



## MINUTES

### Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Board of Directors

November 20, 2025, AT 12:00 P.M.

10 Park Plaza, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.*

**MBTA BOARD  
MEMBERS  
PARTICIPATING IN-  
PERSON:**

Chair Tom McGee, Director Robert Butler, Director  
Thomas Koch, Director Peter Koutoujian, Director  
Chanda Smart, Interim Secretary Phillip Eng

**MBTA BOARD MEMBER  
PARTICIPATING  
REMOTELY:**

Director Eric Goodwine

**MBTA BOARD  
MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Director Mary Skelton Roberts, Director Charlie Sisitsky

**MASSDOT BOARD  
MEMBERS  
PARTICIPATING IN-  
PERSON:**

Chair Phillip Eng, Director Thomas Koch, Director  
Thomas McGee

**MASSDOT BOARD  
MEMBERS  
PARTICIPATING  
REMOTELY:**

Director Eric Batista, Director Joe Beggan, Director Ilyas  
Bhatti, Director Rick Dimino, Director Lisa Iezzoni,  
Director Tim King, Director Dean Mazzearella

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

Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe, General Manager  
Phillip Eng, Chief Operating Officer Ryan Coholan, Chief  
Engineer and AGM Sam Zhou, Executive Director of  
Green Line Operations Alicia Gomes, Deputy Chief  
Operating Officer Deirdre Habershaw, Chief of  
Operational Safety Jim Healey, Chief of Quality,  
Compliance and Oversight Meredith Sandberg

**Others Present:** Chief Counsel John Martin, Counsel- Corporate  
Governance Noah Potash, MassDOT Board Counsel  
Owen Kane

## **Joint Meeting with the MassDOT Board of Directors**

### **1. Safety Briefing**

Deputy Chief of Staff Darrin McAuliffe provided a safety briefing, emphasizing the building's exit routes.

### **OPEN OF MEETING/Call to order by the Chair**

Interim Secretary Phillip Eng called the meeting of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation ("MassDOT") to order at 12:04 p.m. Noah Potash called the roll of the MassDOT Board of Directors participating, being a quorum of the MassDOT Board:

<b>Chair Eng</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Batista</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Beggan</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Bhatti</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Dimino</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Iezzoni</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director King</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Koch</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Mazzearella</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director McGee</b>	<b>Present</b>

Chair McGee called the meeting of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") Board to order at 12:06 p.m. Noah Potash called the roll of the MBTA Board of Directors participating, being a quorum of the MBTA Board:

<b>Chair McGee</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Butler</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Goodwine</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Koch</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Koutoujian</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Smart</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Director Eng</b>	<b>Present</b>

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**2. To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property**

Chair McGee explained that staff had requested that the next item on the agenda be discussed in executive session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property. He added that he had determined that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the MBTA. Chair McGee noted that the MBTA 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 exchange, lease or value of real property.**

<b>Chair McGee</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Butler</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Goodwine</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Koch</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Koutoujian</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Smart</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Eng</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Chair Eng reiterated that staff had requested that the next item on the agenda be discussed in executive session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property. He added that he had determined that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Department. Chair Eng noted that the MassDOT Board would not 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 exchange, lease or value of real property.**

<b>Chair Eng</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Batista</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Beggan</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Director Bhatti	Yes
Director Dimino	Yes
Director Iezzoni	Yes
Director King	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director Mazzearella	Yes
Director McGee	Yes

*Note: The Boards deliberated in executive session from 12:12 p.m. to 1:07 p.m. The MassDOT Board did not return from executive session.*

## **MBTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

### **OPEN SESSION/REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS & ACTION ITEMS**

#### **3. Consent Agenda**

Chair McGee explained that a vote to adopt the consent agenda would approve the October meeting minutes.

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

**VOTED:**

**To adopt the consent agenda.**

Chair McGee	Yes
Director Butler	Yes
Director Goodwine	Yes
Director Koch	Yes
Director Koutoujian	Yes
Director Smart	Yes
Director Eng	Yes

#### **4. Public Comment Period**

Alan Smith Soto of the Arborway Committee for Public Transit discussed the economy of scale savings that would result from extending the E Branch to Heath Street. He discussed Millionaire's Tax funding and asked the Board to support the extension and for the Secretary to recommend the release of funds for a feasibility study.

David Brooks asked the MBTA to evaluate privately funded podway construction and discussed cost savings. He reviewed the specifications and benefits of the technology.

Celeste Veniola of the Sierra Club of Massachusetts expressed support for commuter rail electrification via a catenary system, discussed the benefits, and requested a report on progress. She also asked about public input on the Program for Mass Transportation and said she was grateful for the MBTA's progress.

