

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

May 28, 2020

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert Sullivan, City of Brockton	Charles Kilmer, Old Colony Planning Council
Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon	Paul Chenard, Old Colony Planning Council
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater	Michael Lambert, Administrator
Stanley Zoll, Town of Stoughton	Linda Sacchetti, Chief Financial Officer
Frank Lynam, Town of Whitman	Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Cathie Klabish, Consumer Representative	Glenn Geiler, Grants Manager
Dottie Fulginiti, Town of Easton	Kathy Riddell, BAT

Chairman Sullivan welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting. He stated that based on Governor Baker's declaration of a state of emergency on March 12th, enhanced open meeting regulations were being utilized for the meeting. The meeting was being recorded and will be posted on BAT's YouTube video platform to provide a public forum/access. All requirements have been met.

Chairman Sullivan informed the Board of the notice received by BAT that morning that Board Member Richard Downs had passed away. The Board had a moment of silence in his memory. Chairman Sullivan noted Mr. Downs dedication to the Board for more than five years and remembered him as a strong advocate for transportation and his contributions to the Board. The Chairman offered his thoughts and prayers on behalf of the entire Board to his family and friends.

Chairman Sullivan offered his sincere thanks to Mr. Lambert and his team for their tireless dedication during this difficult period.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. Mr. Lambert passed along a comment received by Arthur Pacella, a rider since 1974. He wanted to applaud all the efforts BAT has made to address the implication of COVID-19 and its impact on BAT's customers.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any changes or questions regarding the minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting. There were none. He asked for a motion to approve the Advisory Board Minutes of April 16, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Lynam and seconded by Ms. Klabish to accept the minutes as presented. The Chairman asked for a roll call vote. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Next on the agenda was a service update. Mr. Lambert asked Ms. Forrester to share her screen with the group. The first slide showed BAT's fixed route ridership down 82.92% for April. This significant decrease is on par with transit ridership nationwide. BAT is tracking ridership closely and expects it to increase slowly. BSU is currently closed and once Governor Baker announces his plans for the state colleges, BAT will move to provide sufficient resources to transport the students safely.

DIAL-A-BAT ridership is down 80.4% in April. The decrease has allowed the DAB workforce to provide solo trips (excluding grocery trips) for the at-risk population in a safe manner. He expects the ridership to increase slowly over time.

Mr. Lambert directed the Board's attention to the performance dashboard. He stated that in general, the system has performed close to its standards and goals. BAT is working to get good data in real time via the drivers, to respond with back up vehicles should the buses become crowded. Currently the vehicles are operating at about 65% capacity due to the closing of the front of the buses to protect the drivers. Fares are not being collected. BAT will develop a new baseline and goals that make sense based on data from April and May.

Current spending is focused on customer and employee safety. PPE is being provided to employees, contractors and customers. The buses are being fogged overnight to sanitize them all and will continue to receive a full cleaning mid-day. Mr. Lambert showed the draft document (Working Together to Reopen) that is being developed in conjunction with MassDOT, RTAs and others to focus on mitigating risk and maximizing safety. Some of the factors include face coverings, staggered work time, and working from home. He noted the four phases of the Governor's plan. Phase one: Start is now in place. Phase Two: Cautious is expected to begin on June 8th based on data. Each phase has different approaches but all are based on strong communications with customers so they:

1. Know what to expect, including services available and schedules to limit waiting times as much as possible.
2. Charlie cards and the introduction of a mobile app to pay for passes. These will be available for those with a smart phone.
3. BAT is also releasing a new mobile-friendly website which focuses on trip planning and includes service alerts which are the two primary features utilized.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any questions regarding the new website or mobile app. There were none.

Number 5 on the agenda was a Federal and State update. Ms. Sacchetti presented the Board with BAT's DBE goal as presented annually and required by the USDOT. The goal for FFY2021 – 2023 of 2.5% has been established. It is a percentage of contract dollars being awarded to DBE (minority and women owned businesses). The goal will be advertised by the end of the week.

Regarding state funding and the CARES Act, BAT is awaiting word from the state as to funding to be provided for transit next year. Some of it hinges on a new stimulus bill in Congress that would provide states with additional funding to assist in the COVID-19 circumstances. The Boston UZA negotiated and agreed to a settlement of funds provided under the federal CARES Act. BAT will receive just over \$9,000,000. BAT expects to utilize about \$2,000,000 to balance the budget for FY20, \$4,000,000 in FY21 and the remainder in FY22. These numbers could change. Mr. Lambert thanked the Congressional Delegation for securing these funds.

Under the Financial Update, Mr. Lambert presented the BAT FY20 Amended Budget. He stated that the document reflects the same numbers as presented at the last Board meeting. BAT expects to utilize approximately \$2,000,000 from the CARES Act to balance the budget. Chairman Sullivan asked for a

motion to accept the FY20 Amended Budget. Motion was made by Mr. Hegarty and seconded by Ms. Fulginetti to accept the amended budget. The Chairman asked for a roll call vote. All members voted to accept the budget as amended.

