

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

April 25, 2024

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert F. Sullivan
Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon
Dottie Fulginiti, Town of Easton
Charlie Kilmer, OCPC
Michael Lambert, Administrator
Linda Sacchetti, CFO
Charles E. Stevenson, General Counsel
Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Emily Adams, Project Coordinator
Kathy Riddell, Assistant Grants Manager

Mayor Sullivan called the meeting to order and welcomed the group. 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.

Mr. Lambert was asked to call a roll. A quorum was established. Mayor Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. Mr. Lambert said no we did not receive any public comments.

Next on the agenda was a review of the minutes from February 1, 2024. Mr. Hegarty made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Ms. Fulginiti. 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 all looked good. Fixed route service is doing very well with a 63% increase over last year. BSU has remained level but combining BSU and fixed route, ridership is still strong at 27% over last year. Ms. Forrester said DIAL-A-BAT has a smaller increase in ridership but is expected to grow. She moved on to explain that standards and goals are being met and exceeded in most areas, especially fixed routes.

Number 5 on the agenda was a financial update. Ms. Sacchetti stated that this report is for three quarters of the fiscal year through March. Six months of fare free provided to riders December through May will be offset by the "Try Transit" grant from MassDOT that BAT received. DDS Program is reporting under budget but will be on budget by the end of the fiscal year. The Community Transit Grant Program is favorable and expects to close the year above budget. Auxiliary revenue will close the year under budget due to no sale of assets considered beyond their useful life. Income will close the year favorable to budget. Fixed route and

paratransit will close the year over budget on two line items. Fuel is also favorable to budget. Increased service but lower fuel contract award will offset usage. Interest expenses will close the year over budget due to the increased RAN borrowing rate. Ms. Sacchetti stated that we will see a reduction in the federal operating assistance due to a 3 million dollars increase in the state contract assistance. The FY25 draft budget is still under review and will be finalized and presented for vote at the May meeting. Overall expenses have seen increases in the past year and the FY25 budget reflects that. The estimated assessments have increased 2.5% over the prior year. They are calculated by service provided to each community. A final assessment schedule will be presented to the Board at the Sept/Oct Board meeting.

Number 6 on the agenda was the Audit and Finance Committee report. Mr. Hegarty said they concurred with Mr. Lambert to support the free fare program if there is funding for it. There were no items that require a vote from the Audit and Finance Committee. Ms. Fulginiti stated she is happy everyone is enthusiastic about seeing the results and benefits of the free fares and is hoping there is future funding for it to continue.

Number 7 on the agenda is the Administrator's report. Mr. Lambert provided an update on financial planning for the upcoming fiscal year. FTA FY24 5307 apportionments are now available. Mr. Lambert stated that for the first time the formula was run with post covid numbers. The RTAs including Brockton were flat; however. New Hampshire saw a 27.5% decrease. Mr. Lambert thought MA did better due to the investment in service that was implemented.

Next, fleet electrification was discussed. The first bus will hit the assembly line next week and they take about 2 weeks each to build. All five electric buses should be on site by the end of June. They will not be immediately needed for operations so there will be time for training for safe operations. The unveiling of the BEB will be in late September or early October in conjunction with BAT's 50th anniversary and customer appreciation day.

Mr. Lambert recommends staying fare free as long as the funding is available. There has been about a 20% increase in ridership over pre covid numbers due to free fare and expanded service. BAT will be continuing to add service starting July 1 and will report back to the board with the impacts of that expanded service. Federal recovery money is being used on an annual basis to help support expanding services and BAT plans to use that money out over a few years. Mr. Lambert explained he would like to see this decrease congestion in the city, help support economic development, and help improve people's quality of life. Mayor Sullivan gave his support in continuing free fares as long as funding is available.

A landscape master plan is under development to expand green infrastructure with the goal of the site becoming a registered arboretum. BAT is looking to support the economic development that is happening around the transit hub.

Under customer service initiatives, BAT is planning on working with a company to provide benchmark data to measure performance and customer satisfaction against national counterparts and to provide feedback on potential new initiatives. He asked the board to provide any requests they might have for new shelter locations. Mr. Lambert is working with the

Mayor on a customer safety video to be posted to BAT's website. Mr. Lambert asked if there were any questions on his report. There were none.

Mayor Sullivan moved on to item number 8 on the agenda, old business, new business, and other. There were no matters to discuss on this item.

Mayor Sullivan thanked everyone for joining the meeting. Mr. Hegarty made the motion to adjourn, and Ms. Fulginiti seconded. Mr. Lambert called roll, and all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Adams, BAT
Project Coordinator

Documents Included in April 25, 2024 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – February 1, 2024
3. Fixed Route Ridership
4. Bridgewater State University (BSU) Ridership
5. Fixed Route Ridership incl. BSU
6. DIAL-A-BAT Ridership
7. Performance Dashboard FY24
8. FY24 Budget
9. FY24 Budget Summary
10. FY25 Draft Budget
11. FY24 Estimated Assessments