

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, MAY 23, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) was held on Friday, May 23, 2025, at PRT's Administrative Offices, 345 Sixth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15222-2527, pursuant to due public notice given as required by law.

The following Board members were in attendance in person: Jennifer Liptak, Chair, Joseph Totten, Tia McClenney, Tom Burgunder, Emma Shoucair and Bobbie Fan. The following members participated via TEAMS: Senator Lindsey Williams, Rep. Aerion Abney and Stephanie Turman. The Board Solicitor was represented in person by Sandy Garfinkel.

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order.

A recommendation was made for approval of the minutes of the April 25, 2025 Regular Meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

The Chair called on Pittsburgh Regional Transit CEO Katharine Kelleman for a report.

CEO Kelleman asked for a moment of silence for the following retirees, all former operators, who passed away since we last met. They were John Atkins, Edward Courtney Jr., James Dunbar, James Esposito, and Lawrence Jackson.

Next, CEO Kelleman stated that big changes are coming to PRT's system starting June 22, especially downtown. "Whether you're a regular rider or just an occasional one, you'll likely notice some things are different. And that's by design. These changes are part of our commitment to keep people moving, improve reliability, and prepare for a more efficient transit future with the new PRTX University Line Bus Rapid Transit."

"Right now, crews are hard at work painting red bus-only lanes through the heart of downtown. You'll also see five brand-new PRTX stations taking shape at key locations on Ross Street, William Penn, Market Square, Wood Street and Steel Plaza. These stations will become the backbone of the new University Line BRT service."

CEO Kelleman noted that nearly 30 routes are being adjusted as part of these changes, some due to BRT construction, others to improve efficiency system-wide. Many buses that serve downtown, especially the 61s, 71s, and several P routes, will now serve the new PRTX stations and use the newly created red lanes.

"We're shifting stop locations, adjusting schedules, and updating routing to better match where people live, work, and travel. And this summer we'll also be installing six new bus stop platforms to provide more room to wait for buses."

CEO Kelleman said that some of this may take a little getting used to but all of it is designed to improve the experience for riders by reducing wait times and keeping buses moving and on schedule. "We know that all this work comes with some growing pains. Noting that it's going to take a lot of enforcement to keep those lanes clear and make this project work the way it's supposed to. But this is

our chance to build a more connected system that serves more people, more reliably, every single day. So, we ask for your patience now for the promise of a better ride ahead.”

“Beyond those changes, we are approaching a turning point for public transit in Pittsburgh and beyond. Not just about budgets or buses, but about who we want to be as a region and what we’re willing to do to get there.”

“Public transit isn’t just about getting from one place to another. It’s about building a Pittsburgh that’s more connected, more inclusive, and ready to grow. As you know that future is in the balance.”

“We know what needs to be done. We have the plans. We’ve heard the voices. We’ve done the work. The question now is whether we will choose to invest, and when done right -- when it’s frequent, reliable, accessible, and designed with community in mind -- transit becomes a reason to stay, a reason to invest, a reason to build a life here.”

“Pittsburgh has been working for decades to reverse decline and spark growth in vibrancy, sustainability, and inclusion. We’ve been trying to write a new chapter. And we’ve made progress. We have world-class hospitals; we have some of the best universities in the world; we have a cultural scene that punches above its weight; we have championship sports, historic neighborhoods, and a cost of living that still outperforms most major metro areas. We have rivers and bridges and green hills and a cityscape that inspires. But we also have challenges. We’ve seen population stagnation even as our peer regions have grown.”

“We have the talent and the ambition, but if we want to grow then we need to treat transit as the essential infrastructure that it is. At PRT, we’re doing everything we can to protect and strengthen the service that more than 130,000 people rely on every weekday. We’re stretching every dollar, we’re collaborating with community partners, and we’re making sure our friends in Harrisburg know why it’s so important. But we’re doing all of this against the backdrop of a looming funding crisis.”

