



Thursday, March 5, 2026

ADVISORY BOARD

MERRIMACK VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Board Members Attending:

Amesbury: Kassandra Gove	Andover: Monica Gregoire
Georgetown: Frank O'Connor	Groveland: Rebecca Oldham
Lawrence: Myra Ortiz (on the phone)	Merrimac: Mitch Kostoulakos
Methuen: Kathleen Colwell	Newbury: Kristen Grubbs
North Andover: Andrew Shapiro	North Reading: Lilian Hartman
Rowley: Bob Snow	
Riders' Representative: Jessica Ramos	
Disability Representative: Jay Collins	

Ms. Gove, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

1. **Welcome & Introductions:** Ms. Gove welcomed the Board members and everyone in attendance and invited them to introduce themselves.
2. **Approval of Minutes of the Meeting of February 6, 2026:** Ms. Colwell of Methuen pointed out that in Item 3b, her name was incorrectly listed, and that it should be Mr. Shapiro of North Andover. Ms. Gove called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Advisory Board meeting of February 5, 2026, with the correction. So moved by Ms. Colwell of Methuen, seconded by Mr. Shapiro of North Andover. Vote to approve: Unanimous, with four abstentions. Motion carried.
3. **Governance: Approval of Disability Representative to the Board:** Ms. Oldham of Groveland introduced Jay Collins of Groveland, who serves on the Library Board of Trustees and was recently elected to the Groveland Housing Authority. He has volunteered to join MeVa's Advisory Board as the Disability Riders' Representative. Mr. Berger and Ms. Gove welcomed Mr. Collins. Ms. Gove then called for a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Collins to the Board as the region's Disability Riders' Representative. So moved by Mr. Snow of Rowley, seconded by Ms. Hartman of North Reading; Vote to approve: unanimous. Motion carried.
4. **Adoption of Resolution #98:** Mr. Berger reviewed that the resolution authorizes the Administrator to borrow in anticipation of Federal Transit Funds and State Net Cost of Service payments for the upcoming fiscal year. Ms. Gove called for a motion to adopt the resolution. So moved by Mr. Shapiro of North Andover, seconded by Mr. Snow of Rowley; vote to adopt: unanimous. Motion carried.

5. Advisory Board Committees Reports:

- a. *Finance & Audit Committee:* Mr. Shapiro related that the committee members met with Mr. Berger and Phil Clayton to review the proposed FY2027 budget. The members questioned items that are reflecting a more substantial increase than others, as well as the qualities and strengths that will be sought after when hiring for the open finance position. They talked about facilities issues, in particular, the Gateway parking area and what the hope is for its future. They discussed the expected funding sources and how much of it is becoming discretionary. The conclusion of the committee was that, based on performance so far, Noah comes with a great degree of credibility and has operated successfully, giving them faith in the budgetary model. With that, they voted unanimously to recommend that the full board approve the budget as presented. After some discussion and questions, Ms. Gove called for a motion to approve the FY2027 budget as presented. So moved by Mr. Shapiro of North Andover, seconded by Ms. Oldham of Groveland; vote to approve: unanimous. Motion carried.
 - b. *Ferry Service Committee:* Ms. Gove stated that the committee met in April. Involved parties are making site visits May 8th in Amesbury and Newburyport. They are awaiting approval from the Coast Guard of the design. Once it's approved, materials can be ordered.
 - c. *Fixed Route Service Committee:* There is no current report but they are expected to meet prior to the June Board Meeting.
 - d. *Paratransit Service Committee:* There is no current report but they are planning to meet prior to the June Board meeting.
 - e. *Administrator Performance & Compensation Committee:* There is no current report but they are planning to meet prior to the June Board meeting.
- 6. Administrator's Report:** Mr. Berger briefly updated the board members about Administration, Operations, Finance, Planning and Outreach. Please refer to his Administrator's Report dated May 7, 2026, for details.
- 7. Update from MVPC:** Elizabeth Maldari from MVPC updated the members on current activities. For planning updates, please see their website at www.mvpc.org
- 8. Other Business:** There was no other business presented.
- 9. Confirm Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at MeVa Headquarters in the main conference room.
- 10. Adjournment:** Ms. Gove asked for a motion to adjourn at 9:56 a.m. So moved by Mr. Shapiro of North Andover; seconded by Ms. Gregoire of Andover; Vote to adjourn: Unanimous. Motion carried.