



MINUTES

Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Board of Directors

September 26, 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 Chanda Smart,

**BOARD MEMBERS
PARTICIPATING
REMOTELY:**

Director Eric Goodwine, Director Mary Skelton Roberts

**BOARD MEMBER
ABSENT:**

Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt

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

General Manager Phillip Eng, Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe, APTA Vice President Ward McCarragher, Director of Ferry Operations David Perry, Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak, Chief Quality, Compliance and Compliance Officer Meredith Sandberg, Deputy Chief of Red Line & Mattapan Line Transformation Eric Burkman, Senior Director of Alternative Service Laura Riegel, Senior Director of Procurement Operations Ray Wise, Senior Director of Climate Policy and Planning Kat Eshel

Others Present:

General Counsel Douglas McGarrah, Counsel-
Corporate Governance Noah Potash

1. Safety Briefing

Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe began with a safety briefing, pointing out the board room's safety features and exit routes and reviewing rail crossing safety tips.

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 Goodwine	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

PRESENTATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

2. Transit Fiscal Cliffs

General Manager Phillip Eng introduced Ward McCarragher, Vice President of Government Affairs and Advocacy at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), to discuss Transit Fiscal Cliffs. Mr. McCarragher discussed the national landscape, noting that transit ridership is at 79% of 2019 levels and fare revenue has collapsed, which impacted the MBTA more than most other agencies. Chair Glynn and Mr. McCarragher discussed the BART system’s reliance on fares. Director McGee and Mr. McCarragher discussed how systems with low farebox recovery ratios, such as LA, fund their operations. Director McGee asked about the return on investment for transit funding and Mr. McCarragher said that it was a five to one ratio. Mr. McCarragher discussed looming fiscal cliff in operating budgets and reviewed common agency responses, which are generally to seek increased funding and new sources and to avoid reducing service or increasing fares. He then reviewed the Biden Administration’s proposals and state and local responses, which include raising revenues and cost

reductions. He noted that many places have implemented short-term fixes through increases from the General Fund. Mr. McCarragher highlighted the example of Minnesota, which has implemented a sales tax and a retail delivery fee, and noted that a variety of new taxes and fees have been proposed across the country. He said that transit creates jobs and fosters energy independence and discussed APTA's work to rethink public transit as a catalyst for economic growth, pointing to framing used in Pennsylvania. Chair Glynn and Mr. McCarragher discussed the wide variety of potential innovations. Director Skelton Roberts asked about states in a similar situation to Massachusetts with regard to modes and Mr. McCarragher cited SEPTA. Chair Glynn discussed what the MBTA can learn from national efforts and Director McGee said that a breakdown of different options would be helpful. Director Skelton Roberts said that Massachusetts citizens and legislators have transportation funding fatigue and requested information on long-term strategies. Chair Glynn asked about the amount of money in the Biden proposals and Mr. McCarragher clarified that the Biden proposals would allow for more flexibility with existing formula funds, not an increase in overall funding. General Manager Eng commented on the wealth of knowledge he had gained from dialogue with APTA.

3. Consent Agenda

Chair Glynn explained that a vote to adopt the consent agenda would approve the August 22nd meeting minutes.

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

VOTED:

To adopt the consent agenda.

Chair Glynn

Yes

Director Butler	Yes
Director Goodwine	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Sisitsky	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

Public Comment Period #1

Paul Schlichtman, Chair of the Arlington School Committee, discussed the historic importance of transit to Arlington and said that the MBTA needed to engage more with Arlington about expanding service. He cited Arlington's strong support for the MBTA Communities Act and called for extending the Red Line, making the 77 bus route more frequent, and adding a bus connection to Medford/Tufts. Chair Glynn noted that the original design of the Red Line extension that would have served Arlington was blocked by Arlington residents. The General Manager said that he would be happy to discuss the issues.

Jonathan Clark of Local 318, representing machinists on the commuter rail, said that Keolis is not negotiating in good faith with the unions on wages or affordable insurance and said that this was making it difficult to retain skilled workers. General Manager Eng discussed the importance of the workforce and said the MBTA was hoping to resolve the negotiations positively.

4. Recognition of Ferry Passenger Lifesavers

The General Manager introduced Director of Ferry Operations David Perry. Mr. Perry discussed the heroic efforts of members of the public and ferry crew members to save a passenger's life in August. He commended the actions of the crew to return the ferry to dock and close coordination with Boston EMS. The saved passenger,

Karen Nesbitt, expressed her gratitude towards the bystanders. Dr. Paul Cangiano, who participated in the lifesaving effort, discussed the life-saving presence of an AED on the boat. Nurse Laurie Trezza challenged everyone to get CPR certified.

