



MBTA ADVISORY BOARD

FULL BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

December 10, 2024 10:00 AM

- A. Call to order:** Chair Thomas P. Koch (Quincy) called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM. He asked the Board for a moment of silence to honor all in uniform and those working to keep peace.
- B. Minutes:** The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2024 Advisory Board meeting. Rob Scherer (Ashland) moved that the minutes be approved. Mike Serino (Saugus) seconded this motion, which was approved unanimously.
- C. MBTA Board of Directors Update:** Thomas M. McGee; Chair of the MBTA Board of Directors and former State Senator, Mayor, and MBTA Advisory Board member, joined to give an update. Chair McGee spoke about the authority's recent progress in eliminating slow zones, hiring workforce, finalizing union agreements, implementing a new app, and facing the challenges ahead in further modernization and investment for the system.
- a. Chair Koch asked what the Chair's sense was of the legislature's appetite for tackling the funding issues. T. McGee answered that the



legislature has historically supported the MBTA through challenging times, and he believes that they understand the challenge and are willing to work within their means to address it, or at least to get the ball rolling. He added that General Manager Eng and the current leadership team have helped to regain the trust of the legislature and the public.

- b. Susan Barrett (Lexington) asked how the MBTA plans to grow ridership while cutting service in Greater Boston communities like Lexington. S. Barrett added that developers are requiring more parking for developments because of transportation needs, and this extra congestion will continue to clog roads as necessary housing is built. T. McGee answered that with low workforce numbers, getting the existing service running each day was historically a challenge. The T is now building the workforce back up which is an important part of moving the system forward. T. McGee added that he visited the electric bus maintenance facility in Quincy which is moving along well. He agreed that returning more frequent service to communities like Lexington is a key priority and the discussion should continue.
- c. Lenard Diggins (Arlington) mentioned a point made by T. McGee in his remarks that the ROI for the dollars spent on the Big Dig was around \$0.30, but that far more returns were beyond measuring. L. Diggins commented that it might be helpful to figure out how to measure



intangible benefits as the Commonwealth looks to sell further investments in infrastructure to the public. T. McGee answered that it was a good point and that A Better City has done work in quantifying the benefits of recent T projects. He said it would be a valuable resource to produce, and opened for suggestions from members about the best way to execute such a project.

- d. Joe Collins (Norwood) echoed S. Barrett's question about the communities that are impacted by Bus Network Redesign. J. Collins also asked how members might obtain a Commuter Rail lapel pin. T. McGee said he would look into that.
- e. Bruce Leicher (Harvard) commented that his ride on the Red Line is now half the time that it used to be. He asked if the MBTA could address the shortage of parking at Littleton 495 and the broken parking stations. T. McGee asked Brian Kane (Executive Director) to follow up with more details so that he could look into the issue.
- f. Brad Rawson (Somerville) thanked T. McGee for joining the Board. B. Rawson also thanked B. Kane and Hanna Switekowski for their work increasing the visibility and work of the Advisory Board. B. Rawson highlighted the importance of such regional convening spaces like the Advisory Board, the Regional Planning Associations, and the MPOs, in building a statewide coalition for supporting the MBTA and other facets of the transit systems like the RTAs. T. McGee agreed and



recalled a former GM's assertion that "the MBTA is the largest of the RTAs" and they are all interconnected. He added that he plans to remain on the MassDOT Board to maintain the connections between all transportation systems in the Commonwealth.

- g. Matthew Peterson (Boston) echoed S. Barrett's comments about the importance of local bus service. In Boston, there are continued investments in changes to roadways to make MBTA service work better. He said that the city is interested in seeing the MBTA focus on delivering consistent and reliable service on the bus network to the same degree that the subway system sees. T. McGee agreed that this was an important, and often overlooked component of service. T. McGee answered that the main challenge they previously faced was filling bus driver positions, but the workforce has been built out through recent hiring and this will help to tackle service inconsistencies.
- h. Duncan Allen (Needham) asked about any potential, upcoming opportunities for electrification on other Commuter Rail lines. T. McGee answered that there had been a number of discussions preCOVID and the Fiscal Management and Control Board had unanimous consensus across the Commuter Rail system to embrace electrification and regional rail policies. The first piece of the puzzle



will be the Fairmount line's electrification which will inform how the infrastructure is used going forward. Additionally, the MBTA Board of Directors recently approved a new order of double-decker cars to upgrade the fleet. These new cars can be run on electric locomotives, providing the opportunity for future improvements to the overall system. T. McGee emphasized that he firmly believes in a future electrified regional rail and is committed to moving forward with this goal.

- i. Alan Castaline (Brockton) asked what the service schedules will look like with the opening of South Coast Rail, and commented that the hourly train service in Brockton has begun to see crowding again. He asked how to get back to the level of service that Brockton saw preCOVID to service their. T. McGee answered that he is unsure what the service will look like, but asked if A. Castaline or B. Kane could provide information on pre- and post-COVID service to Brockton, he would be able to take a closer look.
- j. Chair Koch thanked T. McGee for his time and his work on the Board. T. McGee thanked members for their questions and looked forward to further collaboration moving forward. B. Kane thanked T. McGee.

D. Discussion and action to elect a slate of officers, committee members, and committee charges for the MBTA Advisory Board for calendar year 2025: B. Kane said that he asked Chair Koch to postpone Item D for the



next meeting because he is still recruiting for the new positions. B. Kane shared that the Advisory Board is seeking a new Treasurer, By-Law Committee Chair, Capital Budget Oversight Committee, and members for these committees. He asked any members interested to reach out to him about the opportunities. Chair Koch added that the Advisory Board has never been more engaged, which is a direct result of the interest and dedication of its members.

