

TPAG Meeting Minutes
July 30th, 2025

Attendees: Brian Binnall; Mary Haroyan; Nona Haroyan; Sharon Strzalkowski; Carolyn Foley (PBSTM); Mike Kennedy; Mark Binnall; Constance Mellis (CMRPC)

Discussion/Approval of May Minutes

Ms. Strzalkowski moved to approve the minutes of the May meeting, this was seconded by Ms. Mary Haroyan. All attendees voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Paratransit Report

Carolyn Foley from PBTSM read the statistics and figures from June FY25 as follows.

- Total Application Trips Requested: 77
- Total Trips Requested: 14,422
- Capacity denials: 0
- Cancellations: 3,255 (22.5% of scheduled trips)
- No Shows: 376 (2.6% of scheduled trips)
- Missed Trips: 2
- Trips Completed: 10,791
- Companions: 444
- PCA(s): 915
- Elder Shopper: 203

New Statewide Paratransit Eligibility Application

Starting July 1st, 2025, all Massachusetts RTAs will be using the same paratransit eligibility application. The application and instructions are available on the WRTA website and can be mailed if requested. Carolyn Foley (PBTSM) explained that paratransit applicants are no longer *required* to come in person to fill out the application. They may apply online or request the application by mail or come in person.

Follow up Items

Review of process for expedited ADA Paratransit Eligibility application.

Concerns about the new Yellow Cab app which is not working properly for some users, especially related to text messages.

Terms of the rider and disability representatives for RTA advisory boards; no updates

Nomination of TPAG Officers

The elections will be held in October, and nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair and two Executive Board members are now open

The attendees nominated Mike Kennedy for the executive board, he accepted.

Nancy Garr-Colzi was also nominated for Exec Board, she will be contacted to see if she accepts. [Subsequent to the meeting, Ms Garr-Colzie was contacted and accepted the nomination.]

Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey

A TPAG member reports that 597 surveys were completed. WRTA will be reaching out to the individuals who received the survey but who have not yet completed it.

WRTA Customer Service Report

In June there were 64 complaint cases closed – 27% related to paratransit

- 5 referenced driver's behavior
- 2 referenced driver being early/late
- 8 classified as 'other'

Shout out to paratransit driver Nick who offers exceptional service.

TPAG changes in 2026

Constance Mellis (CMRPC) addressed the group; there will be changes coming in 2026 to the nature or operation of the advisory group. Currently, CMRPC is under contract to WRTA to staff TPAG and provide administrative services. When TPAG began it was one of the few outlets for paratransit riders to engage directly with the WRTA and make their voices heard. Today, there are many groups who do this including Worcester's Department of Transportation and Mobility, Riders Action Council, Transportation Advocacy Coalition, transportation advocacy being done at the Center for Living and Working, among others. Additionally, there is a Disability Rep and a Rider Rep on the WRTA Advisory Board who hold voting positions. Because of this, TPAG will see some changes in the coming year. The specific changes are unknown as of now. Attendees acknowledged the decreasing participation in the group. Attendees also expressed interest in a re-organization or re-purposing of the group, perhaps working within the other organizations and groups advocating for the same populations. Changes are expected to take place beginning Jan 2026.

Briefs of Related meetings

- Transportation Advocacy Coalition: Did not meet in July
- WRTA Advisory Board: Did not meet in July

WRTA Advisory Board Representatives

Rider Representative (currently filled through Oct 2025)

Disability Representative (currently filled in through Jan 2026)

The group was advised to begin discussions on who might be nominated for these positions which are going to be open soon. Mr. Kennedy, who is the current disability

representative on the WRTA advisory board, suggested that more disability and rider representatives could be added to the WRTA advisory board. He expressed concern about having one person be the sole voice for an entire community on the advisory board.

The meeting was adjourned after 45 Minutes.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 24th, 1:00-2:30pm.