

Approved 5/21/26

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, Matthew Gorzkowicz, the meeting of the Advisory Board of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority was held on November 20, 2025 virtually on the Zoom.us platform by computer and by phone.

1. Introductions:

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>
Paul McLatchy III	Ashfield	1.09
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10
Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12
Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05

Total 70.19

Also present were:

Tina M. Cote; FRTA Administrator and Michael Perreault; FRTA Deputy Administrator.

Chairman Eric Twarog called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm and it was noted that a quorum was present to hold a meeting.

2. Review and Vote to Accept Minutes from September 18, 2025:

Robert Decker III made a **motion** to accept the meeting minutes from September 18, 2025, Jeff Singleton seconded, and the vote was as follows:

Name	Town	Weighted Vote	Vote
Paul McLatchyIII	Ashfield	1.09	Abstain
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39	Yes
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63	Yes
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10	Yes
Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12	Abstain
Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94	Yes
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01	Yes
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37	Not Present
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05	Yes
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47	Yes
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44	Abstain
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05	Yes

Total 70.19

Yes – 60.17

No – 0.00

Abstain – 3.65

Not Present – 6.37

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

3. Discussion and Update on Employment Health Insurance:

Tina Cote discussed that the FRTA has nine (9) employees and four (4) of them buy in to the current health insurance plan through the Hampshire Group Trust (HGT). She stated that she has met with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and have been weighing options and are leaning toward the GIC but we do not yet have pricing and probably will not have it until well in to next year. It is a little uncertain and scary not knowing what will happen with the Trust. Staff is used to having Blue Cross/Blue Shield and are hesitant to make the switch to GIC or another carrier. Would prefer to stay with current provider but not sure if that is the direction that we are leaning in at this point.

Bob Decker asked how much is our deposit at the HGT and Tina Cote stated that she did not know since we go through the FRCOG for our benefits management and we do not have a separate deposit that she knows of. Certain members have an amount of deposits according to Bob Decker and it is based on two to three months of premiums- Tina Cote said will ask the FRCOG but at this point there is too much risk with HGT not knowing if they will continue to operate and we will have to weigh our options with GIC or MIIA. Since we have just a few employees getting health coverage, it is hard to get premium pricing. FRTA will continue to monitor things.

Paul McLatchy stated that he was involved in a meeting with the FRCOG finance committee and that realistically because the reserves at HGT have been so depleted that no one should be expecting their deposits back. At the HGT meeting this morning, they are down to about \$2M in reserves vs. \$30M a few years ago. The FRCOG is actively looking to leave HGT and looking at other options. Tina Cote stated that even if we were to get deposits back that it would not be very much since we have low participation in coverage.

4. Review and Vote to Accept FY25 Financial Statements (Single Audit Still Pending) and Updated Weighted Vote:

Michael wanted to point out that Matthew Fortier from Orange has joined the meeting-

Tina Cote stated that everyone should have their Audit and Financial Statements in their packet that was sent out. The FRTA is still waiting on the approval on their single audit because they have to yet to release the 2025 OMB Compliance form (not sure if the government shut down is a reason for this).

The new weighted votes have been updated in the audit.

Karen Kelley asked how often the audits happen and Tina Cote stated that they happen annually and have to be completed by October 1. Other audits happen throughout the year but the financial audit takes place annually and all the Transit Authorities are subject to this.

Jeff Singleton asked if we were using FY25 audit figures in FY26 for vote counts etc. Michael Perreault reiterated that we use the last completed financial audits to determine the weighted votes for the current year. Jeff Singleton questioned when these figures would appear on the Cherry sheet and Michael Perreault stated that the assessment for FY25 would be come off of the FY27 Cherry Sheets. The Department of Revenue (DOR) receives our audit by December /January and then go on to the following year's Cherry sheet. Jeff Singleton asked if the local assessments and weighted votes are based on mileage and Michael Perreault explained that it is based upon per service hour for Fixed route and it is per rider/per trip for the Paratransit service (ADA, Demand response, ACCESS).

Robert Decker III made a **motion** to accept the FY25 Financial Statements and Will Cosby seconded, and the vote was as follows:

Name	Town	Weighted Vote	Vote
Paul McLatchyIII	Ashfield	1.09	Abstain
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39	Yes
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63	Yes
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10	Yes
Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12	Yes

Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94	Yes
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01	Yes
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37	Yes
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05	Yes
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47	Yes
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44	Yes
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05	Yes

Total 70.19

Yes – 69.10

No – 0.00

Abstain – 1.09

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

5. Transit Advisory Committee Update:

Tabled until the next meeting because Megan is not in attendance.

