

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee

Town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts

MINUTES for the board meeting of August 31, 2023 at 6:30PM

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

Present: Melanie Torrico (Egremont), Jamie Minacci (Stockbridge), Ben Elliott (Great Barrington), Deb Phillips (Great Barrington), Tate Coleman (Great Barrington),

Others: Joan Peters (GB Senior Center)

Board positions (review/discussion) (6:40)

All position need to be re-elected

Chair

Deb Phillips nominated Tate Coleman

Second, Ben Eliot

Voted unanimous in favor

Vice Chair

Deb Phillips nominates Bill Cooke

Second Tate Coleman

Voted unanimous in favor

Hannah Walton is our appointed social media person

- Treasurer - Open position
- Unrepresented towns: Lee, Sandisfield and New Marlborough

Tri-Town Microtransit Pilot update (6:50)

- ridership continues to be strong - up 40% in July from June with more modest gains this month

- just hired two more drivers

Alan Soto - has been promoted to Operations Manager

Kristen Forester - weekend and evening dispatcher

Patrick Toole - reporting coordinator hired last week - has caught August up

They are all doing a great job

Will be seeing more reports in the next month or so

Free Sunday fixed route report - not a lot of ridership, but filled the need without Sunday dispatcher

Presently rides need to be scheduled between 8 and 4 7 days/week; hope to have 7-7 dispatch on week days in the near future

The app has not been working out so we will explore other alternatives

Simon's Rock purchased 500 tickets

Weekend and evening ridership has skyrocketed with this purchase

One seasonal driver is leaving in a couple of months so we continue to advertise to make sure we will be covered.

Weekend hours start at 7 AM and will be moved to 6:30 to accommodate people who need to get to work - we are looking at possibly moving to consistent hours 7 days/week because people work 7 days/week.

West Stockbridge joined us at the beginning of August - they have contributed 2 vehicles to the program - a wheelchair accessible mini-van and a new mini-van; they have more limited hours starting an hour later, ending an hour earlier.

Monterey runs 7 days/week with extended hours.

Sheffield has twice daily fixed route service five days/week as part of a daily trip from New Marlborough

We could not consider offering for AT hikers this year as we had too much on our plate - will reconsider this winter

Great Barrington has asked Tri-Town Connector to get their students to Taconic High School as they were unable to find a vendor; drivers are paid \$35/hour, and we are working on getting them certified as 7D which is required

Treasurer's report

- FY2024 Budget: \$1,000
- Expenses - \$100 on Shopper's Guide ad spent so far for staffing
- Anticipated costs -

New & old business

Are we tracking demographics on ridership?

We are still working on collating existing data on senior or not, category of reason for use - just started our coordinator so we do not yet have it together - plan on working on in September.

The work done so far has been monumental and fully appreciated by the committee; questions reflect our hopes for the future.

We have a small research project on ridership done by undergraduates which will be forward to the committee.

Later in the fall, Tate will be looking at the metrics that might be more useful for rural areas; will be soliciting rider diaries to get a better understanding of the needs being met by the program and how it impacts quality of life.

Doctoral research will be a guidebook for rural transit programs.

We are considering a scheduled return to Simon's Rock after 8:30 as there is large demand around that time.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, September 20 @ 6:30

Citizens speak.

None offered.

Adjourn meeting at 7:20

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Phillips