

Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force

Meeting Minutes

June 28, 2022

10:00 - 11:30 am

Date of meeting: Tuesday, June 28, 2022

Start time: 10:08 am

End time: 11:38 am

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

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)	X
3	Sean Cristofori – Center of Hope Foundation	X
4	Mindy Domb – Massachusetts House of Representatives	X
5	Bruno Fisher – Montachusett RTA (MART)	X
6	Frank Gay – Greater Attleboro-Taunton RTA (GATRA)	X
7	Millie Hernandez – Individual with lived experience	X
8	Chris Hoeh – Disability Law Center	X
9	Joe Krajewski – Community Connections	-
10	Catherine Mick – Commonwealth Medicine	-
11	Tara Wilson – Massachusetts Senate (<i>designee of Susan Moran</i>)	X
12	Mathew Muratore – Massachusetts House of Representatives	X
13	Patrick O'Connor – Massachusetts Senate	-
14	Jessica Podesva – Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL)	X
15	Stephen Salwak – South Shore Community Action Council	X
16	Leo Sarkissian – The Arc of Massachusetts	X
17	Meredith Slesinger – MassDOT	A
18	Sharna Small Borsellino – Human Services Transportation (HST)	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 10:08 am. She welcomed members and noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Vote to approve minutes from the 4/28/2022 meeting: Undersecretary Denniston requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Task Force’s previous meeting on April 28, 2022. Representative Muratore introduced the motion, which was seconded by Director Sarkissian and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Undersecretary Denniston shared that EOHHS was pleased with turnout at the May 16 and 18 public listening sessions and that she and Director Small Borsellino have been reviewing the findings and identifying ways to address the issues that consumers and members reported. Undersecretary Denniston also noted that the HST Office has followed up on the individual complaints and incidents raised during the listening sessions, including conducting immediate inspections of the vendors referenced by members.

In response to a request from Director Sarkissian at the April 28 Task Force meeting, Undersecretary Denniston presented an overview of HST complaints data. She noted that HST is prioritizing the most common issues, such as on-time performance, as well as safety concerns, such as wheelchair securement. Director Small Borsellino presented the steps HST is taking to address these issues, such as increasing driver training requirements and implementing enforcement mechanisms to ensure adoption of GPS systems for real-time on-time performance tracking. Staff from MART and GATRA shared that they are working with their vendors and drivers to assist them in adopting the technology. For additional details, refer to the presentation on the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force’s [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

In response to questions from Task Force members about the timeline for implementing the GPS technology, Director Small Borsellino explained that HST has been meeting with the Brokers on a bi-weekly basis to review adoption rates and MART is holding weekly office hours to assist vendors and drivers. She noted that the HST Office is also developing a corrective action plan to hold Brokers accountable.

In response to the public listening sessions, Task Force members shared the following recommendations:

- Proactively encourage consumers to submit complaints (for example, through a “we want to hear from you” pamphlet), make the complaint system less onerous for consumers, and improve communication back to consumers about complaint resolution.
- Have inspectors sit in a wheelchair and ask drivers to secure them during inspections.
- Explore options for surprise or unannounced inspections.
- Share information about how much vendors and drivers are paid to determine whether there is a structural issue beyond oversight.
- Connect with The RIDE to see if they have successful strategies or protocols that HST could adopt.
- Review call center training and improve the complaints processing and disability sensitivity modules.
- Investigate whether the low-cost vendor companies are underpaying drivers.

Task Force members requested the following materials:

- A copy of the recordings of the public listening sessions
- A transcript of the May 16 public listening session
- Information about Broker call center staff trainings
- HST contract and transportation regulations

In response to a question from a Task Force member, Director Small Borsellino noted that many of the concerns raised in the listening sessions predate the new contract, which was implemented on July 1, 2021; some individuals specifically noted that their issue occurred before this date. Director Small Borsellino said that the consolidation from six Brokers to two Brokers would facilitate outreach to consumers. She also emphasized that whether an issue is a new concern or a legacy concern, the HST Office takes all concerns seriously and works to address them.

Vote to adjourn:

Undersecretary Denniston requested a motion to adjourn. Administrator Fisher introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hoeh and approved by a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 am.