

Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force

Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2021
3:00 - 4:30 pm

Date of meeting: Wednesday, November 3, 2021

Start time: 3:00 pm

End time: 4:35 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (WebEx)

Members participating remotely		Vote I*
1	Elizabeth Denniston (chair) – Executive Office of Health and Human Services	X
2	Tom Cahir – Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (RTA)	-
3	Sean Cristofori – Center of Hope Foundation	-
4	Mindy Domb – MA House of Representatives	X
5	Bruno Fisher – Montachusett RTA	X
6	Millie Hernandez – Individual with lived experience	-
7	Chris Hoeh – Disability Law Center	X
8	Joe Krajewski – Community Connections	X
9	Catherine Mick – Commonwealth Medicine	X
10	Susan Moran – MA Senate	X
11	Mathew Muratore – MA House of Representatives	X
12	Patrick O'Connor – MA Senate	-
13	Jessica Podesva – Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL)	X
14	Stephen T. Salwak – South Shore Community Action Council	X
15	Meredith Slesinger – MassDOT	X
16	Sharna Small Borsellino – Human Services Transportation (HST)	X
17	Mark Sousa – Greater Attleboro-Taunton RTA (GATRA)	-
18	Maura Sullivan – The Arc of Massachusetts (<i>designee of Leo Sarkissian</i>)	X

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Undersecretary Denniston called the meeting of the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force to order at 3:05 pm. She welcomed members and noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Undersecretary Denniston delivered welcoming remarks to the Task Force, highlighting the importance of the transportation services administered by the Human Service Transportation (HST) office for consumers, particularly during the COVID pandemic. She explained that the HST reprocurement, which took effect in July 2021, had the goals of safety, improved driver and vehicle safety standards, expanded and improved quality assurance, better access to booking for our consumers, and better and more timely complaint resolution.

Task Force members briefly introduced themselves and their respective affiliations.

Lauren Cleary, Associate General Counsel for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, provided an overview of the Open Meeting Law. She explained the limitations related to Task Force members' communications outside of a formal Task Force meeting on matters which might pertain to the Task Force's work. She emphasized the importance of transparency and explained that documents and minutes from the Task Force's meetings are part of the public record.

David Giannotti, Public Education and Communications Division Chief within the State Ethics Commission, provided the Task Force with a brief overview of the state's conflict of interest and ethics regulations. He explained that members of the Task Force are considered special state employees and are required to complete conflict of interest trainings. He detailed the restrictions placed on members by the nature of their service on the Task Force and stressed that members should view the State Ethics Commission as a resource and should not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns related to potential conflicts of interest and any required disclosures.

Undersecretary Denniston read through the Task Force's charge, which include exploring ways to better collaborate, improve service, and achieve operational and cost efficiencies through the brokerage system and provide the highest quality outcomes for consumers utilizing these services in the Commonwealth. She noted that the Task Force will submit a report to the Legislature by December 2022, which will detail recommendations and guidelines for the HST office to develop non-emergency human service transportation broker services.

Sharna Small Borsellino, Human Services Transportation (HST) Director, provided an overview of HST services in the Commonwealth, which includes the management of a statewide transportation brokerage network for consumers and the provision of technical assistance and outreach strategies for transportation-disadvantaged Massachusetts residents. She highlighted changes to services that were implemented as a result of the new broker contract, which reduced the number of HST service areas from nine to three and the number of brokers from six to two. She noted that in response to consumer feedback, new requirements were added related to the complaint resolution process, reduced call wait times, improved on-time performance and reliability through the use of GPS systems, and increased Quality & Assurance team field visits to ensure driver and vehicle safety standards are met. For additional details, refer to Director Small Borsellino's presentation posted to the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

In response to questions from Task Force members, Undersecretary Denniston and Director Small Borsellino noted that additional details on the eligibility process and administrative costs and broker fees would be provided at the Task Force's next meeting in early 2022.

Undersecretary Denniston noted that a Mass.gov webpage and mailbox have been created for the public to submit general comments and questions for the Task Force. She explained that if members have any questions or additional requests for data, they should be submitted to her or through the Task Force mailbox.

Undersecretary Denniston noted that the next Task Force meeting will be scheduled for early 2022, with the Task Force's final report submitted to the Legislature on December 1st, 2022.

Vote to adjourn:

Undersecretary Denniston requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fisher introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Mick and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.