

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAT ADVISORY BOARD

January 28, 2021

In Attendance:

Mayor Robert Sullivan, City of Brockton	Paul Chenard, Old Colony Planning Council
Michael Dutton, Town of Bridgewater	Charles Kilmer, Old Colony Planning Council
Stanley Zoll, Town of Stoughton	Michael Lambert, Administrator
Cathie Klabish, Consumer Representative	Linda Sacchetti, Chief Financial Officer
Dottie Fulginetti, Town of Easton	Kelly Forrester, Manager of Transit Operations
Mary Waldron, Old Colony Planning Council	Kathy Riddell, BAT
Shawn Bailey, Old Colony Planning Council	

Chairman Sullivan welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting. He stated that based on Governor Baker's declaration of a state of emergency on March 12, 2020 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.

A roll call was performed and a quorum was declared.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any public comments. There were none. Chairman Sullivan asked if there were any changes or questions regarding the minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting. There were none. He asked for a motion to approve the Advisory Board Minutes of September 24, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Dutton and seconded by Ms. Klabish to accept the minutes as presented. A roll call was performed and all were in favor except Mr. Zoll who abstained.

Next on the agenda was a service update. Ms. Forrester presented the group with ridership statistics. She stated that fixed route ridership was about 50% of non-COVID-19 level. DIAL-A-BAT statistics are similar, down about 60%. Mr. Lambert added that BAT's ridership numbers were on track with ridership nationwide, with a more dramatic decrease by those systems that operate subway and even further decline by those system operating commuter rail services. He thought it was interesting to note that the Northeast and West Coast had a deep decline earlier in the pandemic than the South or the West, however, it appears that the country is now on a par with ridership.

Under the performance dashboard, Ms. Forrester stated that the data presented was on the same track as ridership. All the standards and goals set in the document were developed pre-COVID. She noted that on-time performance, safety, maintenance and customer service measurements are doing very well. Mayor Sullivan asked the group if there were any questions on the service update. There were none.

Mr. Lambert provided the Board with a COVID update. He was happy to report that there were no employees out sick or in close contact with COVID positive individuals. He wanted to thank the Mayor for the consistent safety messages. He also wanted to thank labor and its leadership for its support in disseminating information to the workforce. He noted that the MBTA has hit a peak of

sick employees but stated that the T has a harder time getting the message out. Regarding the vaccine, Mr. Lambert stated that a packet of information answering a number of questions surrounding the issue was distributed to BAT's workforce. This has resulted in a number of people signing up for the shot in addition to maintaining their commitment to wearing masks and social distancing.

Next, Ms. Sacchetti gave the Board a budget update. She directed the Board's attention to the FY21 Budget. She pointed out a slower growth than estimated in farebox revenue but it is consistent with ridership. Expenses are favorable to budget by \$1.7 million. The reduced expenses are based on a number of factors including providing fixed route runs every half hour, a reduction in overtime, less revenue miles and a few small service changes. Additionally, the fuel contract was awarded at an amount less than budgeted. She also called attention to the new "Emergency Preparedness" line item. It was added due to COVID-19 and is used to identify COVID related supply purchases. She expects BAT to be on budget at the end of year. Mr. Zoll had a question regarding funding sources and any additional funds that might be available. Mr. Lambert stated that the State House released its budget yesterday and it show a slight cut to the RTAs but expects that may change when reviewed by the Legislature. He also stated that the Federal government released approximately \$10,000,000 in the CARES Act and an additional \$2,700,000 in CRRSSA funding to BAT. Both sources of funds will be utilized to replace farebox revenue to balance BAT's budget. Mr. Lambert expects that the transit industry will receive more favorable treatment by the incoming Secretary of Transportation in Washington, D.C. He also expects that BAT will benefit from a shift to Federal investment in infrastructure and the environment over the next four years.

Mr. Lambert presented the graph depicting BAT Revenues/Funding Sources for a ten-year period. The graph represents five years prior to and five years post 2021. He pointed out the stability of funding sources in the five years prior to this year. This graph depicts BAT's planned approach to providing service in the next five years. He stated that maintaining service was the most important focus.

Also, BAT will seek outside funding to assist with capital purchases to keep the organization in a state of good repair. BAT has been successful in obtaining a state "Winter Streets" grant that will provide heating elements at the BAT Centre platform and 10 shelters with solar lighting. The Brockton Council on Aging is requesting two shelters near their location which will also service the YMCA. In addition, BAT was successful in obtaining funding for three projects:

1. Service beyond ADA in Avon and Stoughton,
2. Flex route service to Rockland and the park and ride facility near the Industrial Park located on the Hingham/Rockland line, and
3. Nine new DIAL-A-BAT vehicles.

Next on the agenda was the Administrator's Report. Mr. Lambert stated that MassDOT's Program Preview will be distributed to the Board shortly. Program Preview outlines the BAT's goals and objectives for the next several years. He stated that the State was pleased with BAT's response to COVID.

Additionally, BAT's Comprehensive Regional Transit Plan (CRTP) will be sent to the Board members for review. After that it will be released for public review. In the process of developing the plan,

BAT was provided an opportunity to compare itself to statewide benchmarks. The CRTP is built on a plan done five years prior by the Old Colony Planning Council. The company hired by MassDOT to develop the current plan were very complementary of OCPC efforts. Additionally, Mr. Lambert noted that OCPC is currently developing a number of new initiatives.

The Finance and Audit Committee Report was presented by Mr. Dutton. He stated the committee received the Final Single Audit. The Audit had been drafted in September but due to new guidance regarding CARES Act funding, release of the audit was delayed. He was happy to report that no additional testing was needed and there were no issues or findings and therefore no changes to the draft report.

There was no Old Business/New Business to report. The next meeting will be held on April 15 and then late May/early June. The Board had no issues with the schedule.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Dutton and seconded by Ms. Fulginetti.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Riddell, BAT

Documents Included in January 28, 2021 Advisory Board Package:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2020
3. Fixed Route Ridership
4. DAB Ridership Comparison
5. Performance Dashboard FY21
6. FY21 Budget Summary
7. FY21 Budget
8. BAT Revenue/Funding Source Graph
9. Winter Streets Grant Award Letter
10. 2021 Community Transit Grant Program Award Letter