

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

September 24, 2020

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert Sullivan, City of Brockton	Mary Waldron, Old Colony Planning Council
Frank Hegarty, Town of Avon	Charles Kilmer, Old Colony Planning Council
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater	Paul Chenard, Old Colony Planning Council
Stanley Zoll, Town of Stoughton	Michael Lambert, Administrator
Frank Lynam, Town of Whitman	Linda Sacchetti, Chief Financial Officer
Cathie Klabish, Consumer Representative	Glenn Geiler, Grants Manager
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 live streamed on BAT's YouTube video platform to provide a public forum/access. All requirements have been met.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any changes or questions regarding the minutes of the May 28, 2020 meeting. There were none. He asked for a motion to approve the Advisory Board Minutes of May 28, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Lynam and seconded by Ms. Klabish to accept the minutes as presented. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Next on the agenda was a report from the Audit and Finance Committee. Mr. Lambert asked Chairman Sullivan if the Board could take the agenda items out of order and come back to #4 a little later. Mr. Lynam made the motion to return to #4 on the agenda a little later and the motion was seconded by Ms. Klabish. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Mr. Lambert provided the Board with a service update. He was happy to report that the workforce was all healthy and at work. Next, he noted that driver protective barriers have been installed on all fixed route and paratransit vehicles. He stated that these barriers are available to the Councils on Aging if they are interested in having them installed. The BAT Centre continues to be closed to discourage large gatherings of riders and to provide the drivers with a safe, socially distanced space between their runs. Access windows has been installed through the customer service office and the supervisor's area. Additionally, outdoor furniture has been purchased and heating units will be installed as the weather turns colder. The ticket vending machines have been moved outside the BAT Centre with the help of the MBTA. The T's assistance saved BAT in excess of \$10,000 to move the equipment in a safe manner.

In the area of operations, service has been added to remove any overcrowding particularly the trips into Ashmont. Service is being added on Sunday to Stoughton, with service to Belair and Sullivan Towers. A small tweak has also been initiated as individuals return to work at the Head Start facility. BAT is continuing to monitor trip frequency to eliminate any overcrowding.

The next agenda item was Performance Dashboard. Mr. Lambert was happy to report that there was a 50% increase in ridership in June and July. BAT is approximately 55% down from pre-COVID ridership. BAT is currently providing more bus trips to Ashmont and BAT has seen a slight increase daily in overall ridership in September.

Ms. Sacchetti provided the group with a financial update. She stated that assessments were increased by 2 ½% with the exception of the Town of Stoughton and Bridgewater that saw slightly higher increases due to new service that was added to the towns. She explained the weighted averages and slight changes to those. Mr. Lynam made a motion to accept the financial update as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dutton. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Ms. Sacchetti gave the group an update on the FY21 budget and outlook for FY22. BAT has two months of data and was happy to report that there was \$50,000 in revenue that had not originally been budgeted due to restarting the collection of fares on August 24, 2020. She expects revenue to increase further in September. FY22 expenses are favorable to budget including the increased service to Ashmont.

Under Administrator's report, Mr. Lambert informed the Board that the state funding for Fiscal FY22 is uncertain. The RTAs are waiting to get a clearer picture of what to expect. BAT will supplement its budget with CARES Act funding. BAT has expended \$1.37M for last fiscal year and have \$7M left for this year and next. He stated that BAT continues to improve the system as noted below:

1. BAT now has a mobile friendly website. BAT initiated this program based on customer surveys. The website now provides a trip planner front and center.
2. Paratransit service has moved to an account-based service. No cash fares are collected which makes trip planning easier for clients by eliminating the need for change or checks. It also makes reconciliation simpler for management.
3. PVRTA and BAT have both rolled out a mobile ticketing app for payment of trips on their smart phones. It particularly benefits Ashmont riders that do not have access to ticket vending machines at the Ashmont station. BAT anticipates linking the mobile ticketing app to the trip planner so riders can find a trip and pay with the push of a button.
4. Planning has changed somewhat due to COVID but still moving forward. Thanks to the assistance of the Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC), work is being done to connect Taunton to Brockton. There have been requests to provide connectivity between Brockton and Taunton, particularly to the Brockton VA Hospital. OCPC is studying and will provide recommendations for implementation. BAT's CRTP is being updated and more information will be available for the next Advisory Board meeting. Additionally, BAT has been selected by MassDOT to take part in an electric bus study.

Mr. Lambert asked the Board to adopt a Fare Policy, which is being required by MassDOT. The resolution, included in the Board package, will combine two existing resolutions, Service and Fare Equity and Public Hearing Policy, both adopted in 2018. The new Resolution #259 will incorporate the statement "...Authority staff to conduct regular and recurring fare reviews to consider periodic, modest fare adjustments." A motion was made by Mr. Lynam to accept and adopt the modified resolution as presented. Mr. Dutton seconded the motion. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

The next item up for adoption was the Public Transit Authority Safety Plan (PTASP). BAT's safety plan has been updated annually. This PTASP follows FTA format requirements and calls for all agencies to present plans in the same manner. The format lays out hazards clearly and addresses mitigation. The plan will be reviewed by FTA during Triennial audits. A motion was made by Mr. Lynam to accept and adopt the PTASP as presented. Mr. Dutton seconded the motion. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Next, Item 4 was discussed. Mr. Hegarty provided the Audit and Finance Committee report on the presentation provided earlier in the day by BAT's auditing firm, Clifton,Larson,Allen, LLC. He was happy to report that the firm found no issues, modifications or weaknesses and went exceptionally well. Mr. Hegarty noted it was a testament to the Administrator and his team and their hard work. He recommends that the Board accept the Audit and Finance Committee's report on the Financial Statements. Mr. Lynam made a motion to accept the report as presented and the motion was seconded by Mr. Dutton. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Mr. Hegarty stated that the Audit and Finance Committee accepted the Single Audit which was received in draft form. The firm is waiting for guidance on the CARES Act and expects further guidance in early October. They will finalize the Single Audit at that time. Mr. Hegarty is recommending the Board vote to accept the Single Audit once the advisory is released and audit complete. Mr. Lynam made a motion to accept the final Single Audit once it is released and it was seconded by Mr. Dutton. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Mr. Lambert had two items under Old/New Business. Mr. Lynam is retiring on 10/13/20. He was one of the original members of the Audit and Finance Committee. Since joining the Board in 2013, he has provided great support, participation and been a valued sounding board for BAT. His extensive experience help the Board think through a number of financial challenges and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Lynam stated he has participated in many committees but BAT's Advisory Board and Administrators have provided exemplary leadership and he thanked the Board for making his role easy and rewarding.

Mr. Lambert informed the Board that one of its members, Dottie Fulginiti, lost her father and asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

Chairman Sullivan thanked the group and Mr. Lambert for juggling to work out all the wrinkles that have cropped up over the last six plus months.

Mr. Lynam made his last motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Dutton. A roll call was performed and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Riddell, BAT

Documents Included in September 24, 2020 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2020
3. COVID-19 Ridership
4. DAB Ridership Comparison incl. Purchased Trips
5. Performance Dashboard FY21
6. Local Assessments
7. Resolution #259 & supporting documents