5. General Manager's Report

General Manager Phillip Eng began his report with an update on the Track Improvement Program, explaining that the new approach he had instituted allows the equivalent of 90 days of overnight and weekend work to be completed during one day of unrestricted access. He also noted various safety improvements made during the program. Mr. Eng discussed Operation Lifesaver and reminded the public to think train when they see tracks. He reviewed the ongoing progress on speed restrictions, reduced from 26% to 6% of track, and said that the current Red Line diversion had replaced 70,000 feet of track and 17,000 ties, while lifting 36 speed restrictions, giving round-trip customers 24 minutes back. The General Manager discussed the reopening of the Dorchester Avenue Bridge and the upcoming launch of South Coast Rail, which will feature 30% more weekday service and 100% more weekend service than previously planned. He then reviewed several successful station openings and improved service on the Worcester and Fairmount Lines. Mr. Eng said that new Red and Orange Line trains continue to be delivered on schedule according to the renegotiated agreement. The General Manager discussed efforts to make the MBTA the transportation system of choice, including more trips, shorter headways, improving modes and supporting mode shift with contactless payments and reduced fares. He discussed modernizing and decarbonizing the system to mitigate climate change impacts and reviewed efforts to rebuild the workforce. The General Manager discussed the recent award of \$472 million

for the North Station Draw Bridge and reviewed other successful grant applications. He concluded his presentation by sharing positive feedback from riders. Director Butler thanked the General Manager for his work and transparency and praised the work on the Red Line. Mr. Eng noted that there had been no major injuries related to the Track Improvement Program. Director Koch said that he had witnessed incredible work on the Red Line and that it showed a change in philosophy from being reactive to proactive. Director McGee said that he was blown away by the working being done.

6. Safety Program Update

Chief Safety Officer Tim Lesniak began his report by highlighting Operation Lifesaver. He then reviewed recent incidents and corrective actions, including two catenary incidents on the Green Line and a smoke and fire incident on bus route 225. Reviewing safer operations, Mr. Lesniak discussed the DeV Vaughn Flyover, the Wellington Inspection area, new color-coded work hard hats, new third rail covers, new construction equipment, and planking on the Boylston curve. Turning to the safety performance indicators, Mr. Lesniak noted downward trends in bus-pedestrian collisions and reportable injuries and improvements in rail and ferry safety indicators. Chair Glynn asked about the safety culture and Mr. Lesniak said that employees were showing an increased willingness to report safety issues.

7. Safety Management Inspection Two-Year Look Back

Chief Quality, Compliance and Oversight Officer Meredith Sandberg reviewed the progress made over the past two years responding to the FTA's Safety Management Inspection. She discussed the cultural shift that has taken place at the MBTA and discussed various improvements across the agency. She noted that the SMI

response is now 86% complete and discussed the benefits of reduced slow zones. Mr. Lesniak discussed the transformation of the Safety division and safety culture, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and support from leadership. He reviewed the reorganization and expansion of the team, then discussed the use of GAP analysis to assess SMS implementation efforts. He explained how expanded use of the Safety Hotline shows a shift in safety culture and discussed updates to the Safety & Security Certification Program. Mr. Lesniak also discussed successful efforts to increase the number of Safety Risk Management Workshops and the successful closure of all 37 overdue DPU Incident Reports. Director Smart asked when the Safety Management Inspection will end, and Ms. Sandberg said that the final submission is scheduled for late 2025.

The Board took a lunch break from 12:03 to 12:21 pm.

Public Comment Period #2

Evan Foss praised service and safety improvements while noting that he remained concerned about fire and smoke issues. He noted that safety culture is difficult to measure but can be felt when it's there.

Dan McElhenney asked how many people ride the MBTA daily, then discussed issues with cyclists and scooter riders on MBTA platforms and urged staff to remove old signs for the CharlieCard store.

Mela Bush-Miles of Action for Equity discussed the fiscal cliff, said that the comparison with other agencies was helpful, and expressed opposition to fare increases. She noted that more could be done to ensure that commuter rail riders and people with CharlieCards actually pay the fare.

