



MINUTES

Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Board of Directors

January 23, 2025, 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 McGee, Director Robert Butler, Director Thomas Koch, Director Peter Koutoujian, Director Mary Skelton Roberts, Director Chanda Smart,

**BOARD MEMBERS
PARTICIPATING
REMOTELY:**

Director Charlie Sisitsky, Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt

**BOARD MEMBER
ABSENT:**

Director Eric Goodwine

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

Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe, Senior Director of Maintenance of Way Jody Ray, Maintenance of Way Superintendent Jacques Jennette, Heavy Rail Maintenance of Way Superintendent Jason Owen, General Manager Phillip Eng, Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak, Chief of Quality, Compliance and Oversight Meredith Sandberg

Others Present:

General Counsel Douglas McGarrah, Acting Chief Counsel John Martin, Counsel- Corporate Governance Noah Potash

1. Safety Briefing

Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe provided a safety briefing, pointing out the board room's safety features and exit routes.

OPEN OF MEETING/Call to order by the Chair

Chair Tom McGee 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 McGee	Present
Director Butler	Present
Director Koch	Present
Director Koutoujian	Present
Director Sisitsky	Present
Director Skelton Roberts	Present
Director Smart	Present

REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

3. Consent Agenda

Chair McGee explained that a vote to adopt the consent agenda would approve the December meeting minutes and the annual fuel hedge.

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

VOTED:

To adopt the consent agenda.

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

Public Comment Period

State Senator Bill Driscoll criticized guidelines and regulations regarding transit definitions in recent zoning changes, highlighting draft accessory dwelling unit (“ADU”) regulations defining bus stops and bus stations as the same and Ashmont Station emergency regulations classifying the Mattapan High-Speed Line as a subway line.

Franklyn Salimbene of the Arlington Committee for Public Transit spoke in favor of extending the Green Line E Branch from Heath Street to Hyde Square and requested community meetings on roadway improvements to Huntington Avenue.

Evan Foss of Newton expressed a preference for having voicemail public comments played during meetings and having all comments included in the record of the meeting. He also requested that safety updates be provided to the public ahead of meetings.

3. Maintenance of Way Update

General Manager Eng discussed how the rebuilding of the workforce enabled improvements to the Maintenance of Way (“MOW”) department and introduced Senior Director of MOW Jody Ray. Mr. Ray recognized the MOW superintendents then discussed the addition of over 100 workers to the team, including superintendents and supervisors. Mr. Ray noted that while the Track Improvement Program (“TIP”) had replaced 252,000 feet of rail, there was more work to do to achieve a state of good repair. He discussed training and development work, emphasizing efforts to deal with speed restrictions quickly. He then discussed the use of thermite welding to eliminate rail joints. In response to a request from the Chair, Mr. Ray explained that about a third of speed restrictions were the result of bolted rails and that this issue can be eliminated by welding. Director Koutoujian asked why welding was not always done previously and Mr. Ray explained that the team previously focused on completing temporary repairs to quickly return service and said that he was working to expand welding skills. Mr. Ray discussed work to modernize equipment and discussed how MOW supported the TIP, including producing, transporting, and welding rail. He discussed how derailments of safety equipment are an expected part

of the work and how MOW collaborated with the Safety Department to ensure that no workers were endangered by anticipated derailments. Chair McGee asked about the type of vehicles involved and Mr. Ray said that they are largely pushcarts without suspended wheels, noting that the Authority has ordered pushcarts with suspension, and gradalls which have rigid frames and uneven weight distribution. Mr. Ray discussed risk minimization practices. He then discussed how MOW expanded its work during the TIP beyond addressing speed restrictions to address adjacent track conditions and the deferred maintenance backlog, and to correct track conditions to enable trains to return to the original design speed. He provided examples of the team's other work, including full depth reconstruction, removal of obsolete infrastructure, vegetation control, and MOW resurfacing crews. Mr. Ray discussed continuing work and noted that during the TIP, MOW completed about 30% of state of good repair work with just 10% of the estimated total cost. He characterized the TIP as the first step of a longer-term strategy.

Director Butler asked who does the welding and Mr. Ray explained that a machine does long strings with arc welding while chemical welds are done using thermite. Director Smart asked about the original speed for the Red Line section and Mr. Ray said that it was 50 miles per hour, noting that there is an Orange Line section that will be restored to its original speed of 55 miles per hour and stating that the Red Line section would be restored to 50 miles per hour in a week or two. Director Koutoujian congratulated the team on completing decades of work in a year and asked if it would be possible to build parts of the system to exceed their original speeds. Mr. Ray said that there were some areas, but noted that certain infrastructure

upgrades would be needed. Director Skelton Roberts congratulated the team and commented on the improved experience for Orange Line riders. Chair McGee thanked the team for their impressive work.

Additional Public Comment

State Representative Bill McGregor expressed support for the proposed extension of the Green Line E Branch to Hyde Square, stating that restoring the rail service that was terminated in 1985 would relieve crowding on the 39 route bus. He cited support from state and local officials and from community organizations and called on the board to support funding.