CEO Kelleman said that for years, PRT has relied on state funding that hasn’t been keeping up with the cost of doing business. “And unless a sustainable replacement is found we will see painful service reductions and fare increases. We could lose critical coverage at the exact moment when more people need us to get where they need to go.”

“A preliminary budget is on the table. The conversations are underway. And the choices made in the coming weeks and months will determine whether we move forward or fall behind. We’re encouraged by the governor’s proposal and we’re grateful to the leaders who have made transit part of the discussion. We’re proud of the coalition that’s come together to advocate for smart, sustained investment. But CEO Kelleman wanted to be clear that even if the Governor’s proposed increase goes forward, it won’t be enough to avoid devastating cuts. We need a long-term solution that provides predictable, sustainable support for the system our region depends on.”

Ms. Kelleman concluded her remarks by saying, “Let’s choose to be a region that invests in growth, not just hopes for it. Because with the right tools, Pittsburgh can be something even more special than it already is.”

That concluded the report of the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair called on Member Tia McClenney, Chair of the Performance Oversight Committee for a report.

Member McClenney reported that the Performance Oversight Committee met last week and had one resolution for the Board's consideration.

It was reported that the Committee reviewed eight procurement items and determined the bids to be in accordance with PRT's procurement policies and procedures and the prices to be fair and reasonable. The Performance Oversight Committee recommended authorizing the award of bids listed in the resolution for the total amount of \$3,681,704.96.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Chair McClenney respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

That concluded the report of the Performance Oversight Committee.

The Chair called on Member Emma Shoucair for the report of the Finance Committee.

Member Shoucair reported that the Finance Committee met on Thursday, May 15, 2025. At the meeting, there was a review of the status quo budget assumptions, the preliminary operating budget, and the April financial results. It was reported that there was also a review of the proposed fare increase of \$.25 cents to the current base fare (from \$2.75 to \$3.00). This increase will result in about a nine percent increase for all fare products.

The FY 2026 Preliminary Operating Budget totals \$538,872,695 which is a .64 percent decrease versus the FY 2025 Operating Budget. This decrease is a result of a planned service reduction in February of 2026 to ensure PRT's sustainability for the next 10 years is under current funding levels.

It was reported that Passenger Revenues in the current fiscal year are steady at FY 2024 rates. Preliminarily, the agency projects the proposed service reduction and fare increase for FY 2026 will have a negative impact of a 20 percent reduction on revenue with a reduction of six percent compared to FY 2024 Passenger Revenues.

The Preliminary FY 2026 Operating Budget Subsidy stakeholder totals \$291.4 million from the Commonwealth, \$40.7 million from Allegheny County and \$3 million from the Regional Asset District. There is no increase in budgeted Commonwealth funding versus FY 2025 levels. Member Shoucair noted that if legislation is passed to increase Commonwealth funding for transit after PRT's final budget is approved, PRT will amend the budget.

The Preliminary Operating Budget includes a reduction of 38 percent of wage and salary costs as well as reductions in operating expenses due to the reduced service. There is also an assumed increase in unemployment compensation costs in the amount of \$25.4 million during FY 2026. The preliminary budget assumes an increase in pension expense after a one-year reduction during FY 2025 related to satisfying increased contributions to the plan due to 2008 Stock Market losses. The preliminary budget also includes health benefit increases due to contractual increases with providers and diesel fuel expense increases due to market volatility.

It was also reported that the current 10-year financial plan indicates that PRT's deferred reserves balance will reach the minimum reasonable amount of three-months operating costs by FY 2027 given the reviewed assumptions.

Member Shoucair then reported that the preliminary FY 2026 Capital Budget is currently set at \$189,282,037 which is an increase of 16.9 percent from the FY 2025 Capital Budget. The increase is due to budgeting dollars previously saved for bus purchases and increases of some federal and state funding. The Preliminary FY 2026 Capital Budget primarily consists of debt service, revenue vehicle purchases, information technology and transit enhancements, and funding for various Fixed Guideway and Facility Improvement programs.