8. Cabot North Yard Project

Deputy Chief of Red Line & Mattapan Line Transformation Eric Burkman presented a contract for the Cabot North Yard Project, discussed the location and significant of the yard and explaining how the project will provide full-depth track replacement, communications upgrades, and traction power duct bank replacement. He reviewed the project limits and scope of the contract, with emphasis on the traction power scope. Mr. Burkman reviewed the project timeline and discussed procurement, noting that the low bid was slightly below the engineer's estimate. Chair Glynn and Mr. Burkman discussed minority and women participation in the contract. Director Butler expressed concern that the low bid would creep up over time and requested updates. Director Smart and Mr. Burkman discussed how the low bid was accepted, with Mr. Burkman noting that it was recommended by the procurement team.

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 Railroad – SPS New England, A Joint Venture, LLC. R44CN04: Cabot North Yard and Duct Bank #003, and to take all actions necessary or advisable to effectuate the Agreement, in a form approved by the General Counsel, in an amount not to exceed \$29,500,000.00.

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

9. Third Party Bus Contract

Senior Director of Alternative Service Laura Riegel and Senior Director of Procurement Operations Ray Wise presented an amendment to the Third Party Bus Contract. Ms. Riegel explained that the contract enables alternative service for the Track Improvement Program and noted that because the previous contract amendment is lasting longer than expected, this amendment would provide service for the rest of the year with additional capacity in 2025. She discussed alternative service and efforts by the MBTA to reduce costs by having more work done by MBTA operators, optimizing vehicle requirements, coordinating with municipal partners, and increasing service on alternative options. Mr. Wise discussed maximizing the use of low-floor buses and said that A Yankee Line submitted the best 'Core Supplier' proposal. He noted that the partnership provides opportunities for diverse operators and includes minimums for low-floor and accessible buses and will hire more in-state contractors. Mr. Wise discussed increased service level commitments and progress on accessible vans. Chair Glynn asked if increased hiring was making the use of more MBTA operators possible, and Ms. Riegel said that was accurate. Director Koch noted that the alternative service has enabled the great work on the Red Line. Director Skelton Roberts and Ms. Riegel discussed how service and headways are managed for the alternative service. General Manager Eng discussed the constant monitoring of the bus service and modifications that are made in response to feedback. He thanked the cities of Boston and Cambridge and Massachusetts General Hospital for their assistance.

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

VOTED:

To authorize the MBTA General Manager, or his designee, to execute a contract amendment with A Yankee Line, Inc. in the amount of not-to exceed \$45,000,000 to provide Shuttle Bus Services and to execute any necessary or ancillary documents in the name and on behalf of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to effectuate this Agreement.

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

Note: Director Koch left the meeting at approximately 12:53 p.m.

10. Climate Resiliency

Senior Director of Climate Policy and Planning Kat Eshel presented an update on climate resiliency, introducing part of her team and discussing how her efforts align with the Healey/Driscoll Administration's climate resilience mandate. She defined resilience as reliability and said that the goal is to plan for, mitigate, and adapt to the risk from climate impacts to minimize disruption and rapidly restore service. She cited coastal flooding, heavy rain, extreme temperatures, and heavy winds as the primary threats.

Note: Director Sisitsky left the meeting at 12:56 p.m.

Ms. Eshel discussed collaborative efforts to increase system resilience since 2015 and reviewed ongoing resilience initiatives, including planning, tunnel flood mitigation, collaboration across the administration and ongoing financial support from partners. She invited the board to join her team at upcoming Climate Week events.

Chair Glynn asked about the flood risk to the Silver Line and Ms. Eshel said that it is next on their list after the Blue Line.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

VOTED:

To adjourn the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

Chair Glynn	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Goodwine	Yes
Director McGee	Yes
Director Skelton Roberts	Yes
Director Smart	Yes

Documents relied upon for this meeting:

- September 26, 2024 Agenda
- Minutes of August 22, 2024 Board Meeting
- MBTA September Presentation
- 2. Transit Fiscal_GM Intro (2)
- 2a. Ward McCarragher MBTA Board (09.26.2024)
- 2b. Ward McCarragher Bio
- 3. TIP Update Full Board 09.26.2024 v3A
- 3a. 9. QCO Update Sept Board 2024_SMI Response
- 4. 2024-09-26 Board - MBTA Heroes
- GM Report to the Board 09.26.2024 v8
- 6. MBTA Board of Directors Meeting Deck 9.26.24 Final UPDATED
- 7. 9. QCO Update Sept Board 2024_v3
- 8. R44CN04 Cabot North Yard Contract 2024-09-24
- 8a. Staff Summary - R44CN04 Cabot North Yard Construction final
- 9. 2024_09_26 Third Party Bus vote_FINAL
- 10. MBTA Board Presentation_Resilience_09262024 v3 FINAL (2)