THE MBTA ADVISORY BOARD

CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY COMMITTEE

Minutes (DRAFT)

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

A. **Call to Order**: The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Hon. D.J. Beauregard (Methuen) at 10:03 AM via Zoom.

B. **Resilience Roadmap Update:** Caroline Bean (MBTA) presented an update on the completion of the MBTA's first Resilience Roadmap to the committee.

   a. Kat Eshel (MBTA) noted that the plan was developed entirely in-house at the MBTA.

   b. David Martin (Acton) asked if the MBTA is considering batteries for back-up power and to create opportunities for revenue generation. K. Eshel answered that the MBTA is considering some components of that idea as they see the same opportunity. There is funding in the CIP for the South Boston Power Complex feasibility study to look at renewing that asset. There currently isn't the real estate or political investment to be able to do battery on that scale. It wouldn't be able to meet the full needs of that area, but they are looking at battery energy storage for other parts of the system as well, such as Regional Rail. D. Martin also asked where Bus Electrification stands. K. Eshel answered that they could do a longer update for the committee at a

later date. In an overview, the MBTA has received 27 BEBs; 11 have been in limited revenue service on the 71 and 73 Routes which will operate out of the new North Cambridge facility that opens later this summer. The next facility will be Quincy, which will be completed next summer. Overall, the order is for 120 buses, which will be delivered in the next year and a half. Additionally, the remaining Arborway design and construction have recently been fully funded.

c. Brian Kane (Executive Director) thanked K. Eshel and C. Bean for their presentation, work on the roadmap, and advocacy for the MBTA's role in climate mitigation. He commented that, while the MBTA might not be at the point of strategic retreat, it is important to have the conversations of where else the threatened facilities might move. He offered the committee as a resource for continued work. He asked about the Commuter Rail's reliance on local civil power for signal systems and gates and if there is any consideration of moving to an authority-wide power system. K. Eshel answered that MBTA is not currently considering stretching the core power network to cover the whole system due to infrastructure and cost. There are effective partnerships between Eversource and municipal electric plants in many places on the system. To run electrified Regional Rail, the MBTA will have to establish more electric infrastructure, but it will be a discontinuous network.

d. Susanne Rasmussen (Cambridge) asked what investments this roadmap translates into in the next five years and what regional collaboration looks like in this context. C. Bean answered that the plan is flexible about overall cost of projects because the MBTA will need to flex funding as it is available. Projects that are expected to be funded in the next 5 years include the Airport Portal Flood Door and

programs for increased track resilience to extreme temperatures. They are currently developing the best way to track progress on the report now that it has been released. Regarding community involvement, the MBTA is working to engage with the municipalities that face the greatest vulnerabilities. For example, direct involvement with Boston's Army Corp. Of Engineers Study and the Mystic Watershed Association's work. K. Eshel added that another way that this coordination can take place is through development review processes.

e. K. Eshel highlighted the Climate Team's recent appearance on the MBTA's "Spilling the T" podcast.

C. **Discussion on the FY2027-FY2031 CIP draft:** B. Kane briefed the committee on the CIP draft and recommended that committee members reach out to staff with any questions or considerations for the Advisory Board's oversight report.

a. S. Rasmussen commented that the roadmap is an immense amount of work; however, it lacks a long-term prioritization for funding and projects, and it would be important to see a more defined plan in the future. Andy Reker (Cambridge) agreed and added that the maintenance needs of the system are still great in addition to the climate hazard mitigation needs with the MBTA's constrained finances.

D. **Adjourn**: With all business transacted, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn which S. Rasmussen made and D. Martin seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 AM.

Attendees:

Committee Members:

Acton	David Martin
Cambridge	Susanne Rasmussen
Cambridge	Andy Reker
Methuen	Hon. D.J. Beauregard
Westwood	Steve Olanoff

Guests:

Kat Eshel	MBTA
Caroline Bean	MBTA

MBTA Advisory Board

Brian Kane	Executive Director
Hanna Switlekowski	Deputy Director
Isabella MacKinnon	Budget & Policy Analyst