

GATRA Advisory Board Meeting November 20, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm by Mayor Thomas Hoye, GATRA Advisory Board Chairman, in Raynham, MA.

Those in attendance were:

Francis J. Gay, Administrator, GATRA
Mayor Paul Heroux, Attleboro Rep.
Alice Souza, Dighton Rep.
Tammy Murray, Hanover Rep.
James Gouveia, Lakeville Rep.
Greg Guimond, Marshfield Rep.
Scott Bragdon, Norfolk Rep.
Joseph Ryan, Pembroke Rep.
Janet Angelico, Wrentham Rep.
Andrew Lima, Auditor Mngr., Hague Sahady
Jen Chaves, SRPEDD
Kim Catania, Admin Secretary, GATRA
***Denotes New Designee for the Meeting**

Mayor Thomas Hoye, Taunton Rep.
Richard Leitch, Norton Rep.
Joanne Moore, Duxbury Rep.
Paula Rossi-Clapp, Kingston Rep.
Kevin J. Dumas, Mansfield Rep.*
Andrea Priest, Middleboro Rep.
Joseph Collins, N. Attleboro Rep.*
Sandy Slavin, Wareham Rep.*
Josie Dutil, Bellingham Rep.*
Angela Costantino, SRPEDD
Daniel Burgess, CFO, GATRA

1. Introductions were made by those present.
2. **Approval of June 13, 2018 Minutes:** The Minutes of the June 13, 2018 GATRA Advisory Board meeting were distributed to the Advisory Board for approval.

MOTION by Greg Guimond to approve the Minutes of the June 13, 2018 GATRA Advisory Board meeting as circulated.

SECONDED by Mayor Heroux and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

3. **FY2018 Financial Report – Discussion/Approval:** Mr. Gay informed the Board that the Audit & Finance Committee met prior to the Board Meeting to review the report and recommended to approve said report. Mr. Lima, as the Audit Manager, gave a short overview of the Annual Financial Statements and the Single Audit Report (federal awards). Mr. Lima touched on several of the items in the annual financial statements as follows: (1) the independent auditor report and GATRA had a clean opinion and complied with all regulatory standards; (2) the management discussion and analysis which is a basic overview of the financial statement in layman's terms and includes how the statement is structured, current operations, financial analysis and discussion on economic factors; (3) 6/30/18 balance sheet including Statement of Net Position, Revenues, Expenses, Changes in Net Position and Cash Flows; (4) Notes which give details on the balance sheet; (5) Notes on Extraordinary Reserve and Retirement Plans; (6) supplementary schedules; (7) local assessments for the fiscal year; and (8) net cost of service.

MOTION by Greg Guimond to approve the Financial Statements of FY2018 as circulated.

SECONDED by Tammy Murray and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

4. **Approval of Weighted Vote:** The Weighted Vote was distributed to the Advisory Board for approval.

Mr. Gay explained to the Board the weighted vote is based upon the local assessments included in the FY2018 Financial Report and will be used going forward for votes of the board meetings. There were no significant changes to the weighted vote from previous years.

MOTION by Greg Guimond to approve the Weighted Vote for FY2019 as circulated.

SECONDED by James Gouveia and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

Mr. Gay referenced the handout entitled “Total System Costs and Sources of Funding, FY2010-2018”. It covers the period through 2018 and shows where the major expenses have gone over this past year. Mr. Gay went through the different items and wanted to point out the footnotes. The local assessments are actually higher than 50% from what GATRA receives from MassDOT under state contract assistance. By statute, the state is required to pay GATRA at least up to the 50% level. GATRA has over the past two fiscal years included receivables for FY17 of \$100,002 and FY18 of \$282,199. Also, an opinion from KP Law regarding the net cost of service was included in the handouts. GATRA had asked for this opinion to provide to MassDOT. Based on the statute and the opinion, GATRA believes the Commonwealth owes GATRA the two amounts for FY17 and FY18. To date, GATRA has not been paid these amounts.

