



MINUTES

Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Board of Directors

January 25, 2024, AT 10:00 A.M.

10 Park Plaza, 2nd Floor Board Room, Suite 2890
Boston, MA 02116

Public participation and comment occurred via written communication, voice message and in-person public comment.

This meeting was broadcast virtually.

**BOARD MEMBERS
PARTICIPATING IN-
PERSON:**

Chair Tom Glynn, Director Robert Butler, Director Thomas Koch, Director Tom McGee, Director Charlie Sisitsky, Director Mary Skelton Roberts, Director Chanda Smart, Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt

**BOARD MEMBER
ABSENT:**

Director Eric Goodwine

**Others Presenting
and/or Participating for
Various Portions of the
Meeting:**

General Manager Phillip Eng, Chief of Staff Katie Choe, MassDOT Chief Safety Officer Pat Lavin, Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak, Chief of Quality, Compliance, and Oversight Meredith Sandberg, Deputy Chief of Construction Field Services Ryan Jordan, Senior Director of Customer Experience Erica Baker, Deputy Director of Customer Experience Katy Zazzera, Chief Administrative Officer David Panagore, Chief Financial Officer Mary Ann O'Hara, Treasurer Pat Landers, Director of Fare Policy & Analytics Steven Povich, Senior Director of Capital Program Planning and Strategy Jillian Linnell

Others Present:

Chief Counsel Kevin Scanlon, Counsel- Corporate Governance Noah Potash

OPEN OF MEETING/Call to order by the Chair

Chair Tom Glynn called the meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") Board to order at 10:00 a.m. Noah Potash called the roll of the MBTA Board of Directors participating, being a quorum of the MBTA Board:

Chair Glynn	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

1. Winter Safety Tips

MassDOT Chief Safety Officer Pat Lavin pointed out the emergency exit routes in the board room and then reviewed winter safety tips.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2. Chair Glynn said that the first item on the agenda was an executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. He said that he had determined that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the MBTA. He noted that the Board would return to open session following the discussion.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was by roll call:

VOTED:

To enter executive session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property, and to discuss strategy with regard to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.

Chair Glynn	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

Note: The Board entered executive session at 10:03 a.m. and returned to open session at 10:12 a.m. Director Butler recused himself from the executive session and did not participate.

OPEN SESSION/ACTION ITEMS

3. Consent Agenda

Chair Glynn explained that a vote to adopt the consent agenda would approve the December meeting minutes, authorize the General Manager to enter into a Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 105, accept two tranches of Fair Share Funding from MassDOT for a total of approximately \$200 million, appoint Director Skelton Roberts to the PWDC subcommittee, and approve a Track Improvement Contract to support work on the Orange Line. He noted that Director Butler would abstain from the collective bargaining portion of the vote.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was by roll call:

VOTED:

To adopt the consent agenda.

Chair Glynn	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

Public Comment Period #1

West Cambridge State Representative Steve Owens said that his district was looking forward to the return of electric buses and urged the MBTA to accelerate electrification of the commuter rail system and to transition to a regional rail network.

Jeb Mastandrea of the Machinists Union voiced support for a low-income fare.

Mary Napolitano of Mass Senior Action Council said a low-income fare would make transit affordable and provide wider access. She said that premium and flex trips on the RIDE should be included.

Jiawen Li of the Chinese Progressive Association supported the low-income fare and discussed the impact of fare increases.

Ziquelle Smalls of Community Labor United said that the low-income fare would support families in leading dignified lives.

4. Safety Programs Update

Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak presented the Safety Programs Update, reviewing recent safety incidents including door incidents on the Green and Red Lines and discussing actions to improve door safety. He also covered a near miss on the Green Line and an electrical fire at Downtown Crossing. Mr. Lesniak reviewed safety performance indicators, noting significant improvement on bus and heavy rail metrics, with more modest results for light rail. Director Butler asked whether the Red Line door incidents involved old cars and Mr. Lesniak confirmed that they did. Director Skelton Roberts asked about light rail injuries and Mr. Lesniak said that they were all employee injuries. Director McGee requested a follow-up on signage for the door issues. Director McGee, Mr. Lesniak, and General Manager Phillip Eng discussed the impact of aging materials on the Downtown Crossing fire.

