



MINUTES

Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Board of Directors

February 24, 2022 AT 10:00 A.M.

This meeting was held virtually in accordance with the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law issued by Governor Baker on March 12, 2020. Members participated remotely and had materials provided to them prior to the meeting. Public participation and comment occurred via written communication, voice message and live public comment through conference call.

This meeting was broadcast virtually.

**BOARD MEMBERS
PARTICIPATING
REMOTELY:**

Chair Betsy Taylor, Director Robert Butler, Director Scott Darling, Director Thomas Koch, Director Travis McCready, Director Mary Beth Mello, Secretary Jamey Tesler

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

General Manager Steve Poftak, Chief Procurement and Contracts Administration Officer Jeff Cook, Chief Mechanical Officer Steve Hicks, Director of Contracted Bus Services Gideon Guilman, Director of Parking and Station Access Bruno Lopes, Assistant General Manager for Policy & Transit Planning Lynsey Heffernan, Director of Fare Policy & Analytics Steven Povich, Chief Safety Officer Ron Ester, and South Coast Rail Program Manager Jennifer Tabakin

Others Present:

General Counsel Marie Breen, Managing Attorney-Corporate & Regulatory Eileen Fenton, and Noah Potash, Esq.

OPEN OF MEETING

Call to order by the Chair

Chair Betsy Taylor 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 remotely, being a quorum of the MBTA Board:

Chair Taylor	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

Public Comment

Louise Baxter expressed support for a low-income fare program.

Maria Belen Power of GreenRoots urged the board to consider a low-income fare pilot.

Silvia Kersten of 350Mass's Transportation Working Group called for the adoption of a systemwide low-income fare across modes.

Alice Brown of Boston Harbor Now advocated making the MBTA system more affordable and implementing low-income fares systemwide.

Collique Williams of Community Labor United said that a low-income fare would make the MBTA more equitable for all.

Veena Dhamaraj of the Sierra Club expressed support for certain fare proposals and called for a systemwide low-income fare program.

Karen Chen of the Chinese Progressive Association expressed support for a low-income fare pilot program.

Juanita Gibson of the Conservation Law Foundation expressed support for a low-income fare program.

Caitlin Allen-Connelly of A Better City said the proposed fare tariff changes were positive and called for implementation of a low-income fare program.

Staci Rubin of the Conservation Law Foundation called for a systemwide low-income fare program and expressed concern at the proposed cost of replacing new CharlieCards.

REPORT

1. Report from the General Manager

General Manager Steve Poftak presented his report, beginning by discussing ridership. Director Tesler said he was pleased to see resilient ridership and asked staff to provide more detail on their work on ridership. Director McCready requested more context on how ridership compares to pre-pandemic levels. Director Mello asked the General Manager to provide a review of ridership outreach efforts at a future meeting.

General Manager Poftak continued with a briefing on the January 21st Wilmington incident, discussing findings of the related investigation and the corrective actions that have been taken to prevent reoccurrence. The General Manager said he would get back to Director Darling on details of the process for confirming that railroad crossing gates are functioning properly. Director Darling asked if the MBTA verifies the work of the Keolis safety team and suggested that staff assemble an audit of the work. The General Manager said that the MBTA does verify the Keolis team's work and agreed to provide more information on the process. Director Tesler added that staff should follow up on implementation with the Safety

Subcommittee. Director Butler asked a question about crossing gates and the General Manager said that there are ongoing discussions with the manufacturer regarding the gates. Responding to questions from Director McCready, the General Manager said that the physical operation of the crossing arms does not change for pedestrians and motorists depending on whether the arms are manually or automatically controlled. Director Darling asked if all gates are belled and whistled. General Manager Poftak said that he would provide an inventory of areas with quiet orders in place.

The General Manager continued by discussing the ongoing investigation of the Back Bay escalator incident. In response to Director Darling's questions about the repair work, the General Manager said that an MBTA employee oversees a maintenance and repair contract with Kone. Director Darling said he looked forward to an audit of the work. Director Butler asked if there have been past issues with this escalator and General Manager Poftak said he would check. Director Tesler clarified that the escalator engineering specialist aiding in technical aspects of the investigation, which the General Manager had mentioned, is independent of the MBTA's existing relationship with Kone.

General Manager Poftak continued with updates on commuter rail fare gates, the CharlieCard store, and the Quincy Bus Facility Groundbreaking Event. Director Koch thanked staff for their efforts. Director Tesler said the Quincy facility would have positive environmental and service impacts and noted that the Board and its successor have brought attention to underinvested facilities. The General Manager

added that updated facilities are the first step towards fleet electrification.