Member Shoucair then gave a review of the April financial results that were presented at last week's meeting.

It was reported that Total Operating Income for the month of April was under budget by \$400,000 due to lower Passenger Revenue and ACCESS. Total Expenses for the month of April were below budget by \$5.3 million due to every expense category being under budget.

Total Operating Income is \$1.2 million higher than last fiscal year through April due to higher Passenger Revenue and Interest Income. Total Expenses through April are \$8.4 million higher than last fiscal year due to higher expenses in every category except ACCESS.

Total Subsidy is \$96.1 million lower than last fiscal year due to federal stimulus funding having been fully expended at the beginning of this fiscal year.

Finally, it was reported that PRT ended the month of April with \$408.4 million in cash reserves.

That concluded the report of the Finance Committee

The Chair called on Member Bobbie Fan, for the report of the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee.

Member Fan reported that the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee met last week and had a few items for the Board.

First, staff presented an update on the PRTX University Line project. It was reported that Phase I, project construction on the downtown loop, will be completed this summer. One of the most visible and impactful changes will be the red bus lanes that will be completed in phases beginning May 19 and continuing into June. Work is weather-dependent, and traffic patterns will be adjusted for each phase. In addition, five PRTX stations with upgraded amenities are being installed downtown, with three currently in progress.

The University Line project will impact many other bus routes downtown in late June. Six modular curb extensions which serve as bus stop platforms will be installed. These alternatives to permanent concrete curb extensions will provide more space for waiting riders at larger volume bus stops or in areas with small sidewalks. There will also be some changes to signs and pavement markings to support these platforms and bus-turning movements.

Next it was reported that Phase II of construction, Uptown and Oakland, has been underway since January. The contraflow bus lane will likely be removed sometime in 2026 as bus traffic shifts all outbound movements to Forbes Ave.

The University Line Project has a budget of \$291 million, with PRT contributing 24% of the total cost. Local and State spending of \$112.4 million secured \$178.6 million in Federal grants that would have gone to another city had PRT not applied. The routes serving the project directly provide about 17,000 daily rides, or about 1 of every 6 PRT bus riders.

Next at the meeting staff presented an update on the June service changes.

In summary, many of the service changes will be focused on the downtown area as the University Line begins to take shape. Four PRTX routes, the 61A, B, C and 71B, will begin to follow their permanent University Line routing downtown. Stop changes will occur for 42 routes and downtown routing changes will occur for another 20 routes. Trip adjustments, trip time adjustments, run time changes and frequency changes will also occur. Specific route details will be made available on the PRT website and signage will be posted at impacted bus stations and stops.

Next at the meeting, Member Fan presented a resolution for PRT to enter into the Manchester TRID Cooperation Agreement.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority, along with the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pittsburgh Public Schools, and PRT, undertook a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) planning study to investigate the usefulness of developing a TRID to support development of public infrastructure and transportation for the Manchester-Chateau neighborhood of the City of Pittsburgh (the "MC TRID").

The MC TRID Phase I Implementation Plan was then developed by URA to identify projects to be funded through the incremental tax brought by the creation of the TRID.

PRT has two projects identified to be funded with \$1.5 million of the tax increment. They are the Allegheny Station Area Plan; and a Rapid Transit Study of the corridor north of the station along the Route 65 corridor.

PRT must enter into a Cooperation Agreement to formalize the adoption of the TRID plan along with the URA and three taxing bodies.

On behalf of the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee, Member Fan respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

That concluded the report of the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee.

The Chair called on Member Tom Burgunder, Chair of the Technology Committee for a report.

Member Burgunder reported that the Technology Committee met on May 15, 2025 and had two resolutions for the Board's consideration.

The Committee first reviewed two bids. The items presented were for procurement of Copier Management Services and Dell Laptops.

The Committee determined the bids to be in accordance with PRT's procurement policies and procedures, and the prices to be fair and reasonable.