5. **Capital Projects:** Mr. Gay gave an update on Capital Projects as follows:

Vehicles: GATRA has ordered two new 35’ Gillig transit buses coming in late spring 2019 as replacement vehicles for the older fleet. We have vehicles on order for mini-buses and vans for demand response system throughout our member communities.

Wareham and Plymouth Management Services: GATRA is still working on finding a site in the Plymouth/Wareham area for a maintenance garage. We are looking at existing sites and buildings as well as possible land to build. Currently, GATRA is still on Holman Road in Plymouth, and to date, has not had much success in finding the right site. The Town of Plymouth wants GATRA to move from Holman Road due to the proximity of an aquifer well head. The Town doesn’t want GATRA’s type of operation close to the well.

Taunton Terminal Project: Improvements have been made at the Taunton Bus Terminal. GATRA has moved its medical brokerage staff from the Maintenance building into new offices in the Terminal building. GATRA has begun renovations in the Maintenance building to add additional space for the administrative staff of Transdev, GATRA’s management contractor.

N.Attleboro: GATRA is still working with the Town of North Attleboro and has 100% design plans for a hub. The Town recently informed GATRA of a vacant piece of land which would give more flexibility for the kind of hub GATRA needs and the Town wishes to do in North Attleboro. GATRA is re-evaluating whether to move its site to this new location.

Mansfield: GATRA is continuing work with the Town of Mansfield on repairs to the Mansfield Avenue Bridge, which support MBTA operations as well as the major roadway and pedestrian access to the station building. The project is going well.

TransLoc: GATRA signed a contract with TransLoc, Inc. They are a company which developed a version of Uber/Lyft for the public transit sector. They have used it in the California area. They were recently bought by the Ford Motor Company and they had a pilot simulation demonstration available for \$25,000. GATRA had a kickoff meeting a couple of weeks ago with TransLoc. They are evaluating two areas. One is in the Mansfield/Foxboro/Attleboro area for rides to the commuter rail station and Gillette/Patriot Place area. The other area is in South Plymouth where there is a large need in a very large area and it is physically difficult for GATRA to have a lot of equipment in the South Plymouth area. The program would have an app on which customers could see where the bus is in the area and have them respond similar to an Uber service. Once GATRA completes this demo, Mr. Gay will inform the Board of the results and the feasibility of doing this in other areas if it is successful. There are other companies trying the same technology but TransLoc seems ahead of the curve.

RideMatch Program: GATRA has done additional upgrades to its RideMatch software and it is now a cloud based system which gives it more speed and capabilities. These upgrades plan to be rolled out soon.

Service Updates: Mr. Gay informed the Board that demand response ridership has been steady but the fixed route is down about 2 % from last year, which is also seen across the Commonwealth and the nation. GATRA's website, gatra.org, has information on ridership numbers.

6. **Legislative Update:** Mr. Gay referenced the MARTA handout which was included in today's packet as well by email to the Board. The state passed the budget with the RTA line item at 88 million dollars but then took back 6 million dollars of the 88 million dollars and RTAs are only funded at 82 million dollars. Two million dollars of the 6 million dollars was going to be used to bail out 2 of the larger RTAs that had past year deficits. The other 4 million dollars was supposed to be used from the legislature's intent to provide for additional support for services throughout the other 15 RTAs. MassDOT announced just last week they are doing a competitive grant program for the 4 million dollars. It sounds like it is more geared toward technology and capital as opposed to operations which the RTAs thought would be the case. GATRA plans to apply but wants to make sure the state is aware it is looking for operations funding.