6. FRTA Updates:

Tina Cote provided an update on our CEC (Clean Energy Center) study and hopes to have that completed by December. Once completed, funds will be available for us to purchase one (1) or possibly two (2) electric vehicle and have it monitored to see how it operates in our rural area.

Our Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (CRTP) should be finalized in January with the completed project available in February. This plan is updated every five (5) years.

Solar project at the Maintenance facility is still ongoing. This should be put out for bid shortly. The FRTA is looking to meet with MassDOT next week to finalize the documents needed to release the bid.

The LINK413 service (in partnership with BRTA and PVRTA) will (hopefully) start mid-January.

The FRTA has several grants that they have applied for and are waiting to see if they will be awarded.

7. Nomination/Election of Open Position to the Finance and Audit Committee for Remainder of FY26:

Eric Twarog announced that he will be retiring from the City of Greenfield on December 19, 2025 and will be resigning as Chair and other FRTA duties. His position on the Finance and Audit Committee will need to be filled for the remaining FY26 term. Tina Cote reminded everyone that Robert Decker and Jeff Singleton were the other standing members. Meetings take place three (3) to four (4) times per year and they can be done virtually. Jeff Singleton is currently the Chair of this committee.

Eric Twarog opened the floor to nominations and Paul McLatchy nominated Veronique Blanchard. Veronique accepted the nomination and Jeff Singleton seconded. Robert Decker moved that nominations be closed.

Eric Twarog proceeded with the vote and the vote was as follows:

Name	Town	Weighted Vote	Vote
Paul McLatchyIII	Ashfield	1.09	Yes
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39	Yes
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63	Yes
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10	Yes
Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12	Yes
Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94	Yes
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01	Yes
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37	Yes
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05	Yes
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47	Yes
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44	Yes
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05	Yes

Total 70.19

Yes – 70.19

No – 0.00

Abstain – 0.00

The vote passed and the **motion** carried through the end of FY26 (June30).

8. Nomination/Election of Chair for Remainder of FY26-28 Term:

Eric Twarog stated that due to his retirement he would no longer be Chair for the remainder of FY26. He expressed what an honor it was to serve on the FRTA Boards over the last several years. The chair signs checks, represents us at the planning meetings (TPO) with the FRCOG once a month and chair meetings. Eric stated that he enjoyed it and that it s not a heavy lift. Eric Twarog opened the floor for nominations.

Paul McLatchy nominated Veronique Blanchard who declined and then nominated Paul McLatchy. Paul McLatchy declined. Tina Cote suggested an interim Chair until June 30th and Robert Decker volunteered but stated that he would not do it beyond June.

Paul McLatchy nominated Robert Decker. Nominations were closed and Jeff Singleton seconded the motion.

Name	Town	Weighted Vote	Vote
Paul McLatchyIII	Ashfield	1.09	Yes
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39	Yes
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63	Yes
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10	Yes
Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12	Yes
Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94	Yes
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01	Yes
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37	Yes
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05	Yes
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47	Yes
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44	Yes
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05	Yes

Total 70.19

Yes – 70.19

No – 0.00

Abstain – 0.00

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

Tina Cote thanked Eric Twarog on behalf of the Board for his time. She stated that he was very supportive and easy to work with and that he would be missed.

9. Discussion of any subject not anticipated prior to the notice being sent to the Advisory Board Members pursuant to Article II, section 4 of the by-laws or anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting pursuant to the Open Meeting Law or a subject which cannot be delayed until the next Advisory Board meeting, including the need for an executive session.

Tina Cote made a correction from earlier and stated that the next Board meeting would be March 19, 2026.

Rick LaPierre made a **motion** to adjourn, Pau McLatchy seconded, and the vote was as follows:

Name	Town	Weighted Vote	Vote
Paul McLatchyIII	Ashfield	1.09	Yes
Karen Kelly	Bernardston	1.39	Yes
Veronique Blanchard	Conway	1.06	Yes
Robert J. Decker III	Deerfield	4.47	Yes
Eric Twarog	Greenfield	32.63	Yes
Greg Gagnon	Hatfield	2.10	Yes

Will Cosby	Hawley	1.12	Yes
Jeff Singleton	Montague	12.94	Yes
Emily Hill	New Salem	1.01	Yes
Matthew Fortier	Orange	6.37	Yes
Carrie Florek	Russell	1.05	Yes
Rick LaPierre	Shelburne	2.47	Yes
Paul Doud	Wendell	1.44	Yes
Susan Bronstein	Westhampton	1.05	Yes

Total 70.19

Yes – 70.19

No – 0.00

Abstain – 0.00

The vote passed, the **motion** carried, and the meeting adjourned at 4:38 pm.