

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MART)
MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2024
REMOTELY**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am with a quorum.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: (constituting a quorum)

Michelle Nadeau (representing Mayor Mazzarella)	Leominster
Alex Vera (representing Mayor Squailia)	Fitchburg
Mayor Michael Nicholson	Gardner
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Select Board)	Bolton
Jan Robbins (representing Select Board)	Ashburnham
Carly Antonellis (representing Selectman)	Ayer
Laura Shifrin	Townsend

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rick Ward (representing Select Board)	Winchendon
Melanie Jackson (representing Select Board)	Phillipston
Kelly Dolan (representing Selectmen)	Lancaster
Lisa Marrone (representing Selectmen)	Sterling
Adam Lamontagne (representing Selectman)	Templeton
April Lynn Forest (representing Selectman)	Ashby
Joe Layden (representing Selectmen)	Littleton
Carter Terenzini (representing Selectmen)	Boxborough
Dan Nason (representing Selectman)	Harvard
Nate Boudreau (representing Selectmen)	Hubbardston
Alyson Toole (representing Selectmen)	Stow
Jessica Sizer (representing Selectman)	Barre
Caesar Nuzzolo	Lunenburg
Mitchell Grosky (representing Selectmen)	Athol
Sharon Hardaker	Hardwick
No Representative	Shirley
No Representative	Westminster
No Representative	Royalston

STAFF PRESENT:

Bruno Fisher, Scott Rich, James Sluss, Jessica Lashua, George Kahale, Louis Brown, Gayle Bouchard, and Keary Connors.

Agenda

I. Approval of September 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Board approval required

RESOLUTION- Ken Troup of Bolton moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves the September 24, 2024 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

Roll Call was done.

Michelle Nadeau (representing Mayor Mazzarella)	Yes
Alex Vera (representing Mayor Squailia)	Yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	Yes
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Select Board)	Yes
Jan Robbins (representing Select Board)	Yes
Carly Antonellis (representing Selectman)	not in meeting yet

II. General / Public Comments (Est. 5 minutes)

- James Sluss – CFO Resignation

James Sluss thanks everyone and said it was time to move on after 11 years.

Bruno Fisher discussed the safety review being done because of the recent accidents. MART is doing a full review of the driver training program; safety is the number one priority. Also, bollards are being installed at the Fitchburg Intermodal.

III. Financial Updates (Est. 15 minutes)

A. Finance Committee

1. SFY25 Four Month Financial Update / Full Year Financial Projection
2. SFY26 Financial Forecast – Projected State and Federal Funding

Jessica Lashua informed the Board there will be an increase in state funding and ridership has increased about 30% with the fare free program. There was no deficit and no surplus in FY2024 and the same stability is expected for FY25.

3. FY25 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Recommendation– Board approval required

RESOLUTION- Ken Troup of Bolton moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves a 2% COLA for all MART employees effective January 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Roll Call was done.

Michelle Nadeau (representing Mayor Mazzarella)	Yes
Alex Vera (representing Mayor Squailia)	Yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	Yes
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Select Board)	Yes
Jan Robbins (representing Select Board)	Yes
Carly Antonellis (representing Selectman)	not in meeting yet

IV. Administrative Updates (Est. 15 Minutes)

A. Successful Litigation on North Leominster Civil Suit

Bruno discussed the North Leominster Civil Suit. MART was successful in getting \$1.3 million in legal cost covered.

B. Proposed Revisions to MART By-Laws – Board approval required

Bruno informed the Board that MART updated the By-Laws to include remote meetings and open meeting laws.

RESOLUTION- Ken Troup of Bolton moved that the Advisory Board of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority approves the MART By-Laws as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Roll Call was done.

Michelle Nadeau (representing Mayor Mazzarella)	Yes
Alex Vera (representing Mayor Squailia)	Yes
Mayor Michael Nicholson	Yes
Kenneth F. Troup (representing Select Board)	Yes
Jan Robbins (representing Select Board)	Yes
Carly Antonellis (representing Selectman)	Yes

C. MassDOT Grant Funded Projects

Rural Connector for towns of Ashburnham, Winchendon, and Gardner
Westminster/Gardner Connector for the migrant shelters
Connectivity grant to Alewife and Devens
Shuttle to Emerson Hospital
Ayer, Shirley, and Lancaster Mircotransit grant

V. Operational Updates (Est. 15 Minutes)

A. Operational Updates:

1. Transit Ridership - FY25 Four Month Ride/Rev Data Comparison

- 34% increase in ridership
2. Brokerage Ridership - FY25 Four Month Ride/Rev Data Comparison
MassHealth ridership has flattened out due to recertification of all MassHealth members.
 3. Taxi-Livery / Community Connection Project Updates
Scott Rich informed the Board that ridership for these 2 projects is approximately 1000 riders a month.
We have increased the fare on these services and Lunenburg residents can now go to Emerson Hospital.

VI. Other Business

- A. Items Not Reasonably Anticipated to be Discussed

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.