

Pursuant to written notice sent to Board Members and pursuant to notice posted at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting, copies of said notice having been sent to the Secretary of the Commonwealth, William F. Galvin and the Secretary of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, Kristen Lepore, the meeting of the Advisory Board of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority was held on May 18, 2017 at the John W. Olver Transit Center, 12 Olive St., Greenfield, MA 01301.

1. INTRODUCTIONS:

Present were the following Advisory Board Members and/or Member Designees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>
	Total	62.77

Also present were:

Tina M. Cote, FRTA Administrator, Michael Perreault, FRTA Assistant Administrator, Ed Sanborn, FRTA Bookkeeper, Amy Rau, Administrative Assistant, Molly Morin, FTM General Manager, Rauley Caine, FTM Assistant General Manager, Donna MacNicol, FRTA Counsel, George Touloumtzis, FRTA Transit Advisory Committee, Megan Rhodes, Franklin Regional Council of Governments , and Steven Ellis, Administrator for Town of Montague.

Chairman Lance Fritz called the meeting to order at 4:00pm and it was noted that a quorum **was** present to hold a meeting.

2. REVIEW AND VOTE TO ACCEPT MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 10, 2017 AND MARCH 16, 2017 MEETINGS:

Tracy Rogers made a **motion** to accept the minutes from the February 10, 2017 and March 16, 2017 Advisory Board meetings. Eric Twarog seconded and the vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Not Present
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
		Total	62.77

Yes – 58.10
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 4.67

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

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

5. REVIEW AND VOTE ON FIXED ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS:

Tina M. Cote explained that after the last Advisory Board meeting in March FRTA held public meetings to discuss proposed changes to the fixed route system. FRTA received a great deal of feedback on the proposals, some of which was positive and some of which indicated more need for improvement. FRTA took this information and all comments into serious consideration and modified the final revision into what has been provided to the Advisory Board meeting today. In addition to these final revisions, FRTA is looking to push back the launch of the new route changes to accommodate all of the work that will be necessary over the summer including, preparing new printed schedules, updating electronic/web-based mapping and data information, and finalizing bus stop locations along the routes. The final changes presented to the Advisory Board represent a positive step forward and serve to directly address the needs of the community based upon the feedback we received.

Dianne Cornwell made a **motion** to approve the proposed fixed route changes as presented. Tracy Rogers seconded and discussion followed. Richard Kuklewicz stated that the Town of Montague is very excited about the new route from downtown Turners Falls to downtown

Greenfield and GCC (Route 24) but had some concerns with elimination of an additional run on the Route 23 from Greenfield through Montague Center into Sunderland. Richard Kuklewicz further explained that representatives from FRTA had previously met with representatives of the Town of Montague to address those concerns and discuss the reasons behind that change. That meeting was very positive and the FRTA will continue to work with the Town of Montague to increase service on the Route 23 to Sunderland in the future. Tina M. Cote wanted to also add that these service enhancements will not only improve our fixed route system, but also fit within our proposed FY18 budget.

The vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Not Present
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
		Total	<u>62.77</u>

Yes – 58.10

No – 0.00

Not Present – 4.67

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

Tina M. Cote gave credit to the hard work the FRTA and FTM staff put into this project including Molly Morin, Rauley Caine, and Michael Perreault.

6. UPDATE FROM FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Robert J. Decker III stated that the Finance and Audit Committee has reviewed the proposed FY18 budget. The biggest question is with the amount of state aid that FRTA will get once the state budget is finalized. The Finance and Audit Committee also recommended increasing the Administrator’s salary by \$2,446. Dianne Cornwell added that the budget calls for a 2.5% increase for staff and that health insurance costs continue to rise. The other notable change to the budget is that the JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute) grant, that supports part of the Greenfield/Orange Route 32, ends after FY17.

