

Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Board Meeting
December 3, 2025
9:30am

Attendance: Gloucester Mayor Greg Verga, Rockport Mitch Vieira, Ipswich Thomas Younger, Essex Gil Frieden, Hamilton Joe Domelowicz, Manchester Tony Barletta, Jay Smiledge, Liz O'Connor, Felicia Webb, Jen LaFlam, Jackie LaFlam

Called to order by Mayor Verga at 9:30am

Approval of Minutes

Motion: I move that the CATA Advisory Board approve the minutes from the February 21, 2025 Advisory Board meeting.

Moved Tony Barletta
Seconded Mitch Vieira
All In Favor

Approval of Minutes

Motion: I move that the CATA Advisory Board approve the minutes from the May 30, 2025 Advisory Board meeting.

Moved Mitch Vieira
Seconded Tony Barletta
All in Favor

Fare Free Summary

Felicia explained there was an increase in ridership for fixed route. ADA and Dial a Ride had no increase. There was a general discussion about increasing awareness of Senior Dial A Ride services in all CATA Communities. CATA On Demand is not included in the fare free. There was a change in MGL 161(b) with the FY26 budget that mandates that Fixed Route and ADA to be fare free, but Dial a Ride needs to be approved by the board to move forward with fare free. Then all CATA's services, except On Demand, will be fare free.

Senior Dial-a-Ride Fare Free

Motion: I move that the CATA Advisory Board approve fare reductions be implemented on CATA's senior dial-a-ride services starting January 1, 2026 and continuing as long as regular fixed route and complementary ADA paratransit services are mandated to be fare free in MGL 161b and adequate funds are appropriated by the Commonwealth to support the fare free service.

Moved by Mitch Vieira
Seconded Joe Domelowicz
All in Favor

Public Transit Agency Safety Plan

Jennifer explained that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires CATA to develop a Public Transportation Safety Plan and have it updated annually. She mentioned that Manchester has been added to our communities to make it 6 CATA communities. CATA uses all safety practices and policies from the existing plan and supports a collaborative approach to managing all safety concerns. The plan has been approved by the Safety Committee. This annual update does need to be approved by CATA's Advisory Board.

Motion: I move that the CATA Advisory Board approve the Public Transit Agency Safety Plan including the performance measures and targets, dated December 2025 and as presented December 3, 2025.

Moved by Joe Domelowicz
Seconded Thomas Younger
All in Favor

CATA Updates

Felicia briefly mentioned the ridership figures and referenced the previous discussion on the ridership; fixed route is up but Senior Dial a Ride and ADA is not.

Felicia also went over the FY26 YTD Budget Summary Q1, it is modeled after the annual budget approved by the Advisory Board. Tony asked about the timing of the State Contract Assistance payments and Felicia responded that there are a couple large payments in August and the fall. Tony also asked about the Local Assessment number looking a little lower than budgeted. Felicia explained that the Local Assessments for the RTAs are funded two years in arrears, so service provided in FY26 is not funded through the assessment process until FY28, which also plays into the borrowing CATA does every year.

Jay expressed concern about wait times for ADA customers and how the ADA and DAR was included with the On Demand. Felicia is aware of the issue and we're working to try and adjust the parameters in the Spare software. Software can be a challenge because when one issue is addressed, the fix could end up creating other issues. ADA is the priority, then the Dial-a-Ride customers. On Demand trips do get move around because those trips are accommodated between the ADA and DAR trips.

Gil mentioned busing school kids from Manchester to Essex. Felicia said if they want that we can talk about it in the future.

Motioned to adjourn by Mayor Verga at 9:50am
Moved by Gil Frieden
Seconded Joe Domelowicz
All in favor

Meeting Material

2025.12.03 CATA Advisory Board Meeting Agenda
February 21, 2025 minutes
May 30, 2025 Minutes
December 3, 2025 Board Packet
December 2025 Public Transit Agency Safety Plan