The Technology Committee recommended that the Board approve the award of the items as listed in the resolution for the total amount of \$397,184.80

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Chair Burgunder respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

The second resolution presented was for an extension of two existing agreements with Scheidt & Bachmann, USA for fare system services. These include both the Farebox Warranty Agreement and the Non-Farebox Equipment and Software Maintenance Services Agreement. Both Agreements are being recommended for one-year extensions and amendments for increasing the total not-to-exceed amounts by \$1,028,079.00 and \$2,046,380.68, respectively. The Committee concluded that these services are needed and that the prices are fair and reasonable, and respectfully recommends that the Board vote in favor of the resolution to authorize these amendments.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Chair Burgunder respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

That concluded the report of the Technology Committee.

Under new business Chair Liptak reported that the Board would hold a special election of Board officers. "This special election is being held to fill officer positions due to the departure of certain former officers from the PRT Board. These officer positions include Vice Chair and Secretary. These positions will be filled for the unexpired terms of the officers who previously held those positions, which is the remainder of calendar year 2025."

Chair Liptak advised that she continues to serve as Board Chair and Member Ali Doyle continues to serve as Treasurer, pursuant to their election to those positions at the Board's Annual Meeting in January 2025.

The Chair then called on Member Turman, Chair of the Committee, for a report of the Nominating Committee.

Member Turman first thanked fellow Committee members, Ali Doyle and Emma Shoucair, for their assistance and guidance. She then reported that the slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee for this special election was Member Emma Shoucair as Vice Chair and Joseph Totten as Secretary.

Chair Liptak thanked Member Turman for the report and asked if there were any other nominations for officers from the Board.

Hearing none, a motion was made to adopt the slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee for the special election, it was seconded and unanimously approved.

Chair Liptak thanked the Nominating Committee and congratulated and thanked Members Shoucair and Totten for agreeing to take on these important roles of Vice Chair and Secretary.

Next up under New Business, the Chair announced Senator Lindsay Williams has accepted her request to serve as the Chair of the Financial Audit Committee. That chairmanship was previously held by former Senator Brewster. Chair Liptak thanked Senator Williams for graciously accepting that position and for her willingness to do so.

Next on the agenda was public comment. The first individual on the public comment list was John Oakes, president of Council for the Municipality of Bethel Park.

Mr. Oakes read a letter on behalf of Council and represents the constituents and all residents of Bethel Park and everyone that uses public transit. The letter went as follows:

"The elimination of the Silver Line and reductions to the Red Line will have a profound negative impact not only in Bethel Park but also in the surrounding South Hills communities.

Having served our residents and businesses for over 100 years, the Silver Line, known by various names over the years, has a long history in Bethel Park and during that time, both Pittsburgh and Bethel Park have benefited from this connection, promoting economic development and residential growth.

By cutting service to this line, you will be continuing a policy of disinvestment in the Pittsburgh suburbs, which has contributed to and will further inhibit regional growth and connectivity. Not only will service cuts reduce future growth in the South Hills, but it will further contribute to the increasing office vacancies within Downtown Pittsburgh by eliminating connections for workers and discouraging businesses from operating there.

For many, it would mean losing their sole means of commuting to work.

Bethel Park and other communities along the Silver Line are actively promoting development projects designed to connect residents to employment opportunities, essential services, and entertainment. Currently, Bethel Park is updating its zoning laws to incorporate Transit Oriented Development zones near stations on both the Silver and the Red Lines. However, removing the Silver Line would undermine these efforts by eliminating the foundation for future developments tied to these zones.

The decision would also jeopardize several planned projects, including the US Film Square development located within walking distance of the Hillcrest Station in Bethel Park. This project includes apartments and retail space, both of which benefit from the accessibility provided by the Silver Line.

