

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) was held on Friday, March 28, 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, Tia McClenney, Bobbie Fan, Joseph Totten, Emma Shoucair, Tom Burgunder, Lori Mizgorski, Rep. Aerion Abney and Senator Lindsey Williams. The following members participated via TEAMS: Ali Doyle. 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 February 28, 2025 Regular Meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and passed with two abstentions from new members Senator Williams and Representative Abney.

The Chair announced that we will be having public comment prior to the Board taking any action on a few items this morning.

To see the below summarized testimony in full, please visit PRT's website at www.rideprt.org or youtube.

The first speaker was Ross Nicotero, President and Business Agent of ATU, Local 85 and the Chairman of the ATU Legislative Conference Board throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Mr. Nicotero stated that while he is proud and humbled to represent the 2200 people that provide this service every day in Allegheny County, he is also in charge of overseeing over the 18 ATU properties throughout the commonwealth.

Mr. Nicotero's comments focused on two basic points. One, the current funding crisis and concerns. And two, what happens if we do not achieve our goals? "You're going to hear from many individuals today regarding the fiscal crisis facing transit systems across the whole Commonwealth, including ours here at PRT. And contrary to what many believe, this is not just about transit in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, but this affects Scranton, Erie, Wilkes Barre, Westmoreland County as well."

Mr. Nicotero wanted everyone to hear that Local 85 and the ATU Conference Board wholeheartedly endorsed Governor Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Davis's efforts to fund mass transit throughout the Commonwealth. With his leadership team, they've made numerous trips to Harrisburg and plan to leave Monday morning to meet with some of our legislators that sit on your board now or previously served on PRT's Board.

Mr. Nicotero mentioned that one of the things that's unique is that Lieutenant Governor Davis's father is driving the Route 64 as we speak. "So, we are proud to once have a board member here at PRT having a direct connection with Lieutenant Davis and with Governor Shapiro."

He concluded his remarks by saying "Our goal is dedicated funding to sustain mass transit. As a leader of hard-working men and women who provide the essential services to everybody in Allegheny County daily, we stand ready and committed to make this happen."

The next speaker was Chris Sandvig, Founder and Executive Director of Mobilify Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Mr. Sandvig stated that the severity of PRT's cuts is terrifying. "Sustainable long-term investment in public transit is essential to ensure our region remains accessible and equitable for all, to say nothing of being economically viable. This proposal isn't just another roadblock to our region's economic recovery. As you heard before, smaller buses and paratransit systems statewide, including our ACCESS, face similar fates, or worse."

Mr. Sandvig noted that he co-led a coalition whose fight culminated in Act 89, "the landmark legislation that saved PA Transit and our roads and bridges. We all knew that the law had a 10-year shelf life. It's not like we didn't warn folks, in fact, many of us, including PRT, rang this alarm in 2019. We made it four years longer than expected and PRT's staff and its operators should be commended for its fiscal stewardship and rewarded for it. Instead, we face the opposite. These financial decisions do have real world consequences."

Mr. Sandvig concluded his remarks by saying "It's time for Harrisburg to put forth a real funding package, not what's essentially a one-month allowance for a county and keep Pennsylvania moving for good this time."

The next speaker, Braden Parker, had concerns and questions related to the salary of PRT's CEO and its impact on the proposed cuts. He suggested a third-party neutral audit of PRT to see where this money is going. He also had concerns on the cost of the rebranding.

The next speaker was Marcelese Cooper who had concerns with the proposed elimination of the 39 bus route, one of the only lines connecting her neighborhood with the rest of the city. It would deeply impact her life and the lives of many others.

The next speaker was Rodney Sanford who stated that he moved to Pittsburgh from Syracuse, NY for work in August of last year. Ever since he moved here, he has relied on the PRT bus system from day one. He explained how these cuts would negatively impact his life and fellow riders.

The next speaker, Mr. Brian Hatgelakas, stated that he is totally blind and uses the ACCESS System. Eliminating his bus in his neighborhood would be detrimental to a lot of people. His bus gets people to and from work. It would be devastating because in the building where he lives, a lot of people rely on the bus and the trolley daily. His next-door neighbor has mobility issues that impede her walk down to the red line from where they live.

He concluded his remarks by saying that it the proposed cuts feel like PRT telling him as a disabled person that his life doesn't matter.

The next speaker was Bernadette Mosey. Ms. Mosey believes that the State is getting overtaxed because of what's happening in Washington, D.C. As a retired nurse formerly employed by UPMC, she took buses and trolleys to work all the time, as did many of her hospital colleagues. Also close by

is Asbury Heights where a lot of private healthcare workers live that work for the senior high rises along Kane Boulevard and the cuts are going to hurt them tremendously.

