

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

February 1, 2024

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert F. Sullivan, Chair
Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater
Stanley Zoll, Town of Stoughton
Carl Kowalski, Town of Whitman
Mary Waldron, OCPC

Charlie Kilmer, OCPC
Michael Lambert, Administrator
Linda Sacchetti, CFO
Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Charles C. Stevenson, General Counsel
Kathy Riddell, Assistant Grants Manager

Mayor Sullivan called the meeting to order and welcomed the group. Mr. Lambert performed a roll call and a quorum was declared. Mayor Sullivan stated that Governor Healey's 3/29/23 extension of temporary provisions allows for public bodies to continue to hold meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location. Enhanced open meeting regulations were utilized for the meeting. The meeting was recorded and live streamed on BAT's YouTube video platform to provide a public forum/access. Individuals can call 508-638-5934 for more information or to submit public comment. All legal requirements were met.

Mayor Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. Mr. Lambert said we have not received any public comments.

Next on the agenda was a review of the minutes of the 10/5/23 meeting. Mr. Dutton made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Mr. Zoll. A roll was called and all were in favor.

Number 4 on the agenda was a service update. Ms. Forrester presented the Performance Dashboard. She stated that it looked good. Fixed route service is doing very well and demand response has increased. Safety, in particular demand response, is showing excellent performance. Customer Service is also exceeding its goals. Mr. Lambert showed the group how ridership is steadily increasing. Not included were the statistics on January's ridership that just became available. Fixed route ridership exceeded the 2019 January ridership for the first time by over 4%. This is attributed to free fares and increased service. DIAL-A-BAT is stable overall but experienced a dip in December because there were fewer service days in the month.

Next, Ms. Forrester presented the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). The document was first produced in 2019 and its update is approved by BAT's Safety Committee and the Advisory Board. BAT's Safety Committee is comprised of joint members of management and the labor Union. The plan includes a risk reduction program and changes to the formal performance measures. A copy of the plan was provided in the Boards packet. Chairman Sullivan

asked for a motion. Mr. Hegarty made a motion to approve the safety plan as presented. Mr. Dutton seconded the motion. A roll was called and all were in favor.

Number 5 on the agenda was a financial update. Ms. Sacchetti stated that a full budget report was provided to the Audit and Finance Committee. To summarize, she stated that there was an increase in operating funds by \$3,392,452 and \$1,395,187 specifically for free fares for a six-month period through 5/31/34. At the next meeting in May a revised budget will be presented to the Board that will reflect operating fund increases and changes in service. BAT expects to balance its budget through accessing federal operating funds. As of end of FY23, BAT had in excess of \$13,000,000 in emergency relief operating funds and this allows BAT to be in a strong financial position in FY24.

Mr. Lambert provided the group with the Administrator's Update. He stated that with the Governor's level funding and new fair share funds BAT services are assured to be well funded. BAT's philosophy is to direct increased funding to its core services and ADA paratransit. BAT is seeking a new discretionary grant that is similar to the Rockland Flex service. The Rockland service has been considered very successful and is also funded by a discretionary grant. The new grant would be directed for 2nd and 3rd shift workers that do not have the same accessibility to public transportation that is provided during the day. Some of these workers already rely on Uber and Lift for their needs and the grant would supplement payment for these late-night services. He asked if anyone had any questions.

The free fare program runs through the end of May. More funds may become available for this program next year. The state and BAT is also looking over fareboxes and the best way to keep them in a state of good repair.

Fleet electrification program is moving forward. Five (5) battery electric buses are expected to be delivered in late May/early June. BAT is taking three approaches to supporting the pilot program with chargers. Ahead of the delivery, BAT will procure a mobile charger that will be able to go to different locations as needed. The second approach is to procure a semi-permanent charger mounted on a skid that can be moved by a fork lift to charge buses at the BAT Centre during the day and the third approach is to install permanent charges at the maintenance facility for overnight charging. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Mr. Lambert described the landscaping master plan. He noted that the BAT buildings are in great shape. However, the land around our facilities is just functional. The Mayor is bringing development investments to the downtown area. BAT is challenging interested parties to consider public safety, create gateways to the community and increase green infrastructure when they bid on providing BAT with a master plan. Additionally, BAT is encouraging developers to apply for an accreditation of the BAT Centre landscape project.

The group was informed that the State Audit of all the RTAs is finally complete after a year. However, BAT has not yet received a report. The audit reviewed cybersecurity and paratransit on-time-performance and other metrics. The Board will be informed as soon as it is available.

Mr. Lambert notified the Board of the new and improved Conflict of Interest training now made available from the state.

Mr. Hegarty gave the group an update of Audit and Finance Committee meeting held earlier in the morning. He stated that the organization is in a solid financial position with the use of the federal emergency relief funds that should sustain the system for a couple of years. Nothing else was discussed that required a vote of the Committee and he asked if anyone had any questions.

Mayor Sullivan asked if anyone had anything to discuss under Old/New Business. There was none. He noted that the next meetings would be held in May and June. He thanked everyone for their participation. Motion was made by Mr. Dutton and seconded by Mr. Hegarty to adjourn the meeting. Roll was called and all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Riddell, BAT
Assistant Grants Manager

Documents Included in February 1, 2024 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – October 5, 2023
3. Fixed Route Ridership
4. DIAL-A-BAT Ridership
5. Performance Dashboard FY24
6. FY24 Budget
7. FY24 Budget Summary
8. Enterprise 12/4/23 free fare article

