



Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) Advisory Board Meeting

Date: Thursday, May 22, 2025
Location: Virtual Meeting via SRTA Microsoft Teams 2:00 PM
Call in Number: 1-929-523-2910; Access Code: 493 554 842#
Purpose: SRTA Advisory Board Meeting

(1) Call to Order

The Advisory Board Chair called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM EST.

(2) Roll Call

Present:

City of New Bedford (Jennifer Clarke)	City of Fall River (Ann O'Neil Souza)
Town of Mattapoisett (Michael Lorenzo)	Town of Swansea (John Hansen)
Town of Westport (Richard Brewer)	ADA Representative (Dan Robillard)

Absent:

Town of Acushnet	Town of Dartmouth
Town of Fairhaven	Town of Freetown
Town of Somerset	Riders Representative

Additional Attendees:

Erik Rousseau, SRTA	Arthur Frank, General Counsel (SRTA)
Kristen Sniezek, SRTA	John LeBert, SRTA
Corey Hebert, SRTA	Brendan Marden, SRTA
Martiza Aquino, SRTA	Michelle Tavares, SRTA
Daniel Brogan, SRPEDD	

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(3) Approval of Minutes

Motion: The motion was made (Town of Westport) and seconded (Town of Mattapoisett) to approve the minutes from the previous SRTA Advisory Board Meeting held on March 20, 2025.

Discussion: N/A

Vote:

For: City of Fall River, Town of Mattapoisett, City of New Bedford, Town of Swansea, Town of Westport

Status: Motion Passes

(4) Citizen's Participation

None.

(5) Civil Rights Update

Title VI:

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

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):

The current EEO Policy Statement for the SRTA has been submitted and is under FTA review and awaiting concurrence.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):

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

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 1st and is under FTA review. The next semi-annual report is due June 1st.

Environmental Justice:

Environmental justice is a requirement that the SRTA must engage the public whenever there is a major project or route change.

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The SRTA is consistently working to increase public participation, and if any public input is needed, it will be conveyed to the Board as part of this report.

Public Hearings / Meetings:

None.

(6) Old Business

FY26 Budget

Mr. Rousseau presented the fiscal year 2026 budget and operational plan. Mr. Rousseau highlighted that the fiscal year 2026 budget includes a full year of intercity express service, micro-connect service, and fare free service. Mr. Rousseau also shared that the Massachusetts Senate budget language includes a change to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 161B which would compel transit authorities to not collect fares for both fixed route and ADA transportation. The transit authorities have advocated for that change not to be made as fare policy is the responsibility of the advisory boards. It is unknown at this time if the language in the Massachusetts Senate budget will pass. In the Fall of 2025, it is expected that the collective bargaining agreement will be made between the Union and Management company. Health care expenses in fiscal year 2026 are projected to have a large increase relative to other budget items. The current level of service provided is not expected to change.

Mr. Brewer asked if it is expected that the fare free service will continue through fiscal year 2029. Mr. Rousseau explained that the fare free service is funded by a grant and that it is expected that the SRTA will continue to receive this funding. If the fare free funding were to end, options would include a return to collecting fares or finding a different source of funding for the fare free service.

Mr. Robillard commented that collecting fares is only a small percentage of total revenue and that ridership would likely drop. Mr. Robillard shared support for the budget as presented and the current levels of service.

Ms. Clarke requested confirmation of the following: continuation of fare free service, continuation of Sunday service, and no increase in local assessment beyond the 2.5% for the fiscal year 2026 budget. Mr. Rousseau confirmed.

Mr. Brogan commented that in the Fall of 2025, the SRTA and the SRPEDD will be working on an economic impact study to demonstrate the positive economic impacts of the fare free service.

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Motion: The motion was made (City of Fall River) and seconded (ADA Representative) to accept the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority's fiscal year 2026 budget in the amount of \$35,563,851.00 and to approve its contents.

Discussion: N/A

Vote:

For: City of Fall River, Town of Mattapoisett, City of New Bedford, Town of Swansea, Town of Westport, ADA Representative

Status: Motion Passes

(7) New Business

MassDOT Comprehensive Regional Transit Plan

Mr. Rousseau explained that every five years, Massachusetts DOT supports the regional transit authorities by doing a Comprehensive Regional Transit Plan for the transit authority. This process has begun and will continue into fiscal year 2026.

(8) Logistics for the Next Advisory Board Meeting

As indicated on the agenda, the next Advisory Board Meeting for the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority is on June 12, 2025, at 2:00 PM.

(9) Adjournment

The Advisory Board Chair called the meeting to adjourn at 2:22 PM EST.

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