Ms. Mosey concluded her remarks by suggesting designated subsidized fare funds from the large Pittsburgh hospitals and churches.

Our next speaker was Ralph Williams, president of the Allegheny County Transit Council. Ralph reiterated a lot of things said by Ross Nicotero. He added that he did not appreciate the negative comments this morning regarding CEO Katharine Kelleman. The first time they met, Katharine came to PPT's rally downtown where she shook hands and talked to everyone. He respects CEO Kelleman because she is always there. She showed up at the train derailment at Station Square and also when the Library Line was flooded. She always shows up and he has a lot of respect for her.

He urged the state legislators who were and now are on our Board to get things done and suggested going after the casinos for help with funding.

The next speaker was Andrew Hussein. Andrew reminded everyone that the funding crisis is not happening because of anything PRT did, but now it is time to call your state legislators. He also agreed that the negative comments regarding CEO Kelleman's salary was uncalled for and said that even if Katharine's salary and all the salaries of all the management was cut, that alone is not going to solve these problems.

Before concluding, Andrew urged everyone to reach out to advocacy groups such as Allegheny County Transit Council and Pittsburghers for Public Transit and get involved because this is 2002, 2006, and 2009 to 2011 all over again, but worse.

The next speaker was Laura Wiens, director of Pittsburghers for Public Transit. Laura stated that PPT is a grassroots community union of transit riders and workers and the co-conveners of the statewide transit advocacy coalition Transit for All PA, which has been organizing for dedicated expanded state funding with riders and organizations and state legislators across the Commonwealth for the last five years, adding that it goes without saying that these service cuts and fare increases would be catastrophic.

Thousands of workers will lose their jobs. Many of these jobs will go unfilled without public transit. Nurses, servers, janitors, adjunct professors, childcare providers, dishwashers, municipal employees and the streets, particularly in our highly desirable and amenity rich neighborhoods like Downtown, Northside, Oakland, Lawrenceville, Strip District, East Liberty and Southside will be choked with cars.

Our major cultural and sporting events will simply not be able to happen with the same attendance. A transit system that is not usable makes for a region that is not livable. But we are ready for this fight.

There's been a transit crisis statewide for years now because our state legislature has failed to increase the allocation for public transit for more than a decade. Notably, PA allocates the lowest amount of money per capita for public transit of all states in the Northeast, and our riders and workers feel this.

"Just the last week we had Transit for All PA organize more than 33,000 letters to state legislators and we've named our specific goal, which is organizing for \$540 million in new state funding for FY

2026 that will allow for service restoration statewide to 2019 levels and a 10 percent increase in non-Pittsburgh regions that have long deserved better. We've also identified the viable transportation related dedicated funding solution that will meet our needs.”

Ms. Wiens announced that next Wednesday, a Transit for All PA statewide call will be held with over 300 registrants “in which we will lay out our demand, our solution and the plan to win. We are fighting to go beyond austerity and the fear of further loss to stabilization, restoration and a vision for communities across PA that can thrive.” She invited the Board and the community to join them at transitforallpa.org.

The next speaker was Brendan Wissinger, a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh studying public administration. He grew up in rural central PA in a county that has no public transit. When he came to Pittsburgh for College, he felt freedom for the first time where he could catch a bus wherever he wanted to go. He now lives in an apartment where he now relies on a bus. “People depend on these bus lines, people with disabilities, people that live paycheck to paycheck and people who just want to get to where they are going.”

Mr. Wissinger concluded his remarks by saying that we must pressure our senators and representatives to raise funding for PRT and look for more innovative solutions.

The next speaker was Marshall Conover who stated that a couple years ago, he lost the ability to drive due to epilepsy and became super dependent on his bus from Bridgeville. These cuts would take away his independence. He wanted to add his voice to just to say, please, for people who can't get around without this sort of transportation, please find a solution.

The final speaker was Jennifer Rumble. As a resident of Bridgeville. Jennifer wants her tax dollars to go to the continued operation of the buses and the T lines as she believes that we need to have more options and add more direct lines, not less.

She implored the Board not to decrease the service of public transportation. “The system needs fertilized, not pruned, even if it costs the city and taxpayers more.” She relied on public transportation systems whenever she went through a time where she did not have access to a car and had to solely rely on her bike and PRT. The system wasn't perfect, there were delays, long travel times, but she was still able to function, and moreover, she learned the value of this public service. She moved to the South Hills in large part because of the T and how she fell in love with it during that time. She cannot think about the silver line being eliminated.

