

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MART)
MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2015
MART MAINTENANCE FACILITY
1427R WATER STREET
FITCHBURG, MA 01420**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:49 a.m.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: (constituting a quorum)

Mayor Mark Hawke (Chairman)	Gardner
Mayor Dean Mazzarella	Leominster
Selectperson Heather Billings	Westminster
Keith Bergman (representing Selectmen)	Littleton
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Selectmen)	Bolton
Richard Hatch (representing Selectmen)	Shirley
Alexandra Turner (representing Selectmen)	Lancaster
Shaun Suhoski (representing Selectmen)	Athol
Selectperson Phyllis Luck	Lunenburg
Francis Powers (representing Selectmen)	Boxborough

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mayor Lisa Wong	Fitchburg
Anita Scheipers (representing Selectmen)	Hubbardston
Robert Pontbriand (representing Selectmen)	Ayer
Alida Herring (representing Selectmen)	Winchendon
Laura Alger (representing Selectmen)	Royalston
Mark Carlisle (representing Selectmen)	Ashburnham
Alyson Toole (representing Selectmen)	Stow
Laura McIntye (representing Selectmen)	Hardwick
Mary Krapf (representing Selectmen)	Ashby
Robert Markel (representing Selectman)	Templeton
No Representative	Sterling
No Representative	Harvard

STAFF PRESENT:

Mohammed Khan, Bruno Fisher, Michelle LeBlanc, Donna Landry, Bonnie Mahoney, Susan Gallien, Adam Gromelski, James Sluss and Keary Connors

GUESTS PRESENT:

Thomas Schiavone	MassDOT
Trevor Bayard-Murray	MassDOT
George Kahale	Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
Phil Rocca	Management of Transportation Service

II. General Comments

Moment of silence for the passing of Jeff Ritter.

III. Financial Matters

A. Status of State Funding

M. Khan stated we have \$5.4 million in State Contract Assistance. Also we are hoping the State will recognize that Athol as joined MART and MART will start receiving funding from the State. On the legislative side we have received \$880,000 funding through the courtesy of Senator Brewer for Athol. We

will be working with Senator Gobi to continue to get that funding, if we do not continue to get this funding it will jeopardize the services in Athol.

B. Status of Federal Funding

M. Khan stated Federal allocation is \$2.2 million.

C. Review Revenue and Expenditures 5 Months

J. Sluss informed the Board there is a \$87,000 loss leading into 5 months and we are trending \$286,000 deficit for the year. This number is an estimate based on the 5 first months.

M. Khan stated to help reduce the deficit MART has instituted a hiring and salary freeze. We have also within drawn our petition to join the State Pension and MART will not be contributing to the employee's 401(a) plan this year. MART will also be looking at a fare increase and restructure of routes to help better serve riders and increase ridership.

D. Revised FY2015 Budget

RESOLUTION-K. Bergman moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves the revised FY2015 Budget as presented by its Administrator with a total local assessment not to exceed \$2,001,869 in accordance with proposition 2 ½. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

E. Status on Joining State Pension and GIC

RESOLUTION-S. Suhoski moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves for MART to withdraw the petition for membership in the State Retirement System. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Administrative Matters

A. Request for Additional Fixed Route Bus/Van Service in Lunenburg

P. Luck informed the Board that MART will be presenting the new routes to the Board of Selectman tonight and she believes they will vote to approve the new routes. The new route will go to the center of town and back from Walmart in Lunenburg. Also included will be the CVS Plaza and the Commuter Rail Stations in Fitchburg and Leominster.

B. Possible Commuter Bus/Van Service in Littleton, Boxborough and Devens to Coordinate with MBTA's Commuter Rail Service

M. Khan informed the Board in Littleton there is a need for a reverse commute and we are working with Littleton and the local industries to try and make this reverse commute possible.

C. Status of Hiring for Controller Position

B. Fisher informed the Board that MART received 46 applications for the position. The next step will be phone interviews with about 10 or 12 applicants. From there we will do in person interviews with 5 or 6 applicants. The target date to fill this position is mid-February.

D. Proposed Fare Increase/Public Hearings

M. Khan went over the fare increase handout. One reason we need to raise fares is to cover expenses and reinstitute staff benefits like increases and 401(A). We have not raised fares in 8 years on the fixed route buses.

K. Bergman stated we cannot just do a fare increase we need to have good reasons behind doing a fare increase. I do not believe raising the fares to cover staff benefits is a good reason. I do believe it is a good idea to look at fares and come up with an overall goal to raise fares. We should have a fiscal goal for raising fares, like balancing the budget.

