



**Southeastern Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Meeting**

Date: Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Location: New Bedford City Hall  
133 William Street, Ashley Room  
New Bedford, MA 02740

(1) Call to Order

**The Advisory Board Chair called the meeting to order at 11:32AM EST.**

(2) Roll Call

Present:

City of New Bedford	City of Fall River
Town of Dartmouth	

Absent:

Town of Acushnet	Town of Swansea
Town of Fairhaven	Town of Westport
Town of Freetown	Riders Representative
Town of Mattapoisett	ADA Representative
Town of Somerset	

Additional Attendees:

Erik Rousseau, SRTA	Arthur Frank, General Counsel
Kristen Sniezek, SRTA	
John LeBert, SRTA	
Shayne Trimbell, SRTA	

(3) Approval of Minutes

**The motion was made (Dartmouth) and seconded (New Bedford) to approve the minutes from the previous September (09/26/2019) Advisory Board Meeting. So Voted.**

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(4) Citizen's Participation

No Citizen's Participation.

(5) Service Report

Mentioned in past Board meetings, the Authority has been in the process of implementing a Transit Management Technology (TMT) system – which includes Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Automatic Passenger Counters (APC), Automatic Voice Announcements (AVA), and more. As a result of these ongoing, multi-year efforts, usable data is beginning to be collected. Such data will be used to assist the Authority in making data-driven decisions in order to enhance the current service to best meet the transit needs of the Communities.

Additionally, Mr. Rousseau informed the Board that while data collection is occurring, the system itself has not yet been certified by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), however, the goal is to have the FTA certification (successfully) completed by the end of Fiscal Year 2020.

The City of New Bedford questioned the availability of this TMT data, specifically to the Board, in which Mr. Rousseau noted that such requests – given the large amount of raw data being collected – would be handled on a case by case basis.

(6) Civil Rights Update

Title VI: The current Title VI Plan for SRTA expires on May 31, 2019. The new Title VI Plan has been completed and uploaded to TrAMS and is awaiting concurrence. This new Plan would be in effect until May 31, 2022.

EEO: The new EEO Plan for South Coast Transit Management was submitted on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and is approved through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

DBE: The SRTA DBE Goal Methodology for Federal Fiscal Year 2019 through Federal Fiscal Year 2021 were submitted on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 and are awaiting concurrence. The next semi-annual report is due December 1.

Environmental Justice: This is a requirement that SRTA has to engage the Public whenever there is a major project or route change. SRTA is constantly working to increase Public participation. If any Public input is needed, it will be reported to the Board as part of this report.

(7) Old Business

*FY20 & FY21 MassDOT MOU*

Included with the meeting materials, Mr. Rousseau presented the recently agreed to FY20 and FY21 MassDOT Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); including the targets that were set and the current performance measured against such targets. Mr. Rousseau highlighted the SRTA's performance above the target in areas such as Farebox Recovery Ratio, Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour, Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour, and more.

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The Town of Dartmouth questioned what other Massachusetts Regional Transit Authorities (RTA) would be comparable to SRTA, in which Mr. Rousseau stated that while every RTA is different in many ways, the SRTA is most comparable to Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA), Brockton Area Transit (BAT), and Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). Currently, the SRTA has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest budget and the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest vehicle pull out – both of which can be attributed to operating in multiple Cities.

#### *FY20 Competitive Grant Opportunities*

The Authority recently submitted applications to two separate MassDOT (State) competitive grants opportunities.

The first being an application – in the amount of \$220,000 – to the Community Workforce Development Grant Program would be used to cover 18-months' worth of operating costs for an express service between the City of New Bedford and the City of Fall River. The proposed service would include 3 trips in the morning and 3 trips in the afternoon with the intention of aligning with Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's (RIPTA) 24X (Newport) service that operates in and out of the Fall River terminal. In addition, 2 trips would be provided in the middle of the day – both of which would be planned in conjunction with the Bristol Community College. The Authority would be responsible for a 20% match to this service; which fares would contribute to.

The second application – in the amount of \$808,937 – would be used to fully fund a 12-month pilot for the oft requested fixed route service on Sunday. In order to accomplish this – and in addition to offset from the amount of fare collected – Saturday service would need to be slightly reduced. Furthermore, if such Sunday service were to be deemed successful, the Authority (and its Partners and Communities) would then be responsible for a 50% match in any subsequent years.

The City of Fall River questioned if a study on Sunday service has been conducted to determine the feasibility of such service. The SRTA has not conducted a specific study, however, the Authority did partner with the Regional Planning Agency (SRPEDD) in 2014 to conduct a Comprehensive Service Assessment (CSA). The development of this CSA included several mechanisms for community outreach – of which demonstrated Sunday service as the highest request.

Additionally, Mr. Rousseau noted that the challenge surrounding Sunday service has often been related to cost and funding. As it is now, the aforementioned competitive grant funds are one-time; which would require commitment from the State for any continued operation.

#### (8) New Business

##### *New Bedford Route 1 Summer Pilot Program:*

Mr. Shayne Trimbell (Director of Transit Planning) provided a brief summary of the New Bedford Route 1 Summer Pilot Service Performance Evaluation (full evaluation included with the meeting materials). As mentioned in the evaluation, this pilot service / route alignment was put in place from June 29 to August 23, with the intent of providing more direct access to the beaches and waterfront of the New Bedford South End Peninsula.

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In summary, the pilot service saw Saturday boardings increase by 15% when compared to the average Saturday boardings throughout FY18 and saw an increase of 2% when compared to the prior 4-year average for Saturday boardings.

As mentioned in the report, the overall public responses were by and large positive, however, there was a slight mix of negative or uncertain – the latter of which can be largely attributed to the longer commute times for some normal travelers. Given the majority positive response, the New Bedford Route 1 Summer Pilot Program is being recommended for the Summer 2020.

The City of New Bedford questioned if demographic info was collected during this pilot, in which Mr. Trimbell noted that this pilot did not include any onboard data collection (or surveys).

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

Given the upcoming Holiday stretch, there will be no December board meeting, therefore the next SRTA Advisory Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:00AM in Fall River.

At this time, the City of New Bedford asked the Board for support in spreading awareness for the City's Transit Orientated Development Survey, in which the SRTA has since posted to respective social media accounts.

#### (10) Adjournment

**The motion was made (Dartmouth) and seconded (New Bedford) to adjourn the meeting at 11:58AM EST.**