Ms. Rumble concluded her remarks by saying that public transportation is a part of infrastructure and a public service. It is not meant to turn a profit. It should be fully funded and allow Pittsburgh residents to access the jobs and resources they need to live.

That concluded the public comment portion of the meeting.

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

CEO Kelleman requested a moment of silence for the deaths of the following retired and one active employees: Retired operators William Brown, Larry Cuturilo, Steve Elek, William Foley, Terrance Guthrie, Edward Hess, Daniel Mudrinich, Timothy O'Connor, Mary Schriener, and William Brown, and active maintenance receiver Jim Henderson.

CEO Kelleman also wanted to send her condolences to the family of Chuck Farkas. Chuck was one of her first Operations friends, always had a smile, always had suggestions, and even during the pandemic when service was cut in his area, even when he was driving extra hours because we couldn't hire enough folks, Chuck's always been there for PRT.

Ms. Kelleman welcomed PRT's two new board members, Representative Aerion Abney and then as of yesterday, Senator Lindsey Williams. "We look forward to working with you, particularly around the topics that you heard a lot about today."

Ms. Kelleman continued: "Our agency has arrived at a serious, urgent and unfortunately utterly predictable crossroad we laid out last week and will repeat today. Without additional state investment, nearly a third of our system could be gone by this time next year. Our fares would become the fifth highest in the nation."

"Last week we discussed a 35 percent reduction in service and a nine percent increase in the fares. This would devastate individuals, families, businesses, and communities across the region."

CEO Kelleman continued, "Now, this is not just a transit crisis, it is a social and economic crisis as well. These are not just numbers; these are the people who keep our region running."

"We heard again today, seniors and people with disabilities would be cut off from healthcare, in many cases, lifesaving healthcare. Students cannot get to school. Neighbors and friends would be stranded, unable to fully participate in all the things which make Pittsburgh and Allegheny County such great places to live."

"Public transit is also the backbone of our economy. It keeps small businesses thriving by bringing in customers and workers, and helps major employers reduce the need for parking and makes it easier for their employees to get to work."

"Transit eases congestion on roads and prevents additional wear and tear on our highways. It also improves air quality, reduces carbon emissions, makes our region healthier and more sustainable."

Ms. Kelleman added that PRT doesn't just benefit Allegheny County. "In the past five years alone, we have spent \$2 billion in the Commonwealth on products like circuit breakers, sheet metal and aftermarket bus parts. We've spent money in 30 counties across Pennsylvania. The past five years we've spent \$114 million in Westmoreland County, \$16,000,000 in Cumberland County, \$12 million in Washington County and nearly \$5 million in Butler County. We are an economic driver from Pennsylvania and without new funding, these consequences are devastating."

"Several of us said, we even heard it this morning, that we should be expanding transit, not cutting it. As our region needs to grow and thrive, so does our network. We should be making service more frequent, more reliable, and more accessible."

"If you were here with Act 89, you knew this day was coming. COVID funding allowed it to go further out, but this has been a day long in coming. Act 89 gave us the funding we desperately needed. We established this in 2013, and we made this funding last. We cut service, we shut a garage, we froze salaries and spent within our means. When Act 89 expired, federal relief funding from COVID allowed us to fill the deficit that was going to be there and that exists today."

Ms. Kelleman added that this year, PRT spent the last of its COVID funding. “We're taking \$50 million out of our fund balance to make ends meet. Without new state funding, our next year's \$100 million deficit grows to \$110 million, the year after \$117 million and continues. There is not enough in the bank to cover these gaps. Transit agencies across the Commonwealth are facing or will still soon face the same crisis. Now much of our budget is locked in fixed costs like utilities, pensions and healthcare, adding that where we are looking at cutting then is only service and the administration which supports it.”

“At a time when local leaders are planning major investments in our region, public transit is more important than ever. We cannot afford to lose our economic and social benefits of a strong transit system. In just the past week, I've heard a lot of strong support from many of our elected officials, and I really appreciate their willingness to listen. But it's time for us to start moving into action. Public transit in Pennsylvania and southwest Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh and southwestern Pennsylvania is as vital as our highways and bridges.”

“Today our Board is voting to open a public comment window on the service changes and a fare increase. Reiterating to everyone that this board is not voting today to take action to cut this service and increase fares. Just like everyone at PRT, the board is completely focused on making sure we keep our service, and we keep our fares. It is our responsibility as a transit agency to make sure that we get people's attention.”