5. Safety Management Inspection Update

Chief of Quality, Compliance and Oversight Meredith Sandberg presented an update on the Safety Management Inspection (“SMI”), reviewing accomplishments to date in the areas of workforce, service, infrastructure, and rules, policies, and procedures. She then summarized the progress of the SMI response, which reached 62%, and discussed planned work for 2024.

6. Track Improvement Program Update

Deputy Chief of Construction Field Services Ryan Jordan began the Track Improvement Program Update with a review of the timeline and a discussion of recently completed Green Line Work and ongoing and upcoming work across the system. He noted that 50 of 191 speed restrictions have been lifted and reviewed upcoming community events. Senior Director of Customer Experience Erica Baker discussed diversion communications. Deputy Director of Customer Experience Katy Zazzera reviewed communication methods and provided examples. Director Butler thanked staff for coordinating work with contractors. Director McGee and Ms. Baker discussed messaging for train stoppages. Director Smart and Ms. Zazzera discussed multilingual communications. Director Skelton Roberts and Ms. Zazzera discussed whether communications could be more proactive.

Public Comment Period #2

Mitikei Chengerei of GreenRoots expressed support for the low-income fare and said it would benefit Chelsea residents.

Seth Gadbois of the Conservation Law Foundation expressed support for low-income fares and said he was encouraged by the analysis of the impact of Forward Funding on the MBTA's finances. He said the MBTA is owed future financial support and called for providing updates on the track improvement program at stations.

Judy Miao Qun Zhu of the Chinese Progressive Association said the low-income fare was important to the community.

Peter K. suggested adding drop-off and boarding signs to Nubian Station's Silver Line stop.

Caitlin Allen-Connelly of A Better City thanked the Governor for her commitment to

transit and said she supported investments in capital expenditures. She added that she looked forward to the development of a long-term transportation plan for the commonwealth.

David Tatarakis thanked the General Manager for his work on the system and then noted that increased state funding would not close the MBTA's future budget gap and called for the board to advocate for the funding the agency needs.

Dave Stevenson, Legislative Representative for Commuter Rail conductors suggested using Fair Share Funds to provide conductors with basic sick time.

The General Manager thanked Mr. Stevenson and said staff were working on the issue. Director Butler spoke in favor of providing sick time.

Jarred Johnson of Transit Matters commended staff for their work on low-income fares and transparency on finances, stating that the legislature must understand the structural budget deficit. He said the MBTA needs to position itself as the solution for core issues.

7. Report from the General Manager

Note: Secretary Tibbits-Nutt arrived at 11:34 a.m.

General Manager Phillip Eng delivered his report, discussing the goals and accomplishments of the Track Improvement Program and providing updates on specific diversions. He commended employees who had been recognized for their data driven decision-making and said that GLXC re-gauging was nearly complete. Mr. Eng discussed engagement with the rail contract industry and winter preparedness. The General Manger reviewed work on rebuilding the workforce, noting record hiring and an increase in diversity. Director Koch said that people can see that issues are being addressed and

thanked the legislative delegations and Governor. He then asked for updates on the Red Line cars. Mr. Eng discussed production and said that CRRC was working to move its deliveries early into the month. Secretary Tibbits-Nutt thanked the General Manager for his work on the Track Improvement Program and fares and said increased funding from the state was very exciting. General Manager Eng acknowledged the contributions of outgoing Chief Administrative Officer David Panagore and outgoing Senior Director of Capital Program Strategy Jillian Linnell. Director Skelton Roberts and Mr. Eng discussed the planned funding taskforce. Director McGee said that the organization had to focus on the return on investment. Director Smart and Mr. Eng discussed requiring accountability in contracts.

8. A History of MBTA Funding

Mr. Panagore introduced Chief Financial Officer Mary Ann O'Hara, who began the presentation on the History of MBTA Funding by explaining the idea behind Forward Funding and comparing revenue from 2000 to 2023. She noted that the MBTA took on additional debt when Forward Funding was implemented, and that the sales tax ended up massively underperforming expectations. Treasurer Pat Landers reviewed the impact of legacy and Central Artery/Tunnel debt. Ms. O'Hara showed that assessment revenue has declined and that fare rates have not significantly increased. She noted that fuel sales tax revenue has been steady, while federal awards increased during the pandemic. Mr. Landers explained how operating expenses for system expansion impacted the financial situation. Ms. O'Hara concluded that the combination of low sales tax growth and high debt service has constrained the operating budget and capital efforts, resulting in projected deficits. Director Koch, Chair Glynn, Director McGee, and Ms. O'Hara discussed

financial projections. Director Smart, Chair Glynn, Ms. O'Hara, and Mr. Landers discussed the Central Artery/Tunnel debt. Director Skelton Roberts and Ms. O'Hara discussed the next steps on funding.