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE FY18 BUDGET:

Ruth Preston made a **motion** to accept the FY18 budget as presented. Eric Twarog seconded, there was no further discussion, and the vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Not Present
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
		Total	62.77

Yes – 58.10
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 4.67

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

Tracy Rogers made a **motion** to accept the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee to increase the Administrator’s salary 2.5% (\$2,446). Jonathan von Ranson seconded and discussion followed. Lance Fritz stated that both he and Peter Otten have requested Tina M. Cote perform a self-evaluation and they will meet to discuss over the summer prior to the next Advisory Board meeting. The vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Not Present
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
		Total	62.77

Yes – 58.10
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 4.67

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

8. REVIEW AND APPROVE FY18 RESOLUTION:

Eric Twarog made a **motion** to approve the FY18 Resolution. Ruth Preston seconded and discussion followed. Lance Fritz explained that the resolution authorizes the Administrator certain functions on behalf of the Advisory Board, such as signing checks in the amount of \$5,000 or less and cosigning with the Chair or Vice-Chair those checks above \$5,000. The language in the resolution is the same as in FY17. The vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Not Present
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
		Total	62.77

Yes – 58.10
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 4.67

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

9. NOMINATION/ELECTION OF CHAIR FY18-20:

Lance Fritz explained that at the last Advisory Board meeting there was a vote taken to nominate himself as the Chair for the upcoming term. Robert J. Decker III made a **motion** to elect Lance Fritz as Chair for FY18-20. Ruth Preston seconded and the vote was as follows.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes

Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Yes
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
	Total	62.77	

Yes – 59.11
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 3.66

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

10. NOMINATION/ELECTION OF FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE FOR FY18:

Lance Fritz stated that currently Peter Otten, Robert J. Decker III, and Dianne Cornwell are serving on the Finance and Audit Committee. Each of them has indicated that they would continue to serve unless someone else is willing to take their place. Jonathan von Ranson made a **motion** to elect Peter Otten, Robert J. Decker III, and Dianne Cornwell to the Finance and Audit Committee for FY18. Robert Baker seconded and the vote was as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Dianne Cornwell	Bernardston	1.79	Yes
Robert Baker	Conway	1.04	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	8.42	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	26.29	Yes
Lance Fritz	Leyden	1.00	Yes
Richard Kuklewicz	Montague	13.37	Yes
Tracy Rogers	Northfield	1.40	Yes
Rick Marsh	Petersham	1.00	Yes
Andrew Baker	Shelburne	3.66	Not Present
Mike Vinskey	Shutesbury	1.01	Yes
Ruth Preston	Southwick	2.74	Yes
Jonathan von Ranson	Wendell	<u>1.05</u>	Yes
	Total	62.77	

Yes – 59.11
 No – 0.00
 Not Present – 3.66

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

11. OTHER FRTA UPDATES:

Tina M. Cote gave some brief updates on the following FRTA projects:

- FRTA had requested an earmark through the legislature for \$180,000 to pilot weekend fixed route service. The earmark was proposed by Representative Mark but was rejected in the House. FRTA is now working with Senator Hinds to put a similar earmark in the Senate for approval. We should know in several weeks if the earmark gets approved, once the state budget gets finalized.
- MassDOT recently completed a compliance audit on FRTA with three minor findings, all which have since been corrected. The findings were: installing a camera in the administrative office covering the cash box; discontinue use of a signature stamp by the Administrator; and to update employee timesheets to reflect additional information on hours worked and in conjunction with the number of hours employees are scheduled to work.
- We expect to implement our new fare cards and 31-consecutive day passes on July 1st. Full fare for the 31-day pass will be \$30 and half-fare will be \$15. Ruth Preston asked if the cards will have any identifying information on them to show the person using the card is the rightful owner of the card. Tina M. Cote explained that half-fare cards will have a photo ID and/or other information on them to help limit fraud and abuse. Michael Perreault further clarified that for all cards, once scanned on the bus, there is a pre-set time limit to not allow the card to be scanned again. This is to prevent “pass-backs”, where one person can use the card and pass it back to someone else to use the same card.
- FRTA will soon make a van donation to the Center for New Americans. There is an identified need for this organization who try to help individuals get to work; individuals who are primarily either working on local farms or have 2nd or 3rd shift employment. These are gaps that FRTA cannot currently meet so a vehicle which has met its useful life criteria and is no longer needed will be donated soon.
- Starting on July 1st the Goshen COA will no longer be providing transportation for the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, and Worthington demand response consortium. This contract will be assumed and transitioned to the Hilltown Community Development Corporation (CDC).
- Since the last Advisory Board meeting FRTA had intended to put the funds for the purchase and sale of the property for the new maintenance facility into an escrow account while we continue to work on getting all of the required permits and permissions for the subdivision of the property, construction of the road and construction of the facility. We have since learned from MassDOT that they will not allow us to put those funds into an escrow account. Unfortunately, we will not be able to finalize the purchase and sale before the end of the fiscal year and as a result, will be reverting those funds back to MassDOT. We will continue to move the project ahead and pursue all necessary permitting, zoning and planning to ensure that everything is in place prior to the final purchase and sale of the property. Robert J. Decker III asked if there was any way to carry those funds over into the next fiscal year. Tina M. Cote explained that all MassDOT capital funds must be spent down by the end of the fiscal year and cannot be carried over. Tina M. Cote did elaborate stating that we do have additional funding in FY18 to continue the project. Ruth Preston asked if FRTA will be responsible for the

roadway infrastructure. Tina M. Cote confirmed that roadway infrastructure would still be part of the agreement.

- FRTA recently received its newest transit bus to the fleet and expects it to go into service in the upcoming week or two. The new bus is a 35-ft Gillig Low Floor, similar to the bus delivered last summer.

Jonathan von Ranson stated he has been working with FRTA regarding demand response service issues that residents of Wendell are currently experiencing. Currently, residents in Wendell are able to use demand response transportation to travel into Orange for services but have very limited to no options for travel into Greenfield for services. Michael Perreault responded that FRTA tries to work through problems on a case by case basis, not only with regard to operational and procedural issues, but also in the context of financial and budgetary issues. In this particular case, FRTA will continue to work with Jonathan von Ranson and the Town to resolve the issue.

Tina M. Cote stated that FRTA will work with the Advisory Board to review and update the Advisory Board by-laws this fall. One area that should be reviewed is the time and manner in which we send board meeting packets out to Advisory Board members in advance of a meeting. Of consideration is a way to more effectively and efficiently coordinate this through email which will reduce costs for printing and mailing, as well as allowing for the information to be received by Advisory Board members in advance of meetings. Lance Fritz added that we will look to appoint a committee to review the by-laws at the next Advisory Board meeting and if anyone is interested in serving on the committee to please contact Michael Perreault.

Tina M. Cote asked the Advisory Board their thoughts on offering a period of free transportation on our fixed routes when the new service changes are launched in September. Robert J. Decker III asked how much revenue would be lost by offering free transportation for a week. Tina M. Cote estimated \$1,000 to \$1,200. Robert J. Decker III suggested offering free bus rides on four consecutive Fridays. Robert Baker asked if there were any days during the week that were more heavily used than others. Molly Morin replied that ridership appears to be evenly spread out and that no particular day has higher ridership trends than another. Ruth Preston stated that riders with new monthly passes might feel cheated. Without further comment or objection, Lance Fritz stated that Tina M. Cote could exercise her best judgement in offering free transportation in conjunction with the route changes.

Robert J. Decker III asked the Advisory Board to put in a request to MassDOT to replace the N. Main St. bridge over the railroad in South Deerfield. Michael Perreault stated that he would draft a letter and present it at the next Transportation Planning Organization meeting.

Rick Marsh asked whom he should speak with regarding transportation services in Petersham. Tina M. Cote stated that she would be happy to speak with Rick Marsh offline after the meeting to get more specifics and start a discussion on what can be done to help.

Robert J. Decker III made a **motion** to adjourn; Dianne Cornwell seconded and the meeting concluded at 4:45pm.