CEO Kelleman concluded her remarks by saying that PRT will continue to engage with riders, businesses and policy makers, but can't do it alone. “The folks who showed up today, the folks who are watching this, we need everyone's voice. We need everyone's advocacy, and we need folks who control our funding to hear that Allegheny County deserves a transit system that works for everybody.”

That concluded the report of the Chief Executive Officer.

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

Member McClenney reported that the Committee reviewed three 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 \$19,278,206.50.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Member 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.

Chair Liptak gave the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee's report.

It was reported that the Planning and Stakeholders Relations Committee met last week, and she had two resolutions to bring to the Board for approval.

The first resolution was seeking authorization to adopt Pittsburgh Regional Transit's Title VI Program for 2025 to 2027. The Title VI Program, which is updated every three years, per federal legal requirements, ensures that PRT is not disproportionately impacting low income or minority communities with its services or amenities.

During the 2022-2024 period, it was found that 78 routes meet the designation for low-income, and 75 routes meet the designation for minority routes, both of which increased from the previous three-year period.

One significant disparate impact was identified, with overcrowding occurring on several trips into Oakland on minority race and ethnicity routes. PRT is working to mitigate that impact now and will continue to do so over the coming year.

Another change included a service increase on Route 40-Mt. Washington, which was not originally brought before the Board due to its intention as a temporary service increase. However, due to a longer than anticipated rehabilitation project on the Monongahela Incline, the increased service level has remained, and staff completed a Title VI analysis of this service increase. There were no disproportionate burdens or disparate impacts found.

Chair Liptak requested the Board's approval to Adopt the Title VI Program for the 2025 to 2027 term.

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

The Chair then presented the second resolution seeking authorization to proceed to public comment period for Fiscal Year 2026 fare increases and service reductions.

This resolution would allow PRT to begin soliciting public feedback, including holding public hearings, regarding the ongoing financial crisis that has come about with the expiration of Act 89 and exhaustion of federal COVID relief funding. The public comment period would begin at 8 a.m. on Monday March 31, 2025, and conclude at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, June 18, 2025.

State funding is no longer able to support the public transit needs of Allegheny County, resulting in a structural deficit that will continue to grow each year without new investment.

Although the governor has proposed increasing public transit's share of the state sales tax, which would increase PRT's share by an estimated \$40 million, legislation relating to the governor's proposal remains on the House floor. With much of PRT's budget dedicated to fixed costs, PRT has few opportunities to narrow the funding gap outside of service reductions and a fare increase.

While additional options are being explored, PRT has proposed a 35 percent reduction in bus, light rail, and incline service and a nine percent fare increase that would allow the agency to stabilize service for the next decade.

These cuts include the elimination of 40 bus routes and the Silver Line and reductions in service to 53 additional bus routes and the Red Line.

Additionally, this may lead to a 62 percent decrease in the ADA service area and a 20 percent fare increase for ACCESS paratransit riders, all of which would be effective February 2026.

Before taking a vote, Chair Liptak reiterated that this resolution is for the purpose of approving the public comment period concerning the proposed service reductions and fare increases, and not to approve the fare increases and service reductions today.

Senator Lindsey Williams commented that she wanted to be clear that she is voting on this because it is opening public comment.

She observed that we heard today the comments from the public and that she has received hundreds of emails and calls into her office about the devastating impacts of these cuts. She certainly has a lot of questions as to the cuts to the routes and what that will look like, the fare increase, what those cuts to staff might mean, and the impact on our members of ATU.

Senator Williams continued, stating that she is committed to finding a sustainable funding stream in Harrisburg, and that she agrees with one of the commenters here today who said we should be fighting to go beyond austerity, and Senator Williams agreed that more is needed. "The way we bring more people to this region is not by cutting routes and it's not by the status quo either. It's by increasing what options we have. Myself and a lot of my colleagues are going to be fighting for that in Harrisburg. But as Katharine said, we do need to hear from you."

The senator continued by urging the public to please keep reaching out to your elected officials, to your friends and to people who might need to be convinced to share your story about how this impacts you. "Because we know that the governor's proposal is not enough to stave off these cuts. But I don't think either my colleagues, or myself, understood the \$117 million until February. Thank you for all who came and testified and please engage in the public comment."

Member Fan commented that a few folks here were in the room last week when these cuts were announced. "And personally, it felt like attending a funeral. But this is not a funeral, it's a fight. Everyone in this room and even some of the folks who've been part of the fight for years before establishing Act 89, that the timing is such that we're looking for local leadership more than ever. And the timing is also that cuts like these are unimaginable because it's already so unlivable right now."

"We heard from so many public commenters about living the unlivable here in Pittsburgh. This is important to take that seriously just imagining what it would be like without transit."