7. **FY2019 Revision 1 Budget:**

Mr. Gay reminded the Board that at the last meeting in June 2018 they had voted to level fund everything on the FY2019 Budget. This FY2019 Revision 1 Budget does the same by level funding the operations except for in some of the operating costs for the fixed route and demand response systems. Also, Mr. Gay is requesting a cost of living increase of 3% for staff. In FY2018 no cost of living increase was given to staff, so this 3% would amount to 1.5% over FY2018 as well as FY2019. On the Administrative side, GATRA had to borrow more money for its Revenue Anticipation Note. GATRA's interest expense is up for this increased amount and the rate of interest increased in the current borrowing last August 2018. The only other increase is in the Human Service Transportation which is expected to increase by 7% in operating costs as well as what is received in revenue from the state contract. You will note on the last page of the FY2019 Revision 1 Budget, in the state contract assistance and local assessments numbers, the local assessment numbers are up 2 ½% which GATRA is asking the state to match. It is not part of the 82 million dollars the RTAs will be receiving from the state.

MOTION by Greg Guimond to accept the FY2019 Revision 1 Budget as circulated.

SECONDED by Scott Bragdon and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

- 8. Public Hearings – Proposed Fare Increases:** Mr. Gay reminded the Board that in the spring 2018 the Board voted to have public hearings for fare increases for both fixed route and demand response services. In the package provided to the Board today there was included the Summary of the Public Hearings and a Fare Equity Analysis done by SRPEDD to review these fare increases in compliance with Federal Environmental Justice and Title VI requirements. Angie Constantino and Jen Chaves from SRPEDD then briefly reviewed these documents, including the proposed fare increases and GATRA staff recommendations which were provided in the packet. The Fare Equity Analysis was done based on the staff recommendations as opposed to the proposed fare increases. There was no disproportionate impact found as the fares are across all fare types. The low income is affected more but overall there is no disproportionate impact. The attendance at the public hearings was as follows: Attleboro - 5; Franklin – 12; Plymouth – 19; Wareham – 2; and Taunton – 0. There was no real opposition to the fixed route increases which were increased by \$0.50 full fare / \$0.25 half fare. The majority of the opposition was against the demand response increase of \$0.75. Due to this opposition, the staff recommended only an increase of \$0.50 instead of the proposed increase of \$0.75.

Mr. Gay pointed out a few other items on the Staff Recommendations; i.e. transfers within one town would be free and the fares for the Attleboro to Taunton route would have the same increase amount of \$0.50 and \$0.25 respectively. The only new fare is for the ADA Paratransit. By statute GATRA can charge twice the base fare for rides which GATRA would have to provide to anyone who is ADA qualified. This would be a \$1.75 increase from the \$1.25 previous fare. The reason for this is because that level of service costs more than the Dial-A-Ride service and even at \$3 it is a reasonable fare.

Ms. Moore asked when these fare increases will be implemented. Mr. Gay informed the Board that GATRA hopes to be ready to implement these fare increases by January 1, 2019 but it may get pushed back a couple of weeks due to the updating of all the schedules and brochures. GATRA will keep the Board informed as to when the increases will take effect.

Mr. Bragdon asked if any state approvals are needed for GATRA to make these increases. Mr. Gay said there were no state approvals needed. All of the staff recommendations are up to the Board to decide to agree on and approve.

MOTION by Mayor Heroux to approve the fare increases in accordance with the GATRA staff recommendations as circulated.

SECONDED by Kevin Dumas and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

- 9. Proposed Service Changes:** Mr. Gay informed the Board that his staff is still working on adjustments to schedules and currently no public hearings are scheduled. Hopefully, GATRA will be successful in receiving some of the 4 million dollars to put it towards operating money so major service changes will not need to be made. The legislature developed a Task Force this summer in regard to the additional 4 million dollars. The Task Force was to have its work done and made recommendations by November 2018. The Task Force does not plan to have its work done until possibly February 2019. Because of this uncertainty, GATRA is only going to make some adjustments to schedules. For instance, the Plymouth area up through the Scituate area may go to a

winter schedule which may have hours cut back. If GATRA does not get this additional funding for operating costs, then major cuts in service may need to be made to stay within the budget.

With no further business to discuss;

MOTION by Greg Guimond was made to adjourn the meeting.

SECONDED by Scott Bragdon and **passed** by the Advisory Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 PM.