General Manager Poftak concluded by announcing that the Union Square branch of the Green Line Extension would open on March 21st, with revenue service beginning that afternoon. Directors Darling and McCready thanked the General Manager and staff for getting the project close to completion. The General Manager noted that Program Manager John Dalton's leadership has been crucial. Director McCready asked if the General Manager could include information on community feedback in future reports, which Mr. Poftak said he would. Responding to a question from Director Mello, the General Manager said that he expected USDOT to participate in the opening event.

PRESENTATIONS AND ACTIONS

Chair Taylor announced that going forward, subcommittee materials will be provided to all board members and that the subcommittee chairs will present short reports on subcommittee meetings at future board meetings. She then noted that Agenda Item 3, the appointment of a new member and an alternate member to the MBTA Retirement Fund Board of Trustees, would be rescheduled to a later date. Director Tesler expressed appreciation for the addition of reports from the subcommittee chairs.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2022 MBTA Board Meeting.

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

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the MBTA Board Meeting held on January 27, 2022.

Chair Taylor	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

4. Proposed Contract Award of Subway Vehicle and Bus Vehicle Cleaning Services to S.J. Services

Chief Procurement and Contracts Administration Officer Jeff Cook and Chief Mechanical Officer Steve Hicks presented proposed contract awards for subway vehicle and bus vehicle cleaning services, both with S.J. Services. Director McCready asked about the cost of enhanced cleaning procedures for Covid-19 and Mr. Cook said he would get back to the board with exact numbers.

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

VOTED: To authorize the General Manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, or his designee, to award and execute a contract with S.J. Services, for Subway Vehicle Cleaning Services and to take any and all actions necessary or advisable to effectuate the Agreement, in a form approved by the General Counsel, in an amount not to exceed \$18,684,975.00.

Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes

Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

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

VOTED: To authorize the General Manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, or his designee, to award and execute a contract with S.J. Services, for Bus Operation Vehicle Cleaning Services and to take any and all actions necessary or advisable to effectuate the Agreement, in a form approved by the General Counsel, in an amount not to exceed \$27,016,223.00.

Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

Note: Chair Taylor was not present for consideration of Agenda Item 4 due to a technical issue. Accordingly, Vice-Chair Koch chaired the meeting until Chair Taylor rejoined at 11:27 a.m.

5. Proposed Contract Award of Shuttle Bus Services to A Yankee Lines, Inc.

Director of Contracted Bus Services Gideon Guilman presented a proposed contract award for shuttle bus services with A Yankee Lines, Inc.

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

VOTED: To authorize the General Manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, or his designee, to award and execute a contract and all necessary ancillary documents between the MBTA and A Yankee Lines, Inc. for Shuttle Bus Services, in a form approved by the General Counsel, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000,000.00.

Chair Taylor	Yes
Director Butler	Yes

Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

6. Proposed Contract Award of Parking Facilities Management to Keolis Commuter Services

Director of Parking & Station Access Bruno Lopes presented a proposed contract award for parking facilities management to Keolis Commuter Services. In response to a question from Director McCready, Mr. Lopes said that the contract length was 39 months.

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

VOTED: To authorize the General Manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, or his designee, to award and execute a contract and all necessary ancillary documents between the MBTA and Keolis Commuter Services for Parking Facilities Management, in a form approved by the General Counsel, in an amount not to exceed \$19,029,515.65.

Chair Taylor	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

Before moving to the next item, General Manager Poftak clarified that his presentation on the Green Line Extension referred to the Union Square branch opening, and that the College Avenue branch is scheduled to open in late summer.

7. Fare Media Changes

Assistant General Manager for Policy & Transit Planning Lynsey Heffernan and Director of Fare Policy & Analytics Steven Povich presented proposed fare media changes. In response to a question from Director Mello, Mr. Povich clarified that the “one more trip” option will not pose a cost to the MBTA, as riders with a negative card balance will have to reload their card to take additional trips. Director McCready, noting that purchasers of bulk cards are likely to be from outside Massachusetts and have institutional payors, suggested increasing the cost of these cards to offset other card costs for more habitual users of the system. In response to a question from Chair Taylor, Mr. Povich said that staff are currently developing criteria for distribution of cards by social service agencies.

Chair Taylor asked when the proposed changes would go into effect. Ms. Heffernan said that the implementation of the new fare collection system was more of a question for the technical side of the team and said she would check with her colleagues. Chair Taylor said it is important that the board have a sense of when these changes would go into effect before voting on them. In response to a question from Director Darling, Mr. Povich said that staff are examining options for transferring balances from old CharlieCards. Director Tesler said that these issues would be addressed during public outreach and said it would be important for the board to hear the full range of comments from the public. Ms. Heffernan said that staff would collate public comments and provide them to the board in advance of a vote.

