

MBTA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES (Draft)

July 18, 2023

10:00 AM via Zoom

- A. Call to order:** Mayor Thomas P. Koch (Quincy) called the meeting to order with 47 member communities represented, present and voting at 10:02 AM. The Chair led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance, and a Moment of Silence for those in uniform keeping the peace around the globe.
- B. May 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes:** Alan Castaline (Brockton) offered two corrections, which will be incorporated into the final version. The first correction was to page 2 where the math showed did not add up, and the second was on page 4 wherein the minutes incorrectly showed that the Mayor of Brockton has submitted a letter to the MBTA. It was the Old Colony Planning Council that submitted the letter. These will be fixed in the updated version. Following this A. Castaline moved to approve the minutes as amended. Colette Aufranc (Wellesley) seconded the motion. The motion was approved via the Zoom poll application by a vote of 44 yes, 0 no, and 3 abstentions.
- C. Report of Bylaw Committee:** Michael Dutton (Bridgewater), Chair of the Bylaw Committee presented the report. The bylaw committee met three times to consider changes to the bylaws in advance of today's meeting. A memo accompanied the proposed changes, as well as a red-line version of the bylaws showing proposed changes. In summary the changes proposed are:
- General updates (cover page, footer)
 - Grammatical and wordsmithing edits (pages 7, 8, 10, 12, 14)
 - Adding the Chair to those receiving resignation letters of members and designees in addition to the Executive Director (page 7)
 - Providing for the possibility of two Vice Chairs as opposed to the current limit of one Vice Chair (page 9)
 - Eliminating the distinction between standing and ad hoc committees (page 16)

- Updating the fiscal year of the organization from the state fiscal year to the calendar year as per the recently adopted Financial Policy. (page 19)
- Adding language guiding the body if it is requested to make a nomination or appointment to an external body. (pages 19 & 36)
- Updates to the voting strengths of municipalities based on FY24 Assessments (page 33)

Following this presentation, the Chair recognized Joe Collins (Norwood), who questioned why the bylaws propose moving from the state fiscal year (July 1- June 30) to the calendar year. The Chair recognized Colette Aufranc, Chair of the Budget & Audit Committee to provide an answer. Ms. Aufranc stated that the Budget & Audit Committee requested this change to the bylaws so that they conform to the recently enacted Financial Policy. With no more questions, M. Dutton moved to approve the changes as proposed. C. Aufranc seconded this motion, which was approved by a vote of 43 yes, 0 no, and 4 abstentions.

- D. Election of Officers, Committee Members, Committee Chairs, and approval of Committee Charges:** Mayor Shaunna O’Connell (Taunton) moved to approve the slate and elect the officers, committee members, committee chairs and vice chairs, and approve the committee’s charges as presented. Josh Ostroff (Natick) seconded this motion, which was approved by a vote of 45 yes, 0 no, and 2 abstentions.
- E. Keynote Speaker: Undersecretary Monica G. Tibbits-Nutt:** The Chair introduced the Undersecretary of Transportation, Monica G. Tibbits-Nutt. The Undersecretary thanked the Chair and members for the invitation and opportunity to speak to the membership. The Undersecretary spoke on may points, including:
- Climate: transition to electric vehicles for both private and public vehicles.
 - East/West or West/East Rail as well as improved rail connections around the entire Commonwealth.
 - Ferry: The Lynn ferry is successful, and should be continued if funding can be found not just while the Sumner is closed, but also as mitigation when the station is closed.

- South Station Expansion: The administration is in active discussions with the Post Office about moving to allow South Station expansion to advance
- Commuter Rail Procurement: The 2026 contract procurement will be essential to the future of transportation in the Commonwealth. Electrification must come with this procurement.
- AFC 2.0: MassDOT is working with the T to advance this important project, as well as fare policies that improve equity across the Commonwealth.
- Financial Cliff: The financial cliff is coming and is real. The administration has a responsibility to explain to the Legislature and citizens what the number is. The number will be at least \$1b extra per year.

