



## **Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) Advisory Board Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday, February 25, 2022  
**Location:** Virtual Meeting via SRTA Cisco WebEx (2:00 PM)  
Call in Number: Call in Number: 1-408-418-9388; Access Code: 2631 163 7853;  
Password 69875884  
**Purpose:** SRTA Advisory Board Meeting

### (1) Call to Order

**The Advisory Board Chair called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM EST.**

### (2) Roll Call

**Present:**

City of New Bedford (Jennifer Clarke)	City of Fall River (John Perry)
Town of Fairhaven (Paul Foley)	Town of Mattapoisett (Michael Lourenco)
Town of Fairhaven (Bob Espinola)	Town of Dartmouth (Cody Haddad)
Riders Representative (Dan Robillard)	Town of Westport (Richard Brewer)

**Absent:**

Town of Acushnet	Town of Swansea
Town of Freetown	ADA Representative
Town of Somerset	

**Additional Attendees:**

Erik Rousseau, SRTA	Arthur Frank, General Counsel (SRTA)
Kristen Sniezek, SRTA	Lilia Cabral-Bernard, SRPEDD
John LeBert, SRTA	Amber Allen, SRTA
Shayne Trimbell, SRTA	
Maritza Aquino, SRTA	

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(3) Approval of Minutes

**Motion: The motion was made (Riders' Representative) and seconded (City of Fall River) to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2022 SRTA Advisory Board Meeting.**

**Discussion: N/A**

**Vote:**

**For: Town of Fairhaven, City of Fall River, City of New Bedford, Town of Mattapoisett, Town of Westport, and Riders' Representative**

**Status: Motion Passes**

(4) Citizen's Participation

No Citizen's Participation.

(5) Civil Rights Update

*Title VI:*

The SRTA's current Title VI Plan has been submitted and is under FTA review and awaiting concurrence.

The SRTA's subsequent Title VI Plan is in progress, and updates will be provided to the Board as part of this process.

*Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):*

The EEO Plan for South Coast Transit Management (SCTM) has been submitted and is under FTA review and awaiting concurrence.

*Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):*

The SRTA's current DBE Goal Plan has been submitted and is under FTA review and awaiting concurrence.

The most recent semi-annual report was submitted on December 1 and is under FTA review. The next semi-annual report is due June 1.

The SRTA's current DBE Program Plan received FTA concurrence in September 2017.

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*Environmental Justice:*

Environmental justice is a requirement that the SRTA must engage the public whenever there is a major project or route change. The SRTA is constantly working to increase public participation, and if any public input is needed, it will be conveyed to the Board as part of this report.

(6) Old Business

*COVID-19 Response (<http://www.srtabus.com/covid19>):*

Mr. Rousseau stated that the TSA, or Transit Security Administration's current mask mandate is due to expire on March 18, 2022. This mandate has not yet been extended. Mr. Rousseau expressed that he will update the Board accordingly should there be any new information.

Question: Have any new air filters been installed in conjunction with what is already in place?

Mr. Rousseau answered: We have piloted five systems that have a UV light component. They have not proved to be sufficient. The air filters we utilize currently are the MERV-13 and also the SanUV 'Air'e filters. These have shown to be very effective for us. We are also exploring other manufacturers to provide more options if applicable. We want to ensure the health and safety of our passengers.

(7) New Business

*Title VI Plan Update:*

Mr. Shayne Trimbell explained the new updates for the Title VI plan. Title VI covers a broad range of topics which will be presented in greater detail next month when the draft plan is complete. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Under FTA rules, SRTA is required to maintain a Title VI civil rights program to protect the rights of racial minority and low-income populations. The program is required to be updated every three years. The current plan was update in 2019 which is why we are updating the plan now. For the most part, much of the current Title VI plan will be carried forward without any changes. However, there have been changes in the region's population that will be reflected in this update.

The most significant change in the plan is the addition of Haitian Creole as a third Safe Harbor language. Safe Harbor languages are those that are spoken by more than 1,000 people or 5% of the total population in the service area. Prior plans identified Portuguese and Spanish as Safe Harbor languages, however demographic changes identified in the American Community Survey data published by the U.S. Census showed 1,237 Haitian Creole speaking residents. Because this exceeds the Safe Harbor threshold, Haitian Creole is now included as a Safe Harbor language. This means our vital documents such as public notices,

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complaint forms, demand response applications, and riding guides will need to be translated into Haitian Creole.

Significant changes to the plan include clarifying language in the Major Service Change policy to better define what is considered a major service change. Previously, the plan only reference fixed route mileage, however because SRTA provides demand response service above what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, we are proposing to include demand response in the definition. Under the proposed language, any change that reduces or increases demand response service area or span of service by 25% will also be considered a major service change.

The other policies that are proposed to be updated are the Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden policies. These address the effects of service changes on racial minorities and low-income populations. Where the current plan states that a change that affects either population more than 20% than their counterpart, the proposed language will identify an adverse effect when more than 60% of the effected population is either a racial minority or low-income. This change will make service change analysis easily understood by the public since it is based on population rather than measuring the effect of a change.

That sums up the most notable changes in the plan. We have been working with our planning consultant Nelson\Nygaard to prepare the draft, which when complete I hope you will find it more visually appealing, well organized, and easy to read and understand. Next month I will review the more detailed aspects of the plan such as our service monitoring requirements and the result of the analysis. Additionally, we will be seeking plan approval at that time so we can complete the plan and submit for FTA review by our deadline of April 1, 2022.

#### (8) Logistics for the Next Advisory Board Meeting

As indicated on the agenda, the next Advisory Board Meeting for the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority will be held on Thursday, March 31st 2 pm at 2:00PM. Consistent with past meetings, this meeting will be held remotely.

#### (9) Adjournment

**The Advisory Board Chair called the meeting to adjournment at 2:32PM EST.**