

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MART)  
MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2024  
REMOTELY**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 am without a quorum at 11:16am there was a quorum.

**ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: (constituting a quorum)**

Mayor Dean Mazzarella	Leominster
Mayor Sam Squailia	Fitchburg
Mayor Michael Nicholson	Gardner
Lisa Marrone (representing Selectmen)	Sterling
Jan Robbins (representing Selectman)	Ashburnham
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Selectmen)	Bolton
Sharon Hardaker	Hardwick

**ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Kelly Dolan (representing Selectmen)	Lancaster
Selectperson Heather Billings	Westminster
Adam Lamontagne (representing Selectman)	Templeton
Carly Antonellis (representing Selectman)	Ayer
April Lynn Forest (representing Selectman)	Ashby
Selectperson Aubrey LaBrie	Winchendon
Richard Martin	Royalston
Joe Layden (representing Selectmen)	Littleton
Carter Terenzini (representing Selectmen)	Boxborough
Tim Bragan (representing Selectman)	Harvard
Nate Boudreau (representing Selectmen)	Hubbardston
Alyson Toole (representing Selectmen)	Stow
Jessica Sizer (representing Selectman)	Barre
Caesar Nuzzolo	Lunenburg
Mitchell Grosky (representing Selectmen)	Athol
Melanie Jackson	Phillipston
No Representative	Shirley

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Bruno Fisher, James Sluss, Scott Rich, Jessica Lashua, Keyna Thomas and Keary Connors.

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

**Agenda**

**II. General / Public Comments (Est. 5 minutes)**

**III. Approval of March 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Board approval required**

**RESOLUTION- Dean Mazzarella of Leominster moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves the March 26, 2024 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Roll Call was done.

Mayor Dean Mazzarella

yes

Mayor Sam Squailia	yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	yes
Lisa Marrone	yes
Kenneth F. Troup	yes
Sharon Hardaker	yes

**IV. Financial Updates (Est. 30 minutes)**

**A. Finance Committee - Updates**

1. FY24 10 Month Financial Update
2. FY24 Full Year Financial Projection
3. FY25 Proposed Budget – **Board approval required**

**RESOLUTION- Mayor Sam Squailia of Fitchburg moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approve the FY2025 budget as presented by the Chief Financial Officer. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Roll Call was done.

Mayor Dean Mazzearella	yes
Mayor Sam Squailia	yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	yes
Lisa Marrone	yes
Kenneth F. Troup	yes
Sharon Hardaker	yes

4. Proposed 2 Month Fare Free Extension (Funded) – **Board approval required**

**RESOLUTION- Mayor Sam Squailia of Fitchburg moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves for MART to be fare free for additional 2 months (August 2024). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Roll Call was done.

Mayor Dean Mazzearella	yes
Mayor Sam Squailia	yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	yes
Lisa Marrone	yes
Kenneth F. Troup	yes
Sharon Hardaker	yes

James Sluss informed the Board that MART will end the year with no surplus and no deficit. Key drivers for savings are janitorial, IT, RAN borrowing, insurance and security. All COVID funding is now gone. The fare free program has resulted in increased ridership. MART will also have Nelson and Nygaard looking at making a master transit plan along with route development and driver recruitment. The brokerage has earned its incentive in the first 3 quarters of this year.

**V. Administrative Updates (Est. 20 Minutes)**

**A. Nomination of Advisory Board Officers**

Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairman  
 Mayor Sam Squailia Vice-Chairman

There were no other nominations made.

**B. Executive Compensation Committee**

1. Salary Review / Increase Recommendations – **Board approval required**
  - a. Bruno Fisher
  - b. Scott Rich
  - c. James Sluss

**RESOLUTION- Ken Troup of Bolton moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves a 2.5% increase for employees listed above effective July 1, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Roll Call was done.

Mayor Dean Mazzearella	yes
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Mayor Sam Squailia	yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	yes
Lisa Marrone	yes
Kenneth F. Troup	yes
Sharon Hardaker	yes

**C. Service Program Changes and Results**

**D. Technical Planning Update – Fitchburg / Leominster Service Redesign**

Bruno Fisher told the Board that MART is having Nelson and Nygaard review routes. The demographics have changed over the years. MART will possibly do some route deviations to neighbors without fixed bus route and feed to the fixed bus route.

Scott Rich informed the Board that MART will also have Nelson and Nygaard help with driver recruitment. MART has also done driver videos which are up on the website, a driver brochure, hiring bonus and \$25 gift card for interviewing. MART is now starting to see some results from these efforts.

**VI. Operational Updates (Est. 10 Minutes)**

**A. Operational Updates:**

1. Transit Ridership / Revenue Data Comparison

a. FY23/24 Ten Month Ridership/Revenue Data Comparison

Bruno stated that fixed routes have seen an 8% increase in ridership. All services have seen an increase in ridership.

2. Brokerage Ridership / Revenue Data Comparison

a. FY23/24 Ten Month Ridership/Revenue Data Comparison

Bruno stated that MassHealth has seen a 1% decrease because members being recertified are not eligible for benefits anymore.

3. Taxi-Livery / Community Connection Updates

Scott stated that taxi/livery services in Lancaster, Lunenburg and Sterling are performing about 800 rides per month. And the new Community Connections service that started on May 6, 2024, for Bolton, Stow and Littleton has had 67 rides so far.

**VII. Other Business**

**A. Items Not Reasonably Anticipated to be Discussed**

MART received 2 grants for new services. One will be a rural connector which will connect Ashburnham, Winchendon and Tempelton to the Gardner fixed bus route and one will connect Westminster to Gardner.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.