Following the Undersecretary's presentation, the Chair recognized members for questions:

- Bruce Leicher (Harvard) asked about EV charging at commuter rail stations, specifically Littleton. The Undersecretary mentioned that the strategy going forward is to include maintenance contracts as part of the procurements and installations. She also mentioned that negotiations are ongoing with National Grid to ensure that the grid can support increased charging.
- Matt Moran (Boston) asked about the administration's strategy towards the inner core, specifically needed expansion projects like the Red-Blue connector. The Undersecretary suggested that the focus in short term will be on maintenance of the existing system, while trying to balance important inner core projects like the transition of the Fairmount Line to rapid transit. Tough balances will be necessary especially balancing things like free fares versus the financial cliff.
- Brad Rawson (Somerville) thanked the Undersecretary for her words. He continued that as MassDOT rebuilds dozens and dozens of bridges over rail lines in the next decade, they should be future proofed to support electrification and regional rail such that these bridges do not need to be redone later. The Undersecretary mentioned that the current focus is on upgrading the electrical grid to support all the needed

electrification in the coming years. The current grid cannot support all the electrification that is required. Upgrading it will be expensive and take a long time.

- Josh Ostroff (Natick) requested a more formalized municipal engagement strategy, ensuring more consistent outreach and intake processes for projects to ensure that cities and towns in and around the project are aware of what is going on. He also states that the MBTA does not tell its own story well and that a better narrative would help. The Undersecretary agreed.
- J. Collins asked if hydrogen technology had been considered for propulsion of private and public vehicles. The Undersecretary stated that all propulsion forms are under consideration for public and private vehicles.
- Susan Barrett (Lexington) suggested that connecting RTAs and the MBTA is critically important, especially for paratransit. The Undersecretary mentioned that blended sections are under consideration to eliminate the requirement for paratransit customers to transfer. S. Barrett suggested that the administration focus on supporting increasing ridership on public transportation as opposed to supporting private EVs. The Undersecretary responded that it is true that not everyone can afford a private vehicle, and that supporting public transportation is equally important.
- Jay Monty (Everett) stated that the T is critical to achieving municipal, and regional goals.
- Duncan Allen (Needham) suggested that with respect to the fiscal cliff, a better analogy may be climbing a fiscal mountain and then remaining on that mountain with sufficient resources to not end up in a deferred maintenance valley again. The Undersecretary responded that it is clear that additional dedicated revenues are needed, that there are no additional federal or other funds forthcoming, and that the T's current cycle of deficit after deficit, crisis after crisis, and the continual threat of service cuts each year is not working.
- Michael Zullas (Milton) asked if the timeline for the Mattapan

transformation can be sped up so that it will not take a decade? The Undersecretary responded that she is not briefed on that project and cannot comment.

- Roy Epstein (Belmont) asked about rail electrification. He suggested that since total electrification will take decades, what is the strategy for procuring new, reliant locomotives to continue supporting robust ridership while the transition continues? The Undersecretary noted that it is clear that the transition will take a long time and that a strategy is needed to transition from diesel to electric.
- Lenard Diggins (Arlington) asked how the lack of counties harms the Commonwealth's abilities to access federal funds. The Undersecretary mentioned that it is complicated, but that the feds like to see things like regional plans, corridor plans, and coordinated plans across more than one municipality.
- Brian Kane (Executive Director) asked when the MBTA will regain its ability to plan for its own future again? The Undersecretary responded that all possibilities are under consideration, including a review to see if the Office of Transportation Planning is meeting the goals of the MBTA.

With all questions answered, the Chair thanked the Undersecretary for attending, for her forthrightness, and for her attention to detail. On behalf of the membership, he wished her well. The Undersecretary departed.

