

Approved 11/10/22

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 September 08, 2022 virtually on the Zoom.com platform by computer and by phone.

1. INTRODUCTIONS:

Present were the following TAC Members:

Chair Elizabeth Quirk, Kim Croce, George Touloumtzis, and Deb Wilson.

Also present were:

Rachel Fichtenbaum, Janice Gibeau, Carol Letson, Wayne Waldron; FTM General Manager, Steve Pardoe, FTM Assistant General Manager, Catherine Connolly; FTM Safety and Training Manager and Michael Perreault; FRTA Assistant Administrator.

Elizabeth Quirk called the meeting to order at 3:00pm and it was noted that a quorum **was** present to hold a meeting.

2. REVIEW MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 12, 2022:

George Touloumtzis made a **motion** to approve meeting minutes from May 12, 2022. Deb Wilson seconded, and the vote was as follows:

Kim Croce: Yes

George Touloumtzis: Yes

Deb Wilson: Yes

The vote passed and the **motion** carried.

3. UPDATE ON ACCESS SERVICE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS:

Michael Perreault gave some brief updates on the Access and Workforce Development grants. Both projects have been very successful in filling transit gaps.

4. DISCUSSION/UPDATE ON REDUCING STIGMA AND INCREASING RIDERSHIP:

Elizabeth Quirk stated that this project is on hold and that there hasn't been any movement on this project since the last meeting.

5. DISCUSSION ON WEEKEND FIXED ROUTE SERVICE AND EXPANDING THE BASE OF THE TRANSIT SYSTEM:

Michael Perreault updated that the ad hoc committee has not met recently on potential weekend fixed route service. FRTA is working to come up with a small-scale pilot project focusing on Saturday fixed route service.

Additionally, the FRCOG has received grant funds and is working with FRTA to improve marketing and brand awareness of local public transportation services. The FRCOG has hired the Allen Roche Group as the consultant for this project. More to come in the following weeks as we look to assess and improve our local marketing strategy.

6. REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL TOPICS:

Rachel Fichtenbaum provided the following updates and information to the group:

- Previously FRTA and other MA RTAs worked to create a local transportation inventory, which led to the creation of RideMatch. RideMatch is now a statewide resource for transportation options throughout the Commonwealth and MassDOT is looking to update the information online and keep it current moving forward. You can check out RideMatch online at: massridematch.org.
- Anyone that has information, success stories, or other transportation related topics can send them to Rachel Fichtenbaum to be included in MassMobility's monthly newsletter.

Rachel Fichtenbaum also announced that she has accepted a new position at MassDOT which will encompass similar work with mobility along with overseeing the Community Transit Grant Program. Along with that transition MassMobility will be moving from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to MassDOT. For more information on MassMobility and its monthly newsletter please contact Rachel Fichtenbaum at her new email address: Rachel.L.Fichtenbaum@dot.state.ma.us.

George Touloumtzis asked if the new position she's taking at MassDOT was a pre-existing position or a new position at MassDOT. Rachel Fichtenbaum explained that this was a pre-existing position at MassDOT, but it will now also encompass her previous work on mobility. Her new title will be Manager of Grant Programs and Mobility Management. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services will not be replacing Rachel's current position.

7. FRTA UPDATES:

Michael Perreault provided the following updates and information:

- In mid-July Southwick COA and Hulmes Transportation began using Ecolane scheduling software for the Town of Southwick. FRTA will next be working with Hilltown CDC, which operates for the Towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, and Worthington.
- Two additional 35ft low-floor Gillig transit buses were delivered over the summer. We are awaiting one additional bus in September, and they should all be in operation by October.
- FRTA was awarded grant funds from MassDOT and is looking to create and hire for a new Travel Ambassador/Travel Trainer position.
- FRTA has been working behind the scenes to replace its fixed route software and rider app. We are working with a new company, Passio, and hope to have the new software and app operational later this fall.

George Touloumtzis stated that it is helpful to highlight new vehicles coming into the system, which could help with battling stigma where people unfamiliar with transit could be turned off by the use of old/outdated equipment.

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

There were no public comments, transportation questions, or suggestions for agenda topics.

The next scheduled FRTA Advisory Board meeting is Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 4:00pm via Zoom. George Touloumtzis stated that allowing for virtual meetings has seemed to create a platform for more active and effective Advisory Board meetings and making quorum at those meetings. George Touloumtzis asked if there has been any consideration for virtual or hybrid meetings in the future. Michael Perreault stated that he thinks there are provisions or remote participation in meetings, but that there needs to be a quorum physically present. MA legislature has extended allowance for remote public meetings through March 31, 2023. More to come on this as we get closer to that date.

Michael Perreault stated that if anyone has agenda topics at an upcoming meeting can send them to michael@frta.org.

The next Transit Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2022. George Touloumtzis made a **motion** to adjourn, Deb Wilson seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.