- E. Discussion and action to adopt an internal budget for the MBTA Advisory Board's staff and administrative actions. Budget & Audit Committee Chair:** B. Kane presented the Advisory Board's internal budget, as discussed by the Budget & Audit Committee on 12/02/24. B. Kane highlighted the Barr Foundation's grant for \$100,000 effective 01/07/25. The Advisory Board has been, according to plan, spending down their reserves and with this grant the Board will be able to build those reserves back up, while continuing to fund the staff's advocacy, legislative, and municipal work. B. Kane requested that the Board approve the budget.
- a. Breanna Lungo-Koehn (Medford) asked if B. Kane could provide a breakdown of how the \$100,000 grant would be spent.
 - b. B. Lungo-Khoen moved to approve the Advisory Board's Internal Budget, with the caveat that B. Kane will report back with a breakdown of the grant. Rob Scherer (Ashland) seconded the motion which passed by vote of the Board.



F. Old Business, New Business: B. Kane reported that he had recently received the 2022 and 2023 Audit of the Advisory Board, and that it came back with no findings. The Budget & Audit Committee is formulating a response to the audit.

- a. Chair Koch thanked B. Kane and reminded members that the next Board meeting will be in February, where the Board will discuss the Transportation Funding Task Force's report and the legislative response.
- b. S. Barrett commented that at the Lexington Transportation Forum, Representative Michelle Ciccolo (15th Middlesex) said that Representatives are not hearing about transit, so it is important for community leaders to convey the importance of this issue to their state delegations. Chair Koch agreed and added that he plans to present about MBTA funding to the Quincy City Council in the new year and urged members to do the same.

G. Adjourn: With all business discussed, John Collins (Chelsea) moved to adjourn, a motion seconded by Mark Howell (Concord). The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM.

Note: These minutes were approved by vote of the MBTA Advisory Board at its 2/5/25 meeting



Attendees

Abington		Essex	
Acton		Everett	Jay Monty
Amesbury		Fitchburg	Hon. Sam Squailia
Andover		Foxborough	
Arlington	Lenard Diggins	Framingham	Mike Tusino
Ashburnham		Franklin	
Ashby		Freetown	
Ashland	Rob Scherer	Georgetown	
Attleboro	Hon. Cathleen DeSimone	Gloucester	Greg Cademartori
Auburn		Grafton	
Ayer		Groton	
Bedford		Groveland	
Bellingham		Halifax	
Belmont		Hamilton	
Berkley		Hanover	



Beverly		Hanson	
Billerica		Harvard	Bruce Leicher
Boston	Matthew Peterson	Haverhill	Christine Lindberg
Bourne		Hingham	
Boxborough		Holbrook	Katie Goldrick
Boxford		Holden	

Braintree		Holliston	
Bridgewater	Bob Rulli	Hopkinton	
Brockton	Alan Castaline	Hull	Jason McCann
Brookline	Erin Chute	Ipswich	
Burlington		Kingston	
Cambridge	Andy Reker	Lakeville	
Canton		Lancaster	
Carlisle		Lawrence	
Carver		Leicester	
Chelmsford		Leominster	
Chelsea	John DePriest	Lexington	Susan Barrett
Cohasset	Corey Evans	Lincoln	



Concord	Mark Howell	Littleton	
Danvers		Lowell	
Dedham		Lunenburg	
Dover		Lynn	Aaron Clausen
Dracut		Lynnfield	
Duxbury	Brian Glennon	Malden	Yem Lip
East Bridgewater		Manchester	
Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	Mansfield	
Marblehead		Rochester	
Marlborough		Rockland	
Marshfield		Rockport	
Maynard	Rose Burns	Rowley	

Medfield		Salem	Brendan Linard
Medford	Hon. Breanna LungoKoehn Todd Blake	Salisbury	
Medway		Saugus	Mike Serino
Melrose	Garin Boyd	Scituate	
Merrimac		Seekonk	
Methuen		Sherborn	



Middleborough		Shirley	
Middleton		Shrewsbury	
Millbury		Somerville	Brad Rawson
Millis		Southborough	
Milton		Sterling	
Nahant		Stoneham	
Natick		Stoughton	Debra Roberts
Needham	Duncan Allen	Stow	
Newbury		Sudbury	
Newburyport	Hon. Sean Reardon	Sutton	
Newton	David Koses	Swampscott	
Norfolk		Taunton	
North Andover		Tewksbury	
N. Attleborough		Topsfield	
North Reading		Townsend	
Northborough		Tyngsborough	

Northbridge		Upton	
Norton		Watertown	Steve Magoon
Norwell	Andy Reardon	Wayland	



Norwood	Joe Collins	Wakefield	
Paxton		Walpole	
Peabody		Waltham	
Pembroke		Wareham	Alan Slavin
Plymouth		Wellesley	Sheila Page
Plympton		Wenham	
Princeton		West Boylston	
Quincy	Hon. Thomas Koch Frank Tramontozzi	W. Bridgewater	
Randolph		West Newbury	
Raynham		Westborough	
Reading		Westford	
Rehoboth		Westminster	
Revere		Weston	
Westwood	Steve Olanoff	Winthrop	
Weymouth	Owen MacDonald	Woburn	
Whitman		Worcester	Todd Kirrane
Winchester		Wrentham	
Wilmington			



Other

Director Thomas McGee,
Chair

MBTA Board of
Directors

Andrea Perdomo

WBUR

MBTA AB

Brian Kane
Hanna Switekowski

Executive Director
Deputy Director