

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

April 25, 2024

In Attendance:

Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon

Dottie Fulginiti, Town of Easton

Michael Lambert, Administrator

Linda Sacchetti, CFO

Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations

Emily Adams, Project Coordinator

Kathy Riddell, Assistant Grants Manager

Mr. Hegarty welcomed everyone and called the virtual meeting to order for the purpose of discussing business brought before the Audit and Finance committee in accordance with the agenda presented and the notice sent out on April 22, 2024. The meeting was held virtually and streamed live on BAT's YouTube channel to meet the public engagement requirements.

Mr. Hegarty asked if there were any public comments. Mr. Lambert stated that there were no public comments at this time.

The minutes from the meeting of February 1, 2024 were reviewed. Ms. Fulginiti moved to have the minutes approved and Mr. Hegarty seconded that motion. All were in favor.

Number 4 on the agenda was an update of the FY24 Budget. Ms. Sacchetti provided an update through March for FY24. BATs operating revenue is reporting unfavorable by \$900,000 and operating expenses are favorable by about \$658,000. Farebox revenues are unfavorable at the level of \$900,000 as BAT service is fare free for six months. The offset is a \$1.3 million "Try Transit" MassDOT grant awarded to BAT to cover free fares and associated costs. Auxiliary revenue is unfavorable to budget and will close the year under budget as no assets beyond their useful life will be disposed of in FY24. Fixed route and paratransit services are reporting under budget but with the filling of positions and added service they are expected to exceed budget at the end of the year. Fuel is reporting favorable to budget by \$62,000 as the increase in fuel usage was offset a lower fuel contract price. There is over \$13,000,000 remaining in the federal emergency relief funds that can be used this year to balance the budget and future years. A final FY25 budget will be provided at the next meeting. Mr. Lambert emphasized BAT is trying to balance fiscal responsibility and increased service coming out of COVID.

Mr. Lambert provided the Administrator's Report. He stated that for the first time since COVID, FTA used updated ridership numbers in their apportionment formula to allocate funding. As a result, BAT's 5307 funding is flat over last year. New Hampshire is part of the Boston UZA and

lost 27.5% of its funding. Boston and the RTAs fared better as they invested in increased services. BAT has invested in service and seen an increase in ridership. The governor's budget was level funded and the house budget was even better than the governor's.

Next was an update on bus electrification. The first bus hits the assembly line next week and will take about two weeks to build. This puts BAT on schedule to receive 5 electric buses by the end of the fiscal year. BAT is working with the manufacturer, operational team, National Grid, and city officials to make sure that we have safe integration of the new buses into the fleet. There will be a public unveiling in late September/early October in coordination with BAT's 50th anniversary and annual customer appreciation day.

Mass DOT has extra funds available from this year's free fare program. BAT applied for a grant to run through June as long as there are no concerns from this committee or the board. The program is yielding excellent ridership. Mr. Hegarty fully supports continuing the free fare program. The last item in this section is the Customer service update. Mr. Lambert explained the secret rider program that is conducted periodically. Drivers that receive perfect scores receive rewards and drivers that do not receive corrective action or re-training. Mr. Lambert also said BAT wants to create a customer service survey, separate from the secret rider program, on a twice-a-year basis in multiple languages and formats. One survey would be fixed to evaluate BAT's performance over time and compare it to previous years. The second survey would be to get input on specific initiatives.

Mr. Lambert informed everyone that there will be new shelters with lighting and new BAT signs as well as new big belly barrels at certain bus stops. Mr. Lambert stated he is working with some elected officials to create a safety video for BAT's website.

Mr. Hegarty asked if there was any old business or new business to come before the committee. Seeing none, Mr. Hegarty called for a motion to adjourn; Ms. Fulginiti made the motion to adjourn, and Mr. Hegarty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Adams, BAT

Project Coordinator

List of handouts for April 25, 2024:

1. Agenda
2. Meeting Minutes – February 1, 2024
3. FY24 Budget
4. FY24 Budget Summary
5. FY25 Draft Budget
6. Estimated Assessments