Ralph Walton discussed the policy on helping riders with groceries and asked the agency to be caring, inquisitive, and ingenious about keeping riders able to live their lives.

Tom Ryan of A Better City stressed the importance of public transit to the economy and asked the board to make new estimate on the funding gap and the state of good repair backlog. He noted the uncertainty of federal aid and asked how the Safety department calculates its safety targets.

Evan Foss of Newton echoed Mr. Walton's comment and requested clarification on roof repairs at Newton Center station.

*Note: The following public comments were submitted via voicemail or email. Summaries were read into the record by Board Counsel.*

John Eustace Gerard asked staff to stop schedule adjustments on the Green Line C Branch and at Kenmore and stated that trains that do not run on time steal time and money from riders. He criticized MBTA employees, calling them disrespectful, automated fare collection, crowding on the C Branch, and the lack of all-door boarding.

Joanne Iselin Baldini asked how much longer until the new Kendall Square outbound station would be fully operational.

Olivia McKenley, a journalism student at Boston University, requested an interview about Green Line policies that may impact the day-to-day lives of students.

George T. Comeau of the Canton Historical Society requested that the MBTA repaint the cupola at Canton Junction Station and discussed how maintaining the cupola would preserve the character of the building and its importance to the community.

Saviz Mowlavi said it was exciting to see the MBTA implementing dropbacks to relieve congestion at Orange Line terminus operations and asked if there are similar plans for the Red Line, especially at Alewife.

Lucas Prato of the Reading Turnback Committee thanked the General Manager for withdrawing the proposed Turnback Track in Reading and said that the committee would work to help find a path forward that supported improved service and respected the needs of the community. He thanked staff for making the time to attend a Reading Select Board meeting and thanked Director Smart for voicing the community's concerns and thanked the MBTA administration and Board of Directors.

Dolores Boogdanian, President of the Audubon Circle Neighborhood Association urged completion of Phase 3 of the Fenway Multi-Use Path, arguing that completion was critical to making previous investments worthwhile. She cited the health and economic benefits of the completed path and requested increased communication from the MBTA with stakeholders about the status of the project.

The General Manager commented on how staff follow up on comments and said that the Chief Operating Officer met with the Mass Senior Action Council on the RIDE baggage policy and will report back after completing review of the policy.

## **5. General Manager's Report**

General Manager Phillip Eng began his report by reviewing the timeline of the Green Line Train Protection System ("GLTPS") project. Chief Operating Officer Ryan

Coholan discussed the background of the GLTPS and the importance of protecting people, emphasizing the safety of the Green Line. Chief Engineer and AGM Sam Zhou acknowledged the CEO of Piper Network in the audience and discussed the progress at installing wayside equipment. Director Koutoujian, Mr. Zhou, and Mr. Coholan discussed the meaning of wayside. Mr. Zhou reviewed the status of carborne equipment and discussed design challenges and the complexity of the system. Executive Director of Green Line Operations Alicia Gomes discussed the importance of employees and her former colleague Terrese Edmonds, who died in a 2008 Green Line accident. She noted that all progress on GLTPS has come in the past two years under the current leadership.

Director Butler thanked the team for moving beyond talk. Director Koutoujian, Mr. Eng, and Mr. Coholan discussed the reasoning behind focusing on the D Branch. Director Koutoujian, Mr. Eng and Mr. Coholan discussed how the technology works, with Mr. Coholan likening it to automobile GPS and explaining that phase 2 of the projects would include auto-breaking.

The General Manager said that the Transit Police would report to the Board next month and discussed piggybacking work to improve the state of good repair, citing a recent incident caused by splice repairs to the catenary system. He then reviewed the replacement of two Furnace Brook Bridges in three days during the Red Line diversion. Mr. Zhou noted that speed restrictions had been caused by a dip in the track near the bridge. He said that although emergency repairs correct a crack in the bridge, permanent replacement was needed. He recognized the team that worked on the replacement. Director Koutoujian asked if there was video of the repair and Mr. Zhou said that they only had still images but could install cameras for future projects. Mr. Eng said that new fare

gates would open at South Station in December. He discussed a partnership with the production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* would offer discounts to riders and employees. The General Manager then discussed the Transit Navigation Crew's contribution to the success of the APTA Conference. He acknowledged several teams that had recently won awards, including the Policy Strategy and Oversight Team, the Light Rail Leadership Team, and the Better Bus Network Phase 1 Team. Mr. Eng concluded his report by recapping the Focused Act of Kindness food drive that had collected 3800 pounds of food based on an employee suggestion.