B. Fisher stated we need to increase our revenue and reduce our costs. This is one way to increase the revenue.

E. Comprehensive Service Analysis Update- Recommended Route Changes

B. Mahoney informed the Board that we have URS Corporations doing a full service analysis and all the RTA's are in the processes of performing this comprehensive service analysis. The recommended changes were put into a three phase process.

V.

Capital Equipment/Facilities

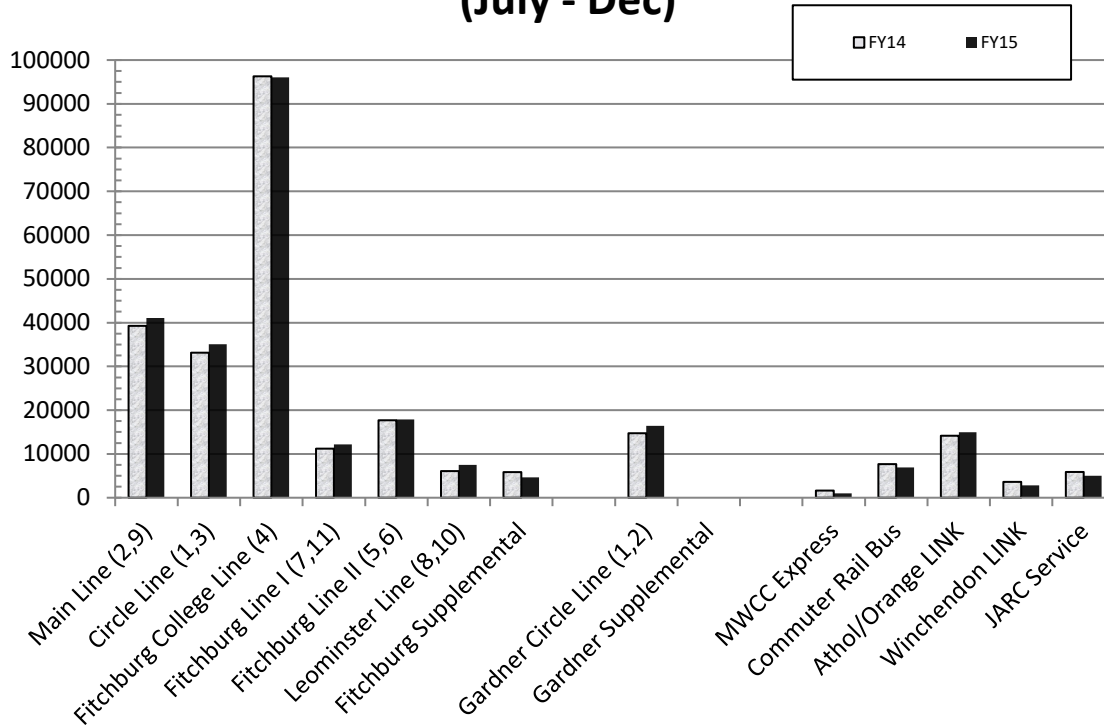
- A. Improvement to the Commuter Rail Corridor between Fitchburg and Boston
- B. Fisher gave a brief update on the Commuter Rail Corridor Improvement Project.
 - B. Wachusett Commuter Rail Extension Project – Station, Parking and Layover Facilities
- B. Fisher informed the Board that the station is not set to be complete until December 2016 now.
 - C. Parking Improvement at Ayer-Rail Trail Facility-Transfer of designated property to MART from its owner
- B. Fisher informed the Board the Town of Ayer, MART, MBTA and Mr. Barre are hoping to come to an agreement on the proposed plan so that the project can proceed forward.

VI. Operational Services and Status Reports

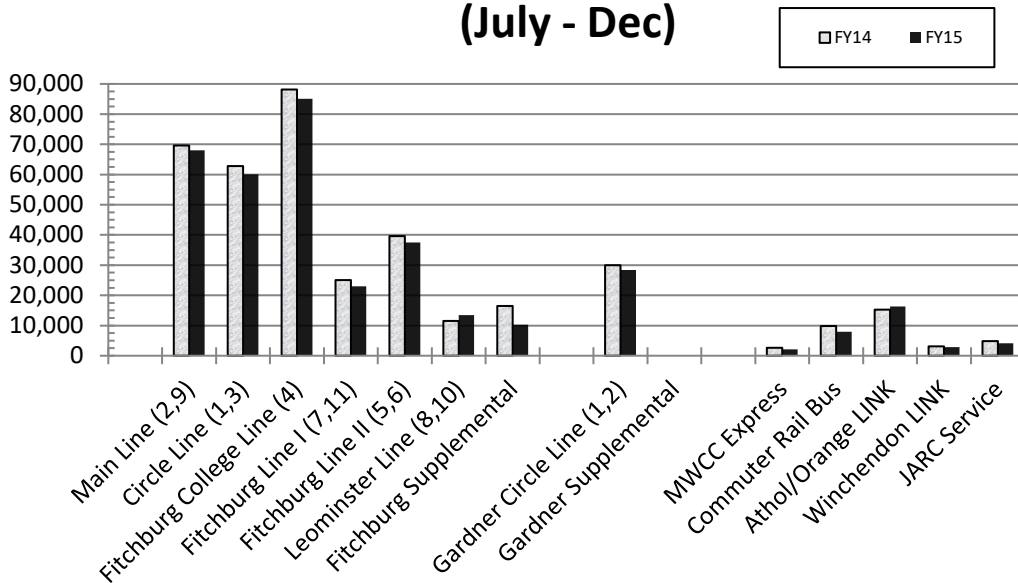
A. MART Operation Status on Revenue and Ridership