- F. Executive Director's Report:** B. Kane gave the report. A member survey remains open and all are requested to respond to assist leadership in planning what policy areas to work on over the next year and into the future. The link to the survey was shared.
- G. Adjournment:** With all business transacted, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. M. Dutton moved to adjourn, which S. O'Connell seconded. This motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:49 AM

NOTE: These minutes were approved by vote at the 12/05/23 meeting

Abington	Alex Hergerty	Everett	Jay Monty
Acton		Fitchburg	
Amesbury		Foxborough	
Andover		Framingham	
Arlington	Lenard Diggins	Franklin	
Ashburnham		Freetown	
Ashby		Georgetown	
Ashland	Rob Scherer	Gloucester	Greg Verga Greg Cademartori
Attleboro		Grafton	
Auburn		Groton	
Ayer		Groveland	
Bedford		Halifax	
Bellingham		Hamilton	
Belmont	Roy Epstein	Hanover	Jim Hoyes
Berkley		Hanson	Laura Bennett
Beverly		Harvard	Bruce Leicher
Billerica		Haverhill	
Boston	Matt Moran	Hingham	
Bourne	Pete Meir	Holbrook	
Boxborough		Holden	
Boxford		Holliston	
Braintree		Hopkinton	
Bridgewater	Michael Dutton Bob Rulli	Hull	
Brockton	Alan Castaline	Ipswich	Linda Alexson
Brookline	Rob King	Kingston	
Burlington		Lakeville	Lia Fabian
Cambridge	Suzanne Rassmussen Andy Reardon	Lancaster	
Canton	Chris Podgurski	Lawrence	
Carlisle		Leicester	
Carver		Leominster	
Chelmsford		Lexington	Susan Barrett
Chelsea		Lincoln	
Cohasset		Littleton	
Concord		Lowell	
Danvers		Lunenburg	
Dedham		Lynn	
Dover		Lynnfield	
Dracut		Malden	
Duxbury		Manchester	
East Bridgewater		Mansfield	
Easton		Marblehead	Dan Albert
Essex		Marlborough	Meredith Harris
Marshfield		Salem	Tom Devine
Maynard	Chester Osborn	Salisbury	

Medfield	Gus Murby	Saugus	Mike Serino
Medford	Breanna Lungo-Koehn Todd Blake	Scituate	Karen Canfield
Medway		Seekonk	
Melrose		Sharon	Hanna Switekowski
Merrimac		Sherborn	
Methuen		Shirley	
Middleborough		Shrewsbury	
Middleton		Somerville	Brad Rawson
Millbury		Southborough	
Millis		Sterling	
Milton	Mike Zullas	Stoneham	
Nahant		Stoughton	Deb Roberts
Natick	Josh Ostroff	Stow	
Needham	Duncan Allen	Sudbury	Dan Carty
Newbury		Sutton	
Newburyport		Swampscott	
Newton	David Koses	Taunton	Shauna O'Connell
Norfolk	Kevin Kalkut	Tewksbury	
North Andover		Topsfield	
N. Attleborough		Townsend	
North Reading		Tyngsborough	
Northborough		Upton	
Northbridge		Watertown	
Norton		Wayland	
Norwell		Wakefield	Jonathan Chines
Norwood	Joe Collins	Walpole	
Paxton		Waltham	
Peabody		Wareham	Alan Slavin
Pembroke		Wellesley	Colette Aufranc
Plymouth		Wenham	
Plympton		West Boylston	
Princeton		W. Bridgewater	
Quincy	Thomas Koch Frank Tramontozzi	West Newbury	
Randolph		Westborough	
Raynham		Westford	
Reading		Westminster	
Rehoboth		Weston	
Revere		Westwood	Steve Olanoff
Rochester		Weymouth	Owen MacDonald
Rockland		Whitman	
Rockport		Wilmington	Frank West
Rowley		Woburn	
Winchester		Worcester	Todd Kirrane
Winthrop		Wrentham	

