



**January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 1PM  
Open Session Minutes**

**Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)  
Audit & Finance Committee Meeting  
Zoom**

**1. Committee Meeting Convenes**

Mayor O'Connell called the Audit and Finance Committee Meeting to order at approximately 1:00 PM.

The following Board members were present:

Marshfield (3.11), Greg Guimond (remote)  
North Attleboro (3.33), Antonio Morabito (remote)  
Seekonk (2.15), Brittney Faria (remote)  
Taunton (5.64), Mayor Shaunna O'Connell (remote)

The following Board members were absent:

Bellingham (2.65), Josie Dutil

Also present:

Mary Ellen DeFrias (remote), Dan Burgess (remote), Kylie Araujo (remote), Meghan Hyland (remote)

**2. April 5, 2024 Audit and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

Mayor O'Connell introduced Meghan Hyland, Audit Manager from Hague, Sahady, & Co., PC Audit Firm.

Mayor O'Connell reminded the committee that even if they were not present at the last meeting, they can still vote on the minutes as long as they have reviewed them.

A motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve April 5, 2024 Audit and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes. A roll call vote was taken.

Marshfield (3.11), Greg Guimond- aye  
North Attleboro (3.33), Antonio Morabito- aye  
Seekonk (2.15), Brittney Faria- aye  
Taunton (5.64), Mayor Shaunna O'Connell- aye

**Motion to approve April 5, 2024 Minutes passed.**

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### **3. Review of Fiscal Year (FY) 24 Financial Audit**

Dan Burgess introduced the FY24 Financial Audit and turned it over to Meghan Hyland to review with the Committee.

Meghan Hyland reviewed the FY24 Financial Statement report, issued December 31, 2024 and noted that there were no issues, the report was clean, and that there was nothing unexpected.

Meghan also reviewed the FY24 Single Audit report, issued January 4, 2025 and noted that two major programs-- federal transit cluster and transit services program cluster-- were audited. She noted no issues and no findings and that unmodified opinions were issued for both programs. This report has also been submitted to the Audit Clearinghouse.

At this time, Mary Ellen DeFrias and Dan Burgess left the Zoom room and entered a separate Zoom Breakout Room in order to allow for the Committee to ask Meghan Hyland any questions and have an open, frank discussion with her without GATRA leadership present.

Mayor O'Connell, Taunton asked Meghan Hyland if she noted anything different about the audit process since there was new management in recent years. Meghan noted that this was the first year that GATRA was not using an external accounting firm to consult and had moved all financial operations internal to GATRA. Meghan noted that the audit process went smoothly without the consultant's assistance. She noted that the GATRA team was on top of submitting all requested documents. Meghan recommended that in the future GATRA could add additional information to the Management Discussion and Analysis section of the audit reports to provide more context for the reader.

Mayor O'Connell, Taunton asked Meghan Hyland for further recommendations for the GATRA finance department. Meghan noted that GATRA was already in the process of changing from Quickbooks to Munis accounting systems and that Munis will allow for better, more useful reports and that the change to Munis is a step in the right direction to increase the efficiency of the finance department.

Mayor O'Connell, Taunton asked Meghan Hyland if she noticed any issues with internal controls within the finance department. Meghan did not note any issues with internal controls and also explained that with the change to Munis, even more checks and balances will be inherent to the software and continue to increase the internal controls in the department.

Antonio Morabito, North Attleboro asked about the increase in capital spending on buses with no disposals to offset the new buses. He was wondering if it was due to an increase in ridership or some other reason. The group agreed to re-ask this question when GATRA leadership was back in the Zoom room so they could better answer.

Mary Ellen DeFrias and Dan Burgess re-enter the Zoom room with the Committee.

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Mayor O'Connell, Taunton asked Dan Burgess to give an explanation of GATRA's total net position and changes in recent years. Dan reviewed that this year there is a positive net position and where this is reflected in the data.

Antonio Morabito, North Attleboro re-asked question about adding buses to the fleet with no disposals. Dan Burgess explained that this is in part due to timing. FY24 had bus purchases and FY25 will likely have disposals. Mary Ellen DeFrias also added that GATRA is not yet at their contingency number, so we may hold off on disposing of buses that are still safe and running.

Mayor O'Connell brought up Meghan's recommendation about adding more information to the Management Discussion and Analysis and Dan Burgess agreed that in future years this area would be good to expand on.

There were no further questions.

A motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve the FY24 Annual Financial Statement, FY24 Single Audit Report, and FY24 MBTA Share of Income Report. A roll call vote was taken.

Marshfield (3.11), Greg Guimond- aye  
North Attleboro (3.33), Antonio Morabito- aye  
Seekonk (2.15), Brittney Faria- aye  
Taunton (5.64), Mayor Shaunna O'Connell- aye

**Motion to approve the above-stated FY24 Financial Audit reports passed.**

A motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to bring the above-stated reports to the full Advisory Board for a vote. A roll call vote was taken.

Marshfield (3.11), Greg Guimond- aye  
North Attleboro (3.33), Antonio Morabito- aye  
Seekonk (2.15), Brittney Faria- aye  
Taunton (5.64), Mayor Shaunna O'Connell- aye

**Motion to move the above-stated FY24 Financial Audit reports to the full Board passed.**

With the conclusion of the discussion on the Financial Audit, Meghan Hyland left the meeting.

**4. Review of State Audit**

Mary Ellen DeFrias provided an overview of the state audit on the procurement of electric buses. The audit started in October 2023 and GATRA was issued the final report at the end of December 2024. GATRA was provided an opportunity to respond to the report, but the entire response was not included by the auditors in the final report. Mary Ellen followed up with all direct recipients to provide more context from GATRA directly and assure them that GATRA

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was being good stewards of the electric buses. Mary Ellen assured the Committee that the buses are well-maintained and perform well, so much so that GATRA is even the poster child for the manufacturer. The electric buses are an asset to the GATRA fleet. Mary Ellen wanted the Committee to know that she did not feel that the report adequately reflected the good work that GATRA is doing. Mary Ellen did note that one of the report's findings regarding the cash fare policy and procedure was helpful in identifying shortcomings in that area and that issues that were noted in the report were resolved before the auditors even left the site.

Mary Ellen noted that there was no action that the Committee needed to take, but that she wanted to share the report with the Committee and then will also be sharing the report and these sentiments with the full Board at the next meeting.

Greg Guimond, Marshfield requested a copy of the full response from GATRA to the auditors and Mary Ellen stated she will forward it to the whole Committee following the meeting.

Mayor O'Connell, Taunton noted audits are opportunities to improve.

## **5. Adjourn**

A motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to adjourn the meeting. A roll call vote was taken.

Marshfield (3.11), Greg Guimond- aye

North Attleboro (3.33), Antonio Morabito- aye

Seekonk (2.15), Brittney Faria- aye

Taunton (5.64), Mayor Shaunna O'Connell- aye

**Motion to adjourn the meeting passed. Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:31 PM.**

### **Documents & Exhibits Discussed in this Meeting:**

- 1.9.25 Audit and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda
- 4.5.24 Audit and Finance Committee Open Session Minutes
- FY24 Annual Financial Statement
- FY24 Single Audit Report
- FY24 MBTA Share of Income Report
- State Audit Report

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