meeting to order. Mr. Lambert performed a roll call and a quorum was declared. Mayor Sullivan stated that based on Governor Baker's extended declaration of a state of emergency on April 12, 2020, enhanced open meeting regulations were utilized for the meeting. The meeting was being recorded and live streamed on BAT's YouTube video platform to provide a public forum/access. All legal requirements were met.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. There were no formal comments; however, Mr. Lambert wanted to share some feedback BAT received from a rider. The rider had been in contact with both the Mayor and himself regarding recent incidents of the bus moving when passengers were still at the farebox (forward of the yellow line). BAT is following up with the workforce to correct the issue, as it is against the law for bus to be in motion when individuals are not behind the yellow line. The Mayor thanked the rider for reaching out with his comments and assured him all his complaints were being followed up. The Mayor also raised a safety issue he witnessed at Westgate Mall and thanked BAT for following up on it right away, BAT has ordered Transdev to initiate follow-up trainings with the workforce to reinforce that customer safety is of utmost importance and to follow the collective bargaining agreement regarding discipline, if necessary

Number three on the agenda was approval of the minutes of the January 12, 2023 meeting. Mr. Hegarty made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. Dutton seconded the motion. Mr. Lambert ran a roll call and all were in favor.

Next Ms. Forrester presented a service update with the Performance Dashboard. She stated that standards and goals in the dashboard were set in 2020. There have been fixed route ridership increases and excellent on-time performance. Demand Response has seen a slight increase in ridership. DIAL-A-BAT has had some issues bringing the workforce back to pre-COVID levels. On-time performance has suffered and BAT is meeting with DAB managers weekly to find solutions. Safety has had a very good year as well as Maintenance. Under Customer Service, there has been an uptick in valid complaints and BAT has met with managers to address the issues. Fixed Route ridership in March was at the highest since the beginning of the pandemic. Bridgewater

University service is performing very well with a large increase over FY22 as classes are now in person and the University has a full complement of student drivers.

BAT initiated a creative and quick way to improve service on the Route 10/11 by moving from a one-hour pulse to 30-minute pulse thereby almost doubling the ridership since 11/28/22. Similar action was taken on the Route 9 due to the Signature Health Care medical facility at 110 Liberty St. implementing Urgent Care access 7 days a week to help alleviate medical needs with the Brockton Hospital closure. Future increases to service are planned as ridership returns past COVID shutdown.

DIAL-A-BAT has had a steady increase in ridership and we expect that to continue. BAT and DAB are working on improving on-time performance.

Ms. Sacchetti provided the financial update. The FY23 budget provides 8 months worth of data. An amendment will be provided at the May meeting. The expense numbers are favorable to budget by \$1.3 million. Expenses are lower than expected due to driver positions going unfilled, a mild winter, and a favorable fuel contract. The fixed route operator is in labor negotiations and an update to those proceedings will be provided at the next meeting.

Revenue is unfavorable to budget due to the period of "free fares". The State did provide BAT with \$295,000 to help offset the uncollected fares. A balancing of federal operating and state contract assistance will enable BAT to have a balanced budget at the end of the year.

Ms. Sacchetti noted that the draft FY24 budget will be amended and final budget will be presented at the next meeting when actual state contract assistance numbers should be available. Estimated Local Assessments were then discussed. She noted that the city and all the towns received a 2.5% increase in assessment with the exception of Rockland, whose assessment is higher based on the new service the town is receiving. The data will be updated to reflect actual ridership after the end of the fiscal year and the document finalized.

Number 6 on the agenda was a report by the Audit and Finance Committee. Mr. Hegarty gave an update on the meeting held just prior to the Advisory Board. He stated that the Committee was pleased with the performance and areas of savings and the balance of the budget at the end of the fiscal year. He also stated that the Committee voted to unanimously endorse BAT's joining of the Brockton Business Improvement District and encouraged the full Advisory Board to do the same.

Next was a presentation of Resolution #265 to authorize BAT to join the proposed Brockton Business Improvement District (BID). Details of the proposed non-profit were explained to the group. Mr. Hegarty made a motion to adopt Resolution #265. Motion was seconded by Mr. Dutton. A roll was called and all were in favor. Ms. Fulginiti commented that she was very enthusiastic of the BID as the program will make property in the district safer and more secure

for walkers and an overall more pleasant experience for all in the area including riders. She thanked everyone working on the effort to enhance downtown Brockton.

Number 8 on the agenda was the Administrator's Report. Mr. Lambert welcomed Mr. Thayer as the Customer Representative to the Board. He informed the Board of the customer safety campaign taking place to provide clear signage and ways for individuals to provide feedback. He noted the document being developed addressing Customer Rights and Responsibilities.

Mr. Lambert informed the Board of the two federal grants that BAT has applied for. One is the Low or No Emissions Grant and the other is the Bus and Bus Facilities Grant. Both are highly competitive and BAT is asking for 7 electric buses and infrastructure to support the buses. Each grant request is for \$13,000,000 which includes \$2,600,000 state share. BAT has identified these buses in its capital plan and vehicle replacement plan, which will provide funding for the vehicles should BAT not receive either grant. Mr. Lambert thanked the Mayor, OCPC and BAT's federal legislators for their letter of support for the grants. BAT anticipates 5 electric buses to be delivered next spring and will have a ribbon cutting. BAT's electrification project will provide benefits to both customers and non-customers by improving the environment/air quality in the region.

Next was an update on the Rockland Flex service. This micro-transit pilot program services all of Rockland, parts of Abington, Brockton Hospital and the BAT Centre. Fares are \$2 each way. BAT is in the "soft" launch phase and has not advertised the service but the ridership has been doubling every two months. This high-quality service is expected to exceed the previous fixed route service in Rockland. Uber and Lift service impact 2nd and 3rd shift workers, if BAT could direct funding to those organizations, it would be a huge benefit to riders and employers in the area.

Mr. Lambert informed the Board of the state audit on paratransit service performed on the MBTA. The state auditor is moving on the RTAs and BAT has started the process of providing the information requested.

Under Old/New Business, the Mayor informed the group of the expansion the Brockton Council on Aging and its temporary relocation to the Shaw's Center. He thanked BAT for providing a bus stop at the location and expressed the Council's gratitude on behalf of their clients. He thanked Mr. Thayer for joining the group and sharing his skill set.

Next meeting will take place on May 25th at 11:00 am. Mr. Dutton made a motion to adjourn the meeting and motion was seconded by Mr. Hegarty. Roll was called and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Riddell, BAT

Documents Included in April 13, 2023 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – January 12, 2023
3. Performance Dashboard
4. Fixed Route Ridership
5. BSU Ridership
6. Route 10/11 Ridership
7. DAB Ridership
8. Rockland Flex Route Ridership
9. FY23 Budget
10. FY23 Budget Summary
11. FY24 Draft Budget
12. Estimated Local Assessments FY23
13. Brockton Business Improvement District