1. Fitchburg/Leominster
2. Gardner and Mount Wachusett Community College

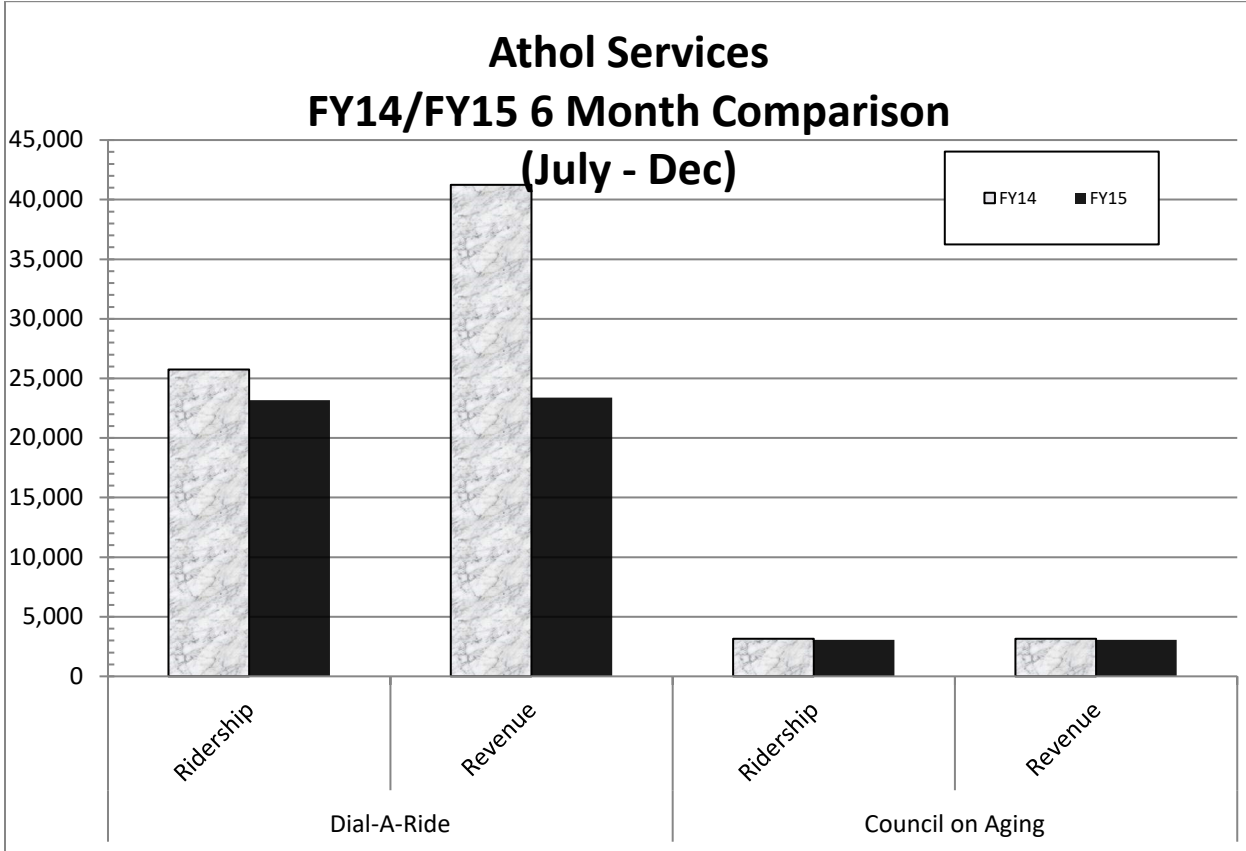
**Fixed Route Revenue
FY14/FY15 6 Month Comparison
(July - Dec)**



**Fixed Route Ridership
FY14/FY15 6 Month Comparison
(July - Dec)**



3. Athol MTG Services/Athol COA



VII. Other Business

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:37 p.m.