The FY21 Budget proposal was presented to the Board. This document was also essentially the same as the one presented at the last meeting. There were several positive items Mr. Lambert pointed out to the Board. The first was the award of a diesel fuel contract for \$1.12 per gallon for the FY21 fiscal year. This price was significantly less than the last contract. The second point was the award/signing of the insurance contract with Travelers Insurance; the percent increase is less than last year. And thirdly, the awarding of the paratransit contract to First Transit which was slightly below the projection. All three factors will help provide stability in the overall system so that focus can be placed where needed during the pandemic. Chairman Sullivan acknowledged BAT's hard work and successful outcomes in containing costs. Mr. Lambert pointed out the Proposed Budget and Alternative Budget. He explained the difference between the two scenarios. The Alternative Budget reflected a potential reduction in state contract assistance; the deficit will be replaced with federal assistance through the CARES Act. Both budgets were based on full-service ridership and allowing for some flexibility based on changing demand on various fixed routes, paratransit, and BSU. The goal is to keep everyone as safe as achievable and allow for social distancing as much as possible. Motion was made by Mr. Lynam and seconded by Mr. Hegarty to accept the FY21 Budget as presented. The Chairman asked for a roll call vote. All members voted to accept the budget as presented.

Next was a presentation of the Audit and Finance Committee Report/Compensation Committee Report. Mr. Hegarty stated that he met with Mr. Dutton and Mr. Lynam, the members of the Compensation Committee, to hear and discuss Mr. Lambert's recommendations for salary increases for the CFO. It was recommended that as of 7/1/20, the CFO be given a 3% increase and on 1/1/21 receive a 2% increase based on merit. Based on the factors that Ms. Sacchetti has taken on additional operational responsibilities during the pandemic, in addition to overseeing budget revisions and making numerous monetary decisions, it was decided by the Compensation Committee that on 7/1/20, she will be provided a 3% increase in salary and on 1/1/21 will be provided a 4% increase for annualized compensation of \$112,228. Mr. Lambert has taken on additional responsibilities including being chosen to represent the RTAs on the Governor's State Reopening Commission. He has picked up Mr. Ledoux's reigns and become the spokesperson for the RTAs on many issues. The Compensation Committee recommends that Mr. Lambert be given a 3% increase beginning 7/1/20 and a 4% increase as of 1/1/21. This will bring his annualized compensation to \$132,612 which is around the median salary of administrators statewide; and therefore, is not overpayment but a reward for his hard work during these difficult times. Chairman Sullivan stated that Mr. Lambert has been ready, willing and able to assist and support the community whenever asked. Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any other comments or questions. The Chairman echoed his support of the recommendations from the Audit and Finance Committee/Compensation Committee. There were no additional comments. Mr. Lynam made the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Klabish to provide the salary increases as stated above. The Chairman asked for a roll call vote. All members voted to accept recommendations as presented.

Next item on the Agenda was an update from the Old Colony Planning Council. Mr. Kilmer informed the Board of two projects they are currently working on for BAT. The first is the Title VI study and secondly, service study for a potential Brockton-Taunton connection. Mr. Chenard shared a presentation on the screen of the Title VI Plan for the Board's review and approval. He stated that Title VI is a federal requirement to provide public transportation without discrimination based on race, color or national origin. The document includes the non-discriminatory manner service is provided, supporting documentation, complaints, demographic information and Limited English Proficiency Plan. The elements included in the document are the general requirements, program specific requirements, service policies, appendix with support documentation and the LEP plan. A draft of the Title VI Plan is ready for review and comments. The Board was given information on how to access a copy of the draft. Methods of providing public comment are available on BAT and the Old Colony Planning Council websites or by sending comments to pchenard@ocpcrpa.org. Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Next Mr. Chenard gave the group an overview of the Brockton-Taunton Service Study and the history surrounding determination of need over a number of years. OCPC will document the need and provide suggestions on service delivery, including paratransit Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Lambert then provided the Board with the Administrators Report. He stated that six drivers had tested positive for COVID-19. All have recovered and are back to work. The workforce continues to come to work every day. He thanked the BAT staff, especially the operational managers who are reporting to him twice a day, as they address issues that unfold almost hourly. They report and respond quickly to changing situations. He especially wanted to thank Mike Damon, Damon Rivard, John Whittemore, Tim Nestor, Jeff Doten and Maria Sameiro. Also he thanked the Board for their continued support and advice.

The next Board meeting will take place in October.

Chairman Sullivan asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lynam made the motion and Mr. Hegarty seconded. The Chairman asked for a roll call vote. All members voted adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Riddell

Documents Included in May 28, 2020 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2020
3. Fixed Route Ridership Comparison incl. BSU
4. Fixed Route Ridership Comparison excl. BSU
5. DAB Ridership Comparison incl. Purchased Trips
6. BSU Ridership Comparison
7. Performance Dashboard FY20
8. DBE Goal
9. Working Together to Reopen Draft
10. Phases of Reopening Draft
11. Fares from Mobile App
12. Preview of New Website
13. FY21 Draft Budget
14. FY20 Amended Budget