

PASSENGER/REGIONAL RAIL COMMITTEE

Minutes

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

- A. Call to Order:** Chair Rob Scherer (Ashland) called the committee to order at 2:02 PM via Zoom.
- B. Minutes:** The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes from March 19, 2025. Greg Guimond (Marshfield) moved to approve the minutes. Steve Olanoff (Westwood) seconded. The motion was approved without objection.
- C. CIP Oversight:** Brian Kane (Executive Director) presented the MBTA's FY 2026-2030 Capital Investment Plan and asked for any feedback from the committee members.
 - a** S. Olanoff asked for specifics about the funding for electrification and Fairmount Line projects.
 - b** R. Scherer asked about official communication on federal funds. B. Kane said nothing has been communicated regarding the federal sources of the CIP, but over the next year this is likely to change as Congress goes through the re-authorization process.

- c** S. Olanoff asked about the plan for electrification if the MBTA is purchasing new coaches to replace existing stock. B. Kane answered that he shared this concern about a long-term vision. Chris Podgurski (Canton) clarified if the coaches would be able to work with diesel or electric locomotives which B. Kanes said to an extent they would.
- d** C. Podgurski commented that, given the fiscal constraints and low ridership, whole-system electrification seemed unlikely. He added that incrementally adding electric locomotives seems more feasible. R. Scherer said the committee will be receiving an update on electrification from the MBTA soon.
- e** B. Kane shared the distribution of CIP programs between priorities, with the most funding going to structures and vehicles. S. Olanoff asked if the federal dollars were included, B. Kane said it was and that the T will be covering a 20% match.
- f** R. Scherer asked what percentage the 80 new coaches would be of the total rolling stock. B. Kane answered around that it was likely a percentage close to a quarter. He said the plan was also to retire all single-level coaches.
- g** B. Kane shared the breakdown of CIP programs by project. He highlighted the funding of design and vehicle purchases for Fairmount Line electrification.

- h** Alan Castaline (Brockton) commented that the Old Service Region consists of 20% of the MBTA service district and, following the completion of South Coast Rail, the bottlenecks caused by single-tracking present significant issues for Regional Rail planning and future service increases. He commented that this issue is not addressed in the CIP. B. Kane answered that there is \$5 million in “pre-design” work for the bottleneck, and he agreed that the project should be a priority.
- i** R. Scherer asked about the schedule for committee members making comments. B. Kane answered that committee members could reach out to him with comments at any time.
- j** S. Olanoff commented in strong support of regional rail electrification projects. He said the committee needs to continue to advocate for an electrified system and expressed concern that the MBTA is procuring new diesel engines. B. Kane added that he agrees with C. Podgurski that electrified service should be test run on the Providence line because it is already electrified. C. Podgurski commented that Keolis doesn’t have any capacity to maintain electric locomotives. He added that the cost of electrification is significant so the transition should be approached through incremental steps. R. Scherer added that the MBTA plans to use Battery-Electric locomotives. R. Scherer asked if there is funding in the CIP to acquire new diesel locomotives, B. Kane and C. Podgurski answered that

- there is funding for mid-life overhaul projects. H. Switekowski added that Amtrak will introduce more electric locomotives to their service soon.
- k** R. Scherer summarized the committee’s comments on the FY 2026-2030 CIP as supportive of a solution to the Old Colony single track challenge and supportive of continued work towards electrification.
 - l** MBTA staff will next meet with the committee in June. The committee will discuss electrification. The committee is willing to have a longer meeting to cover all desired topics.
 - m** Sheila Page (Wellesley) asked if the CIP contained any parking lot projects. B. Kane that there are a range of maintenance and upgrade projects for parking lots across the system. The committee plans to discuss parking with the MBTA at an upcoming meeting.
- D. Old Business | New Business:** B. Kane provided an update on the Allston Multimodal Project. He plans to invite the project’s manager from the Mass DOT to speak with the committee at an upcoming meeting.
- E. Adjourn:** The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. A. Castaline moved to adjourn the meeting, a motion which S. Olanoff seconded. The motion was approved without objection and the meeting adjourned at 2:56 PM.

Note: These minutes were approved by vote of the committee at their 6/18/25 meeting.

Attendance

Committee Members

Ashland	Rob Scherer
Brockton	Alan Castaline
Canton	Chris Podgurski
Duxbury	Brian Glennon
Marshfield	Greg Guimond
Wellesley	Sheila Page
Westwood	Steve Olanoff

Advisory Board Staff

Executive Director	Brian Kane
Deputy Director	Hanna Switekowski