*Note: Director Koch left the meeting at 2:10 p.m.*

## **6. Winter Service Updates**

Chief Operating Officer Ryan Coholan introduced Deputy Chief Operating Officer Deirdre Habershaw to present updates on winter service. Ms. Habershaw said that on heavy rail, the agency would maintain frequent service while introducing better scheduling and new operational procedures. She provided a closer look at reliability on each of the heavy rail lines. Director Koutoujian, Chair McGee, Mr. Eng, Mr. Coholan, and Ms. Habershaw discussed the significant increase in Red Line and Orange Line daily trips. Ms. Habershaw discussed how a procedure called a dropback enabled staff to speed up turnaround of Orange Line trains at the terminus and reduce congestion. She explained that essentially trains are handed off between motorpersons and noted that it also provides an additional break for motorpeople between trips. She thanked the Operations Control Center team and said that they were exploring using the procedure on other lines. Ms. Habershaw shared positive comments regarding the Orange Line. She discussed promotion of additional bus routes to the "frequent bus route" standard of service every



15 minutes or less and provided details on changes for winter 2026. Director Koutoujian summarized the factors allowing for more trips and asked about the time difference between arrival and departure during dropbacks and Ms. Habershaw said that it was about five minutes. Director Koutoujian emphasized the importance of hiring and discussed the rollout of frequent routes and the rationale with Ms. Habershaw. Director Smart offered kudos to the team for the dropback idea.

## **7. Safety Program Update**

Chief of Operational Safety Jim Healey explained his professional background and reviewed the federally required Annual Emergency Response Full-Scale Exercises, stating that employees had noted the need for more trainings for local first responders.

*Note: Director Butler left the meeting at 2:39 p.m.*

Mr. Healey reviewed the development of a training program for first responders and explained how initial outreach was tied to communities impacted by South Coast Rail. He said that the training consists of a classroom presentation followed by a field portion on actual equipment. He said that several departments have been trained, covering over 150 first responders, and that other departments have committed to the training. He cited phenomenal feedback from departments and noted that the trainings can be scheduled around departmental schedules. He added that he has begun receiving unsolicited requests for training and interest from specialized agencies. Mr. Healey recognized the members of his team. Director Koutoujian noted he had had discussions with chiefs interested in the training and cited the importance of the training. He said that it was great that fire departments were involved and asked about the MBTA resources provided. Mr. Healey discussed the challenge of having trainsets available

and discussed plans to obtain retired coaches and a locomotive for future dedicated training. Director Koutoujian asked where the field training portions are conducted and Mr. Healey said that they are generally held at layover facilities. Mr. Coholan discussed how small departments with mutual assistance agreements can take advantage of the training. Director Koutoujian discussed the nature of the responses and Mr. Healey said that staff encourage departments to talk to their neighbors.

#### **8. QCO Update: World Quality Month at the T**

Chief of Quality, Compliance and Oversight Meredith Sandberg discussed how to “think differently” in quality management and discussed how quality verification audits can create closed feedback systems to support continuous improvement. Reviewing work to build a culture of quality, Ms. Sandberg discussed how Quality Management works with auditees and reviewed the audit steps. Explaining that quality is a team effort, Ms. Sandberg discussed the various benefits of a collaborative approach. She said that the results include safer service, increased reliability and public trust, and an enhanced rider experience. Chair McGee discussed the importance of the work. Ms. Sandberg said that the overall Safety Management Inspection (“SMI”) response had reached 98%, with 74% of CAPs fully closed. Chair McGee praised the work. Director Smart asked about next steps once the SMI is closed. Ms. Sandberg said that the FTA will close the inspection and the MBTA will resume normal safety oversight hierarchy with the Department of Public Utilities.

Referring to the Safety Division Board Report from the Consent Agenda, Director Koutoujian noted that assaults on staff are over the target and asked what the MBTA is doing to protect employees. Mr. Coholan noted that the change in the definition of

employee assaults was partly responsible, as the KPIs are based on a rolling average that looks back prior to the new definition. The General Manager said that the issue is under review and that the authority is working with the Transit Police and labor and had installed more physical barriers and rolled out deescalation training. He noted that a bill on worker assaults is in the legislature. Director Koutoujian said that Director Butler had asked him to state that the Transit Police should report to the board again. Director Smart said she had made the same request. The General Manager noted that the Transit Police were slated to report at the next meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further 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 3:14 p.m.**

<b>Chair McGee</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Goodwine</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Koutoujian</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Smart</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Director Eng</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### Documents relied upon for this meeting:

- November 20, 2025 Agenda
- Minutes of October 23, 2025 Board Meeting
- 1. Safety Briefing
- 3i. Safety Division Board Report
- 3ii. October 23, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- 5. GM Report to the Board 11.20.2025 vEH-6D
- 6. Winter 2026 Service Changes
- 7. Safety Update
- 8. QCO Update