Similarly, South Park Township has a major housing development, Summit Station, that offers direct access to the library station on the Silver Line. Many new residents chose this development precisely because of its proximity to public transportation. Eliminating the Silver Line would directly impact these residents as well as the viability of these development initiatives.

The Red Line of Vital Transportation Service is also under consideration for significant reductions in the PRT proposal. This line provides essential connections to the South Hills Village Mall, grocery stores and shopping districts in Bethel Park while offering direct access for residents to work opportunities and entertainment in Downtown Pittsburgh. Reducing service would not only limit access to these businesses affecting their revenue, but would also hinder residents' ability to reach necessities, services and employment.

Furthermore, while PRT is proposing upgrades to Bethel Village Station to improve accessibility, cutting service to this station would diminish and value the value and impact of such investments.

We urge PRT to secure the necessary funding and allocate it to maintain the Silver Line operations and eliminate any proposed Red Line service reductions.

Doing so will uphold the commitment PRT made to our region when it assumed control of the various private transit carriers previously operated these lines.

Please let us know how Bethel Park can contribute to helping you achieve this goal.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Very respectfully and sincerely, the Municipality of Bethel Park Municipal Council."

The next speaker was Keith Paylo from Point Park University. Mr. Paylo introduced his esteemed colleagues, Marlon Collingwood, who's the Vice President of Enrollment Management at Point Park University and Associate Vice President and Chief of Police.

Mr. Paylo's remarks were made on behalf of Point Park University, the Point Park University Board of Trustees, and the safety of the University of nearly 5000 students, faculty and staff to express our concern related to the PRT's proposed relocation of its Wood St., Forbes and Fifth Avenue bus stop as part of the NexTransit project. The bus stop is currently located at PNC Plaza location built to house a major bus stop with large sidewalks and pedestrian seating. The bus stop is one of downtown's busiest with around 1200 riders on and off daily.

PRT's current plan will move the bus stop one block south to an area outside the entrance to our University Center. With small sidewalks and no infrastructure for public transportation, the University Center complex serves as a hub on Point Park's campus. It houses the University Library and connects to the Pittsburgh Playhouse. Over 800 people use the University Center entrance on Wood Street each day.

In addition to the University Center, the high traffic storefronts in the area include a bank, hair salon, fitness studio, and two convenience stores. The area is already crowded and the addition of 1200 PRT riders will create an unsustainably congested and unsafe environment.

PRT acknowledges this issue and as a result, intends to remove the parking lane on Wood Street to accommodate the installation of a bump out. However, this plan will cause more harm to the area.

The bump out will add sidewalk space but will also restrict traffic by removing the Wood Street parking lane. Delivery drivers and emergency personnel will park in the traffic lane, creating an

unsafe environment where traffic will have to enter an oncoming bus lane to navigate around parked vehicles. If implemented, PRT's plan will harm the University and the small businesses that line one of Downtown Pittsburgh's most vibrant blocks.

Increased congestion will reduce by visibility, creating opportunities for potential security issues like loitering, theft, or other disruptive activities. These security concerns will demand more University police resources, limiting the university's ability to maintain security over the rest of its campus. Most importantly, however, the issues created by the relocation of the bus stop will create a perception of reduced campus safety.

Year in and year our students list safety as their number one concern about downtown life in downtown. The relocation of the bus stop will make it more difficult to recruit students and therefore jeopardize the financial stability of the University. This relocation could also jeopardize the University's current initiative to increase enrollment by over 1000 students over the next few years, which will have a negative impact on the revitalization of downtown.

Mr. Paylo concluded his remarks by urging PRT to refrain from its planned relocation of the Wood Street, Forbes and Fifth Avenue bus stop. The University is happy to consult with PRT on viable alternatives that would not jeopardize University activities.

The final speaker was Fonda Duse. Ms. Duse addressed the Board regarding negative expenses due to incapable staff at PRT. Ms. Duse urged the Board to address leaks in the organization as it pertains to unemployment compensation.

The Chair announced the next Regular meeting of the Board will be June 27, 2025.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.