



Climate & Clean Energy Committee

Minutes (DRAFT)

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

- A. **Call to Order:** The Chair, Hon. D.J. Bearegard (Methuen), called the committee to order at 10:02 AM via Zoom.
- B. **Minutes:** The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2026 meeting. David Martin (Acton) made the motion and Jamie Gilmore (Scituate) seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- C. **MBTA Decarbonization Strategy Update:** Kat Eshel, MBTA Senior Director of Climate Policy and Planning presented to the committee with a specific focus on the bus decarbonization strategy and took questions.
 - a Brian Kane (Executive Director) commented that he had been corrected against saying that the legislative mandate requiring bus electrification was not based on the reality of the industry and the MBTA's capacity at the time when it was enacted. He asked if there were better messages for the authority's advocates to relay in support of the goals of this project. K. Eshel answered that the Bus Electrification Plan was designed to create a strategy to meet the legislative mandate before there was any local experience with the technology. Over the last few years, the MBTA has learned many lessons about the state of the technology and the feasibility

- of decarbonization by 20240 and there is still a pathway, albeit a challenging one, towards successful implementation. However, the project is heavily dependent on investment because there are significant facility needs which come at high costs. As the MBTA develops the decarbonatization plan, they are identifying different scenarios that correspond to low, medium and high levels of investment. The greatest advocacy required is for additional sources of consistent investment. Because the project heavily relies on the completion of large facilities that have faced funding difficulties, it has fallen behind targeted timelines. B. Kane added that it is important for policymakers to understand that the timeline delays are also related to the state of the manufacturing industry, which is beyond the T's control. B. Kane also encouraged the authority to figure out a way to sell carbon credits based on the delta between running a hybrid bus relative to a diesel. K. Eshel responded that this is an idea that the Climate Policy team has considered and will continue to do so. She added that another important component to the execution of the plan is broad comfort levels with battery technology relative to fire safety. There are not clear standards in the Mass. building codes for these types of facilitates.
- b D. Martin thanked K. Eshel for her presentation and the work of the Climate Policy team. He commented that some of the concerns around fire safety are based on perception and not reality; for example, a gasoline car is 15 times more likely burn than a battery electric car. He asked if T

- bus routes have layover times at the end of the route where charging could happen. K. Eshel answered that the teams have been working to identify what future schedules will look like for routes out of Arborway. The goal is to cause as little disruption as possible to the existing service.
- c Sheila Page (Wellesley) thanked K. Eshel for her presentation.

D. Next Meeting Dates: Tuesday, September 10, 2026 at 10 AM on Zoom.

E. Adjourn: The Chair requested a motion to adjourn which D. Martin made and S. Page seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:56.

Attendees:

Committee:

David Martin	Acton
Nikhil Nadkarni	Cambridge
Hon. D.J. Beauregard	Methuen
Jamie Gilmore	Scituate
Sheila Page	Wellesley



MBTA Advisory Board Staff:

Brian Kane

Hanna Switekowski

Isabella MacKinnon

Executive Director

Deputy Director

Budget & Policy Analyst

Guests:

Kat Eshel

MBTA