Representative Abbey also wanted to add and echo that we will continue to have his commitment and House Democrats commitment to finding a solution to fund public transit. "In fact, last year, we voted at least two times in the House and passed legislation to fund public transit."

"And while I appreciate all the phone calls and emails that come to his office, I would say, what maybe folks at PRT may not be able to say, that it is you need to reach out to Senate Republicans Pittman and Kim Ward. We sent transit funding over to the Senate and they did not move on. And they are the ones who control what happens over on that side. While he welcomes the opportunity to continue to have conversations with you all, we need to make sure that we raise and elevate this conversation around public transit funding over to the Senate Republicans as well."

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

The Chair continued by reporting on the Allegheny County Transit Council and the Committee for Accessible Transportation.

ACTC met on March 26 and the Council allowed for their meeting to be used as an opportunity for PRT to speak to a joint session of ACTC, CAT, and the City County Task Force on Disabilities. CEO Kelleman spoke to the attendees about the history and context of state funding and the financial situation of PRT. Their next scheduled meeting is April 23.

The CAT Committee received an update on ACCESS services and programs, the Light Rail Accessibility Program, and the 2024 Annual Service Report. Their next regularly scheduled meeting is May 8.

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

The Chair called on member Mizgorski for a report of the Technology Committee.

Chair Mizgorski reported that the Technology Committee met on March 20, 2025 and had five resolutions for the Board's consideration.

The Committee first reviewed one bid. The item presented was for CISCO DNA network monitoring. The Committee determined the bid to be in accordance with PRT's procurement policies and procedures, and the price fair and reasonable.

The Technology Committee recommended the award of the item as listed in the resolution for the total amount of \$256,670.79.

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

The next resolution reviewed was for CCTV and Card Access System Maintenance Services.

It was reported that all applicable board-adopted policies were followed as part of RFP 24-19 in the selection of Site Solutions LLC to provide CCTV and Card Access System Maintenance Services for an initial three-year term and a total not to exceed amount of \$1,800,000 with the option to extend the agreement up to two additional years at PRT's discretion.

The Committee concluded that the services are needed and that the prices are fair and reasonable and respectfully recommended that the Board vote in favor of the resolution to authorize PRT to enter in this agreement.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Member Mizgorski respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously except for one abstention by Member Fan, and the resolution was approved.

The committee then reviewed a resolution for Digital Wayfinding Signage Hosting and Support. This resolution would authorize PRT to enter into an agreement with Connectpoint, Inc., for an initial two-year period for a total not to exceed amount of \$140,070 with the option to extend the agreement up to one additional year.

The Committee concluded that the services are needed and that the prices are fair and reasonable and respectfully recommended that the Board vote in favor of the resolution to authorize PRT to enter into this agreement.

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

The fourth resolution reviewed was for Budgeting Software Services. RFP 24-21 was advertised and evaluated in compliance with all applicable Board-adopted policies and that Questica Ltd., was the highest ranked proposal.

The Committee concluded that the 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 PRT to enter into an agreement with Questica Ltd. For an initial three-year agreement with a total not to exceed amount of \$894,097, with the option to extend the agreement up to two additional years at PRT's discretion. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

Following an update report on the Fare System Refresh, the final resolution reviewed was for continuation of services and support for the fare system.

The proposal is to enter into an agreement with Masabi, the current provider, for continuation of services, equipment warranty, propriety software and equipment.

The Committee concluded that the 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 PRT to enter into an agreement with Masabi LLC to continue to provide the services for a period of years for a total NTE of \$4,103,839.00

At this time, Senator Williams asked for the term of the Agreement. Staff would confirm with the Board immediately following the meeting.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Member Mizgorski respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and passed, with one abstention from Senator Williams, and the resolution was approved.

That concluded the report of the Technology Committee.

Under New Business, CEO Katharine Kelleman recognized six employees whose actions showcase the very best of PRT, noting that we call them All-Stars. Each year, our All-Star Award Committee reviews dozens of nominations to select employees whose dedication, skill, and heroism stand out. These honorees have met the highest standards, and we are proud to celebrate them today. The

awardees for 2025 were Steven Fox, Jr., James Kenney, Sr., Kevin Motta, Darlene Procacina, Edward Reick and William Rusiewicz

CEO Kelleman extended her sincere gratitude to our All-Star Awards Committee for their hard work in selecting this year's honorees, to everyone who took the time to submit nominations, and most of all, to our incredible All-Stars.

The Chair announced the next Regular meeting of the Board will be April 25, 2025.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Approved