

MEETING NOTES

Pursuant to written notice sent to Committee Members and pursuant to notice posted at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting, copies of said notice having been sent to the FRTA's 41-member towns, the meeting of the Transit Advisory Committee of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority was held on July 12, 2018 at the John W. Olver Transit Center, 12 Olive St., Greenfield, MA 01301.

1. INTRODUCTIONS:

Present were the following TAC Members:

Jasper Lapienski and Elizabeth Quirk.

Also present were:

Rachel Fichtenbaum, Megan Rhodes, Peter Kuusisto, Jeff Singleton, Molly Morin; FTM General Manager, Rauley Caine, FTM Assistant General Manager, Ron Andronaco; FTM Safety and Training Manager, and Michael Perreault; FRTA Assistant Administrator.

Michael Perreault called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and it was noted that a quorum **was not** present to hold a meeting. If anyone is interested in becoming a committee member, or knows someone that may be interested, please email Michael Perreault at michael@frta.org.

2. REVIEW MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 9, 2017 AND MEETING NOTES FROM MAY 10, 2018:

The meeting minutes from March 9, 2017 was tabled until the next meeting. There were no comments regarding the meeting notes from May 10, 2018. Michael Perreault thanked Megan Rhodes for taking notes at the May meeting.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Election of officers was tabled until the next meeting.

4. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON FY19 FUNDING:

Michael Perreault updated that the Conference Committee has yet to finalize the budget to send to the Governor. The current formal Legislative session will end on July 31st, so

there are some potential implications if the Conference Committee doesn't send the final budget to the Governor soon. As the Governor has veto powers over budget line items and has up to 10 days to approve and/or veto, if the Conference Committee doesn't get the budget to the Governor before the 21st of July there may not be enough time for the Legislature to override any vetoes the Governor makes. There was discussion that the Conference Committee is made up of State Senators and Representatives to reconcile the differences between the budgets from the two branches. By the next TAC meeting the budget should be finalized with known funding levels for regional transit authorities.

5. DISCUSSION ON FY19 ROUTE AND FARE CHANGES:

Michael Perreault updated that at the last meeting in May, the FRTA Advisory Board approved the proposed route and fare changes. The fare changes went into effect on July 1st and the route changes will go into effect on September 4th. Overall, the fare changes have been successfully launched with only minor issues on the back-end reporting for FRTA.

Jasper Lapienski asked if there was specific data suggesting riders are looking to transfer from the Route 31 into Turners Falls. Molly Morin stated that FRTA doesn't have a way to track where riders transfer to/from, but anecdotally there have been requests from riders looking for transfers at the end of the day into Turners Falls and/or Greenfield. Elizabeth Quirk stated that she regularly takes a transfer from the last bus on the Route 32 onto the Route 21.

Michael Perreault also acknowledged that the Town of Montague continues to support and advocate for additional service on the Route 23 into Sunderland with connections with UMass Transit into Amherst. Unfortunately, with the latest round of route changes FRTA was unable to accommodate additional service to the Route 23. Jeff Singleton stated that the Montague Selectboard passed a resolution and submitted a letter to the FRTA with concerns about excessive trips into Turners Falls and not enough service to Sunderland to connect with Amherst. The Town of Montague is looking to have discussions about what they want for transit services to be able to come to the table with FRTA to understand the wants and needs of Montague and how to work together to achieve those things. Megan Rhodes asked if there is a committee that is working on this project. Jeff Singleton stated that there is not an official committee and that he is working on pulling this together. Megan Rhodes suggested that the FRCOG could possibly help organize and help this process as part of their work updating the regional transit plan later this fall.

6. REVIEW TAC BY-LAWS:

Michael Perreault spoke with George Touloumtzis prior to the meeting about looking for feedback from TAC members on the by-laws to make sure they reflect current practices. There was some discussion about potentially removing members that are not able to attend meetings and potentially moving election of officers from July to a different month where attendance is usually greater. Jasper Lapienski asked if there

would need to be a quorum to change the by-laws. Discussion followed that only the FRTA Administrator can amend the by-laws, but that there should be a quorum to have the discussion, and hopefully find consensus to bring changes to the FRTA Administrator.

Jasper Lapienski stated he previously suggested the meetings should be moved to every month from September to April from 3:00-4:00pm to attract more people to attend.

Elizabeth Quirk suggested to try to get people interested in the TAC either through emails or Facebook to see what times would work for people. Jasper Lapienski suggested FRTA put up a poster in the lobby about the TAC and interested people could contact Michael Perreault.

7. DISCUSSION ON RIDER COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE TO AFL-CIO FOR FY19:

Michael Perreault explained that each town on the FRTA Advisory Board, on a rotating basis, has a position on its board for a Rider Community Representative to the AFL-CIO. Every year FRTA looks to the TAC to help find a list of people interested in serving this position. FRTA will gather a list of names to forward to the AFL-CIO. The AFL-CIO then may vet the list and forward the final list to the Town for selection. Currently, Megan Rhodes is the Rider Community Representative. Anyone interested in being considered or interested in more information please contact Michael Perreault at michael@frta.org. Both Megan Rhodes and Jasper Lapienski stated they would be like to be considered again.

8. REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL TOPICS:

Rachel Fichtenbaum provided the following information to the group:

- The Governor had created a Commission on Aging. This Commission is tasked with looking at all things impacting seniors and age-friendly communities, including transportation. The Commission recently released a grant opportunity for up to \$5,000 targeting disruptive technologies. The grant is open to four different categories, one of which being transportation. If anyone has any ideas for pilot projects involving seniors, please contact Rachel Fichtenbaum at rachel.fichtenbaum@state.ma.us and she would be happy to share your ideas with the Commission.
- Another recent funding opportunity has come out for grants totaling up to \$200,000. These grants will be for improving lives of intellectually disabled individuals.
- Easter Seals and a transportation group in Worcester received a grant to do surveys and outreach to get riders more involved and provide input to the WRTA.
- For more information please contact Rachel Fichtenbaum at rachel.fichtenbaum@state.ma.us or you can read about them in the next MassMobility Newsletter.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS, TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS, OR SUGGESTIONS FOR AGENDA TOPICS:

Elizabeth Quirk suggested that FRTA could combine with MART to become a larger transit authority and perhaps get more transportation funding, similar to PVTA.

Michael Perreault announced that the Franklin County Resource Network's Public Policy Task Force will be hosting a workshop on August 2nd from 9:00am to 11:00am at the JWO Transit Center on State and Federal Government, how a bill becomes a law, and what to say to get your voice heard.

Michael Perreault announced that Community Action will be having their 14th Annual Fill the Belly Bus Community Food Drive on August 3rd. Donations can be brought to Stop & Shop, Food City, Fosters Supermarket, and the Greenfield Town Common.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2018. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.