9. Pro Forma Update

Mr. Panagore explained that the Pro Forma was the annual five-year financial projection that feeds into the budget process and has incorporated the Governor's budget proposal. Ms. O'Hara provided an overview of the goals and said that federal funds are expected to be depleted by 2025. She reviewed the projected size of the budget gap and noted the impact of investments to support new service and initiatives. Ms. O'Hara reviewed ridership and fare revenue trends, then compared them to peer agencies. She discussed revenue and spending assumptions and showed that revenues and expenses have been balanced for FY25. Mr. Panagore noted that yearly cost savings are diminished by robust hiring. Ms. O'Hara discussed projected revenue and expense growth and reviewed budget gap drivers. She then looked at projected deficits and peer agencies and efforts to balance those budgets and reviewed operating budget risks and opportunities. Ms. O'Hara concluded by recommending the use of projection C, continuing hiring, refining projections, and continuing conversations with the state regarding sustainability. Director McGee noted that the authority would be in a different position if the sales tax had performed as expected. Ms. O'Hara noted that it is still a better funding source than many agencies have. Director Skelton Roberts, Chair Glynn, and Ms. O'Hara discussed the successes of peer agencies that have balanced their budgets.

10. 2024 Proposed Fare Changes

Director of Fare Policy and Analytics Steven Povich provided an update on proposed fare changes, discussing the agency's proposal to provide half-priced tickets on all modes for low-income riders. He estimated that 60,000 customers could benefit and said that the MBTA would partner with other agencies to make the application as easy and efficient as possible. He detailed the program impacts in terms of ridership and revenue, especially regarding the RIDE. Chair Glynn asked about premium RIDE fares and Mr. Povich discussed the operational and cost difficulties of that service. Director McGee and Mr. Povich discussed details of the premium service. Director Skelton Roberts and Mr. Povich discussed the costs of the proposal compared to making fares free. Director Butler asked if there was a cost for the partnership with the registry and Mr. Povich said it would just be internal staff time. Secretary Tibbits-Nutt said that MassDOT would cover those costs. Director Skelton Roberts requested more information on the return on investment. Mr. Povich noted that the proposal would also eliminate change tickets and make weekend holiday commuter rail passes permanent. He reviewed the Fare Change Process and planned engagement.

Note: Director Smart left the meeting at approximately 1:10 p.m.

11. Capital Investment Plan Update

Senior Director of Capital Program Planning and Strategy Jillian Linnell provided an update on the Capital Investment Plan ("CIP"), providing an overview of the process and reviewing various investment programs. She discussed federal, state, and MBTA funding sources and their characteristics. Ms. Linnell reviewed historical capital spend and noted declining capital sources for a State of Good Repair over a ten-year outlook.

She concluded with key development milestones. Director Butler thanked her for securing additional funding.

Adjournment

Chair Glynn requested a motion to adjourn the MBTA Board meeting.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was by roll call:

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:38 p.m.

Chair Glynn	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Tibbits-Nutt	Yes

Documents relied upon for this meeting:

- January 25, 2024 Agenda
- Minutes of December 13, 2023 Board Meeting
- Winter Safety Tips- January
- Local 105 - Collective Bargaining Authorization- 2023.12.29
- Request to the MBTA Board - FY24 Fair Share Transfer_January 2024 VF
- Proposed PWDC Appointment
- T90CN06-Emergency Track Improvements - Board Presentation v3 - 2024.01.24
- Staff Summary Review - T90CN06 Emergency Track Improvement Orange Lines 01-24-24-V2-final
- MBTA Board Draft Safety Deck Draft January 18 Final 2PM
- 1. QCO Update Jan Board 2024
- TIP Update Full Board 01.25.2024 v6b
- GM Report to the Board 01.25.2024 v5
- A History of Funding MBTA Jan 2024 TP VF 1.18.24VF
- FY24 Pro Forma Presentation (NO NOTES) 1.24.24 V10
- 2024 Fare Change Proposal January Full Board vF
- Introduction to the FY25-29 CIP_Draft_January 17 2024