

Auto Body Labor Rate Advisory Board  
Meeting held on May 29, 2025 at 2 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Michael Powers, Co-Chair  
Stacey Gotham, Co-Chair  
Mark Merante  
Rick Starbard  
Brian Bernard  
Matthew Ciaschini  
Christopher Stark  
Peter Smith  
Samantha Tracy  
Paul Burke  
JC Burton  
Sean Kane  
John Kwoka  
David Brown

**Call to Order:**

Co-Chair Powers called a meeting of the Auto Body Labor Rate Advisory Board, hereby known as the Board, to order with a roll-call vote. All Board members responded present.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Co-Chair Powers asked for a motion to adopt the minutes from the 4-17 Board meeting. Board Member Starbard motioned to adopt the minutes, and Board Member Smith seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote. Co-Chair Powers then asked for a motion to adopt the minutes from the 5-5 meeting. Board Member Stark motioned to adopt the minutes, and Board Member Starbard seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

**Survey Discussion:**

Co-Chair Powers began the Board's discussion on the auto body shop survey by explaining that a working group had met prior to the meeting and drafted a proposed survey. There were two additional questions the working group could not agree on whether to add to this survey or not. Co-Chair Powers said that at the end of the meeting, he would conduct two polls: one to approve the existing proposed survey and one to decide whether to add the extra two questions. Co-Chair Powers then turned the meeting over to Co-Chair Gotham, who asked members of the working group to speak on their proposed survey.

- Board Member Stark said the capability to get insurer level data from other sources and the lack of funding for the Board led to the working group's agreement on its base drafted survey.

- Opinion: Market rate is different from the insurance / contracted rate. The proposed additional two questions should therefore not be added to the survey.
- Suggestion: The base survey could ask for shop's license numbers.
  - Response: The question requesting registered shop number will serve that purpose.
- Suggestion: A question could be added to the base survey asking for the role at the shop of the individual filling out the survey.
- The Board discussed the amount of time it should give shops to fill out and submit the survey.
- Opinion: 30 days might be too tight.
- Suggestion: After the initial survey is emailed to the auto body shops, reminders should be sent to complete the survey.
- Co-Chair Gotham said if the response rate is low, the data might have to be adjusted for bias.
- Opinion: The questions on the proposed base survey are too narrow because they do not get at contract rates.
- Suggestion: The survey should ask auto body shops to break down the percent of their customer base: direct bill, contract work, insurance work.
  - Response: Question 10 deals with parts of that.
  - Opinion: This might lower the response rate.
- Board Member Bernard said there is legal precedent for removing contract rates to see what true market rates are.
- Board Member Kane asked how the survey would be affected if specialty rates like aluminum were not included. He said shops might get confused and average these rates with the generic body rate, which would affect the data.
  - Board Member Starbard responded that the working group had wanted to keep the survey simple, and aluminum repairs are not the norm.
- The Board discussed how rates not requested in the proposed survey would be handled, including aluminum rates.
- Question: does the survey need to capture EVs in the same way it might need to capture aluminum rates?
- The working group that drafted the survey agreed to meet again and add a consideration which would handle the question about aluminum rates.
- The Board agreed to meet again after the working group meets to make edits to the proposed survey.

#### **Next Meeting:**

Virtual, Zoom meeting, June 3, 2025 at 2 p.m.

#### **Motion to Adjourn:**

Board Member Starbard motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Board Member Stark seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll-call vote, and the meeting was adjourned.

#### Documents relied upon for this meeting:

Agenda – May 29, 2025

Document with proposed survey questions