

Berkshire Flyer 2.0 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2018 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 1 Fenn St. Pittsfield, MA 01201

Staff Attendance

X	A. Koirala	X	L. Schmid	X	C. Kus
	B. Lamb		B. Steiner		

Member Attendance

X	T. Matuszko (Co-Chair)	X	Senator A. Hinds		
X	J. Butler (Co-Chair)	X	J. Green		
X	R. Malnati	X	K. Chittenden		
	A. Lomanto	X	Z. Fleury		
	E. Kerns	X	F. Heming		
X	D. Ruffer		K. Christenson		
X	C. Hoyt				
	T. Delasco				
X	B. Keane				

Other Attendees: Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier, Jon Gould, AJ Enchill, Peter Frieri, Lisa Fletcher-Udel

Introductions & Opening Remarks

J. Butler called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM and asked for introductions from all members and attendees present. Senator A. Hinds provided a brief overview of the Berkshire Flyer Working Group initiative and the steps leading to the launch of the Berkshire Flyer 2.0 Subcommittee. Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier shared her enthusiasm on behalf of the Berkshire Delegation for this project.

J. Butler provided an overview of the current subcommittee roster and indicated that the subcommittee is awaiting a designee from the Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (DOT) Rail Division. Hospitality stakeholders and other rail stakeholders will also likely be added prior to the next meeting.

T. Matuszko provided an update on the current status of the scope of services agreement between DOT and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC). The agreement is expected to be finalized before the next meeting.

Discussion on study focus areas:

A. Koirala presented a PowerPoint presentation focusing on key study areas; Identifying and evaluating last mile transportation options, evaluating ridership data, developing a marketing strategy; and identifying and developing private partnerships.

Senator A. Hinds commented about the need to identify the transportation stakeholders that are willing to demonstrate creative solutions. Also identifying the best “sharing” models of various types – cars, van service, etc.

D. Ruffer spoke about the importance of better understanding which lodging stakeholders already provide transportation services.

A. Koirala transitioned discussion to the “evaluating ridership data” work, and general group discussion followed with several examples cited of how other models work. Consensus that more investigation needed to be done on other existing models.

J. Butler transitioned discussion to “developing a marketing strategy” and presented that 1Berkshire is working to issue an RFP for branding services. Brief discussion followed.

B. Keane noted that there is the potential to identify new audiences that previously haven’t considered the Berkshires as a destination. Rail access could make this possible.

J. Green suggested that the subcommittee evaluate the Downeaster service in Maine as an example with some comparable best practices. The Co-Chairs agreed to investigate and also look at other rail models.

D. Ruffer spoke about the need to potentially subsidize some local transportation models in order to get them off the ground in meeting the needs of the Berkshire Flyer.

B. Malnati shared that contingent upon the direction of some current funding, there may be an opportunity to advocate for some additional evening service from the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA).

Meeting Schedule and Next Meeting

Co-Chairs offered a proposed meeting schedule for the subcommittee and after brief discussion the subcommittee agreed to the below dates all at 3:00 PM;

September 24th, 2018

October 29th, 2018

November 26th, 2018

December 17th, 2018

January 28th, 2019

February 25th, 2019

Meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 24th at 3:00 PM – BRPC Offices, 1 Fenn Street, Pittsfield.