

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

April 16, 2020

In Attendance:

Mayor Michael Sullivan, City of Brockton Council
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater
Stanley Zoll, Town of Stoughton
Frank Lynam, Town of Whitman
Cathie Klabish, Consumer Representative
Dottie Fulginetti, Town of Easton

Mary Waldron, Old Colony Planning
Charles Kilmer, Old Colony Planning Council
Michael Lambert, Administrator
Linda Sacchetti, Chief Financial Officer
Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Glenn Geiler, Grants Manager
Kathy Riddell, BAT

Mr. Lambert explained that the meeting was going out on YouTube live to provide an open forum as a public meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM by Chairman Sullivan. He welcomed and thanked everyone for taking time to attend the meeting via the new normal of virtual meetings. He updated the group about Brockton's position relative to COVID-19. He stated that Brockton has 39 dead and 1,200 cases currently. He stated he has been in contact with Mr. Lambert and has been very impressed with BAT's response. He has also been in contact with the bus union and there has been excellent information sharing and cooperation. He also stated that the Governor has declared that virtual meetings were acceptable to meet public meeting requirements during these times of social distancing.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there was anyone who wanted to make public comments. There were none.

Chairman Sullivan asked for a motion to approve the Advisory Board Minutes of January 23, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Lynam and seconded by Mr. Zoll. Roll call was made and minutes were unanimously approved.

Next on the agenda was a service update. Mr. Lambert stated that since the beginning of the year BAT's service has been turned upside down. BAT's mission has remained the same with a flip in priorities to emphasize safety and comfort. BAT's original goal was to reverse the slow decline of the past 5 years of ridership which had been experienced across the country as well as here. Now the goal is to drive down ridership to provide essential trips and protect the workforce. Emphasis in daily operational calls has been focused on safety to protect essential front line workers. Daily calls began at the end of February that included operation managers. Extensive researched and planning started for BAT's response to the pandemic. Coordination also included city meetings, conversations with Board Members, MEMA, DPH and the Board of Health. Thanks to those early tasks, BAT was in a good position to put reduced service in place and protect drivers while still providing essential trips. The BAT Centre was closed down so individuals would not congregate and it provided drivers with enough space/distance for their breaks between trips. Rear boarding was implemented, fare collection suspended and additional physical barriers have been placed between the front and back of the bus.

Four drivers have tested positive for the virus. Three are fully recovered and back to work. The fourth has more recently contracted the virus but is not exhibiting extreme symptoms. The Board package provided to everyone has a list of all the steps BAT has taken. None of the Board members had any questions.

Next Mr. Lambert directed the Board's attention to the Performance Dashboard included in their packets. He noted that ridership is down 85% over this time last year. BSU will have no service in April and May as reflective of what is happening to all educational institutions. He noted that there are fewer cars on the road; however, speeding has become a threat. He wanted to thank first responders and the police for their assistance with this issue.

Item 5 on the Agenda was a financial update. Mr. Lambert stated that BAT would know more about its financial picture next month, but the key is that the CARES Act will provide BAT the ability to finish FY20 on budget and be in a strong position for FY21. The CARES Act is federal assistance that was supplied to the country for individuals and included public transportation. Public transit will play an essential role as the country begins its economic recovery. BAT anticipates increasing frequency of trips to provide more spacing/social distance. We anticipate reduced revenues but with the assistance of federal funds we should be able to maintain our workforce and service.

The amended budget for FY20 will be updated next month. It will reflect financial impact and there will be an inverse of federal funding to offset any shortfalls. The FY21 budget will be similar. It will reflect a 2 ½% increase of the prior year and 3% increase in state support, however, there may have to be some adjustments made but the budget should remain intact. BAT doesn't anticipate any changes to service including enhanced service to some communities. There were no questions regarding the financial update.

Ms. Sacchetti presented the Board with FY20 Estimated Assessments. They are based on FY20 service with a 2 ½% increase over the prior year plus \$50,000 for new service. New service includes expanded service to Stoughton and additional runs between BSU and the BAT Centre. Actual assessments will be finalized after the audit is complete.

Mr. Lambert stated that state funding is now surrounded by a significant question mark. In January, very optimistic signals were received from MassDOT, however, now everything has changed. There have been a number of discussions with MassDOT and they will continue as BAT clarifies its service and equipment needs. Everyone agrees that the CARES Act will ensure the system stays intact next year.

Number 6 on the agenda was the Administrator's Report. Mr. Lambert wanted to express his deep and sincere thanks to the Board for making themselves available to him about issues. Additionally, he offered an Op Ed to thank the front-line workers for their shared commitment to BAT's mission out on the front line and to all the staff showing up to work every day. He wanted to also give a "shout out" to the Brockton Board of Health for their excellent response and coordination during these difficult times.

Under Old/New Business, Chairman Sullivan thanked OCPC for their efforts in keeping the region safe. Mr. Zoll thanked BAT management for the increased service to Stoughton and new bus stop signs and their efforts to adapt to the COVID-19 challenges.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2020.

Motion was made by Mr. Lynam to adjourn. Motion seconded by Mr. Dutton. Roll call was made and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Riddell
Kathy Riddell

Documents Included in April 16, 2020 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2020
3. COVID-19 Preparations and Operational/Informational Changes
4. Performance Dashboard FY20
5. Fixed Route Ridership Comparison incl. BSU
6. Fixed Route Ridership Comparison excl. BSU
7. DAB Ridership Comparison incl. Purchased Trips
8. BSU Ridership Comparison
9. FY20 Estimated Assessments
10. FY21 Draft Budget
11. FY20 Amended Budget
12. List of Service Changes