4. General Manager's Report

General Manager Phillip Eng began his report by acknowledging the work of the MOW department and discussing the importance of building internal capacity. He addressed the recent investment in the MBTA and ongoing support from the administration to provide more transportation options, stating that he wanted to make the MBTA the preferred choice. He reiterated that his commitment to delivering improvements for the public and to spending money wisely with robust communication with communities. Mr. Eng recognized the leaders of various MBTA modes of transportation. He then discussed work to move forward on regional rail including BEMU and bi-level coach procurement. He stated that South Coast Rail is coming and noted that maintenance and operational control have been transferred to Keolis. The General Manager discussed efforts to improve travel times on heavy rail lines and reduce non-peak headways, emphasizing the importance of rolling stock and signal upgrades. He discussed work to improve light rail frequency and deliver a fully accessible system, including the deliver of

Type 9 cars to Mattapan. Mr. Eng discussed work to take full advantage of water transportation, including acquiring new boats. Regarding the bus network, Mr. Eng discussed improvements to high frequency routes, supported by recent hiring. He also said that the RIDE was continuing to deliver robust on-time service. The General Manager discussed efforts to minimize impact on riders during track work by using single-tracking and concluded his report with a commitment to use funding wisely.

Note: Secretary Tibbits-Nutt joined the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Director Smart thanked the General Manager for his leadership and asked him to expand on growing institutional knowledge. Mr. Eng said that when he joined the Authority, many senior workers had left and that it was a competitive industry, leaving the MBTA without the institutional knowledge necessary to direct and steer projects. He said that having more experience allows the MBTA to manage contractors better. Director Smart asked about reinforcing MBTA community benefits and the General Manager said he wants to engage with communities and listen to their goals and needs. He discussed the importance of delivering robust service and reviewed the benefits of transit-oriented development, including supporting businesses and development and providing housing options for young people. Director Koch said that the incredible progress under the General Manager and his team had brought credibility back to the MBTA. He noted that achieving goals has made it easier for the Governor and the Legislature to continue supporting the MBTA. Mr. Eng said that the Governor's commitment to transportation helped encourage him to accept the position and noted the contributions of the workforce. Director Koutoujian said it was an exciting time to serve on the board and credited the governor. He discussed the history of the system and thanked the General Manager for

his commitment. General Manager Eng said that the transportation network is key to many of the administration's priorities and thanked the Transportation Funding Task Force. He added that all modes are seeing an increase in ridership and that he predicted further increases over the next year.

5. Safety Program Update

Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak provided his report, discussing processes and procedures for Safety Risk Management ("SRM"), including SRM process enhancements under FTA Special Directive 23-10. He said that work was ongoing to grow the SRM program and reviewed the 49 SRM workshops conducted during 2024, including both proactive and reactive workshops. Mr. Lesniak said that the SRM contributions for 2024 included strengthened accountability and oversight and extensive employee trainings. Mr. Lesniak then discussed a recent incident where a disabled Red Line train between Porter and Davis rolled after its air brakes were disabled in accordance with procedure, resulting in a minor collision and a safe evacuation of passengers. He noted that the cars involved were about 30 years old. He said that the procedure for disabled trains has been adjusted to require that air brakes remain engaged unless they are preventing desired train movement. Director Skelton Roberts asked about the risk management lifecycle and Mr. Lesniak described how elements of various safety plans and comparisons with peer agencies were used to create the cycle. Director Koutoujian asked about the propulsion issue with the disabled train and Mr. Lesniak explained that the traction motors failed to some extent. Director Butler asked about the failure of the mechanical brakes after the air brakes were disengaged and Mr.

Lesniak said that the mechanical brakes did not have enough capacity to stop the train on the incline.

6. Safety Management Inspection Update

Chief of Quality, Compliance and Oversight Meredith Sandberg presented an update on the FTA's Safety Management Inspection ("SMI"), providing background on the SMI and stating that with the closure of 14 CAPs in 2024, 52% of CAPs are now closed. She reviewed highlights, including the workforce assessment, track condition reporting processes, and the updated Employee Safety Reporting Program. In 2025, Ms. Sandberg said her team would continue to close out CAPs, using the newly created Quality Management System ("QMS") Manual as a guiding document. She discussed the goals which would support continuous improvement. Ms. Sandberg said that managers would be able to set the tone for the workforce. She discussed how the QMS Manual incorporates "Plan/Do/Check/Act" principles and other industry standards. Ms. Sandberg said that her team is promoting a culture of continuous improvement and that the closed loop feedback system enables adjustments and improvements to processes. She said that overall progress on SMI deliverables is at 91% submitted and reminded the Board that the MBTA submits CAPs to the FTA, which then reviews and either approves or requests adjustments.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional items on the agenda, Chair McGee asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

VOTED:

To adjourn the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

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

Documents relied upon for this meeting:

- January 23, 2025 Agenda
- Minutes of December 19, 2024 Board Meeting
- 1. MBTA January BOD Presentation Draft Final 12 16 2024 v1
- 2i. 2025-01 - Consent Agenda Safety Report
- 2iib. MBTA Energy Hedge Presentation Consent Agenda_Updated 1.03.2025
- 3. FINAL_MOW Presentation vEH5
- GM's Report to the Board 01.23.2025 v10
- 5. 2025-01-23 - Board of Directors Safety Deck
- 6. SHE QCO Update Jan Board 2025_v2