8. Alternative Fare Proposals

Ms. Heffernan presented the next item, a presentation on alternative Fare Proposals. Responding to a question from Director Darling, she said that staff are looking at multiple programs regarding income verification. Chair Taylor noted the presentation focused on pre-Covid numbers and asked about re-visiting data-gathering. Ms. Heffernan said that staff are working on studying the new normal and that transit-critical riders were still using the system. Chair Taylor asked staff to review updated numbers. Director McCready asked how the “income cliff” will impact the policy decisions. Ms. Heffernan acknowledged that picking any level is arbitrary to an extent and reiterated that the MBTA does not want to conduct income verification. Director Tesler spoke on the critical nature of selecting a partner for income verification and mentioned the RMV’s Ignition Interlock Program, which engages with institutional partners for income verification in its statutorily established Indigency Program, albeit on a smaller scale than a potential low-income fare program. Ms. Heffernan discussed the various types of partners available. Director Tesler noted that some peer agencies and their partners are covered in the appendix to the presentation.

Ms. Heffernan continued with an update on the Fare Free bus pilots. She noted that the pilots are planned to end in 2024, although she agreed with Chair Taylor that it is possible that funding could be extended. Responding to a question from Director Darling, Ms. Heffernan clarified that current marketing materials

emphasize the planned end date. Director Mello asked whether staff's analysis indicates that the proportion of riders who saved money through the program were largely newly attracted, infrequent riders. Ms. Heffernan said that staff's understanding is that the key characteristic of the riders who saved money was that they did not have to transfer to other routes. Chair Taylor commented on the approach proposed by Somerville, stating that it would be a good idea to consider as many types of pilots as possible. Chair Taylor also said it was important to determine the criteria for the success of pilots beforehand. Director Darling asked how the increase in ridership was measured. Ms. Heffernan said that automatic passenger counters use lasers to count riders and that this feature will be standard on MBTA buses going forward. Responding to a question from Director Darling, Ms. Heffernan said the MBTA is collaborating with the City of Boston on marketing materials and that Boston is covering the cost of physical pamphlets. The General Manager added that Boston has been a good partner working through the challenges of extending the pilots. Director Tesler said that other communities are showing a willingness to cooperate that has been enhanced by seeing the MBTA's work with Boston. Responding to a question from Director Mello, Ms. Heffernan confirmed that there's no fare equity concern when the MBTA distributes fare media through the City of Boston.

Director McCready asked if there are ways that staff can look at fare equity based on the time of day for trips. He also stressed the importance of considering the periodicity of fare payment. He emphasized the importance of environmental

aspects and said that including a conversion metric for ridership increases versus vehicle miles not-traveled and carbon not-released would be helpful. He suggested mapping ridership increases to operations cost increases and safety impacts. He also noted that the dynamic pricing model is extremely complex, as demonstrated by the presentation. He cautioned against “analysis paralysis” and asked if there is a cutoff date for when some kind of program should be implemented. He asked if the MBTA needs to get computer scientists involved.

Note: Director Koch left the meeting at approximately 1:00 p.m.

9. Safety Review Panel Update

Chair Taylor expressed concern with the number of delayed items in the Safety Review Panel Update and asked Chief Safety Officer Ron Ester to comment on the operating budget and the needs of the Safety Department at a future meeting. General Manager Poftak briefly commented on the on-hold items in the report and said that the department is fully budgeted on hiring. Director Tesler suggested that Director Darling, as Chair of the Safety subcommittee, could introduce the update. Director Darling asked Chief Ester to present the first set of slides from his presentation, given time constraints. Chief Ester presented on the Safety Review Panel report, discussing the recommendations where implementation is on hold. Director Darling said that the General Manager and Secretary Tesler would return with more details on the financial review portions of the Panel recommendations. General Manager Poftak added that some items will always be in progress. Director Tesler said the purpose of reviewing the Panel recommendations is to talk about the

ongoing Safety process and that updates from the subcommittee could also highlight progress. Directors Mello and Butler expressed appreciation for the presentation.

10. South Coast Rail Project Update

South Coast Rail Program Manager Jennifer Tabakin presented an update on South Coast Rail, reviewing construction progress and the overall project structure. Director McCready thanked Ms. Tabakin for the presentation.

Chair Taylor asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:26 p.m.

Chair Taylor	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Darling	Yes
Director McCready	Yes
Director Mello	Yes
Secretary Tesler	Yes

Documents relied upon for this meeting:

- February 24, 2022 Agenda
- Minutes of the January 27, 2022 MBTA Board Meeting
- Report from the General Manager
- Fare Media Changes February 2022 Board Deck v12
- MTF Board Update_Feb22 v13
- 02.24.2022 Safety Presentation v4
- BusCleaningBoard of DirectorsDeck21022finalversion
- Third Party Bus Contract – Board of Directors Slide Deck v10
- Parking Facilities Management RFP 160-21 FINAL
- SCR Feb 2022 MBTA Board Briefing