



Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

September 10, 2025
Location: via TEAMS

Attendance:

New Jersey: Reggie Haynes, Judy Boldurian, Grace Kimbaris, Stephen Benigno

Pennsylvania:

Emeritus Member(s): Jeffrey Kessler, Larry Davis, Tyrone Wesley, Ben Saracco

DRPA/PATCO: John Rink, GM; Jerry Sahi, CFO; Cheryl Ansert, Administrative Coordinator; Robert Finnegan, CSSO; Michael Rakowski, PDM; John Hanson, CEO

Potential Members: Lupe Diaz

Call to Order: Approval of August 13, 2025 meeting minutes.

Finance

CFO Sahi

DRPA Preliminary Traffic

- August 2025 total traffic was roughly around 32.2M. 29k less than previous year, primary reason for decrease is 2024 being a leap year and the extra day in 2024 contributed 135K of additional traffic.
- For the month of July, traffic grew by approximately 35,000 or 0.8% versus prior year.

DRPA Final Revenue & Traffic

- Final June YTD revenue was \$191.0M, \$7.0M, or 3.8% higher than the 2025 budget, higher traffic volume is driving revenue favorability.
- June YTD traffic was 24.6M, 600k, or 2.5% higher than budget.

PATCO Ridership & Revenue

- June YTD revenue was \$7.0M. \$80k, or 1.1% higher than 2025 budget.
- June YTD ridership was 2.9M. 30k, or -1.0% less than 2025 budget. 130k, or 4.6% higher than 2024.

Preliminary Operating Expense

- Preliminary June YTD Operating expenses were \$89.9M, \$9.7M favorable to budget.
- This favorable variance is primarily driven by \$7.2M of savings from employee related costs, currently we have around 117 open positions out of 954 total budgeted positions. The majority of the \$2.5M savings on operating expenses is timing related.
- Total DRPA operating expenses are \$58.7M, 8.8% favorable to budget.
- Total PATCO operating expenses are \$31.2M, 11.4% favorable to budget.



Bridge and Highway

How have the Philadelphia Transportation cutbacks affected bridge traffic and are more commuters driving instead of using PATCO?

CEO Hanson

- Assuming we are talking about SEPTA when saying “Philadelphia Transportation cutbacks”. There are no cutbacks to SEPTA at this time. If there were, SEPTA doesn’t cross the bridge, so it wouldn’t impact bridge traffic.

Update on Betsy Ross Bridge construction.

PDM Rakowski

- The Betsy Ross Painting Project is proceeding as planned.
- They are painting the upper sections of the truss and installing platforms over the Eastbound lanes.
- The project runs through the middle of 2027, but we are anticipating finishing ahead of schedule.

Who is responsible for the maintenance of the access roads to and from the Commodore Barry Bridge and what is the status of resurfacing?

PDM Rakowski

- We are talking about the roads between 95 and Business 13/ 9th Street on the Chester side and beyond Route 130 on the New Jersey, Logan Township side? That property belongs to PennDOT and NJ DOT.
- We have received a lot of complaints that we pass along to the agencies.
- We also had them come out to look over the condition of the roadways, but we cannot address their property.

PATCO

Service & Operations

Are there any planned schedule modifications due to SEPTA’s service reductions?

CEO Hanson

- According to our understanding, those service reductions have been put on hold by a recent court decision.

What is the status of the GCL project?

CEO Hanson

- We are at the 30% completion of design.
- We are planning one early action project - replacement of the Mantua Bridge in Mantua, NJ.
- It needs to be replaced whether the GCL project goes forward or not, it is functionally obsolete and very old.
- We continue to negotiate with Conrail making progress on the use of the right of way.



How have the overnight shutdowns impacted PATCO staff's hours and are overnight train operator shifts now regular or overtime?

CEO Hanson

- There is no additional overtime.
- There have been no impacts to the employees other than one night shift employee that is working in the Lindenwold yard moving trains around instead of riding the rails.

With a continuous 4.5 hour overnight service suspension how can that time be leveraged to undertake trackwork and support a full restoration of pre-COVID midday service levels?

CEO Hanson

- Our Engineering team is working with the contractors who are doing capital work to allow them that time.
- The spending is ahead of schedule as the project gets ahead of schedule which does impact liquidity.
- Overnight suspension doesn't really connect in any meaningful way that I can see to restoration of pre-COVID midday schedules and restoration of pre-COVID midday schedules is not in our plan at this time.

Judy Boldurian: Are the schedules going to be redone and any trains eliminated?

CEO Hanson

- The plan is to leave it the way it is now.

Security & Social Services

Is there a strategy for late-evening rider escorts or increased patrols during shift-change windows?

CEO Hanson

- In terms of late evening rider escorts, we have never done that and there is no plan to do that.
- There is some increased police activity from time and effort not being devoted to dealing with problems on the line during the overnight.

Can we formalize a "crisis compassion" protocol that allows police, ambassadors, or outreach staff to issue courtesy rides or service connections for vulnerable riders?

CEO Hanson

- That is not anything that we have ever done before and it is not in the plan to do.

Can consistent signage and public address reminders for 988 and first-responder hotlines be added to trains and platforms?

CEO Hanson

- We have a lot of 988 signages in the stations on the LCD screens and on the Ben Franklin Bridge walkway.



Are there plans for crisis de-escalation training refreshers for front-line staff?

CSSO Finnegan

- Our officers receive training and refresher courses in de-escalation in order to handle these situations.
- Train operators and station managers receive customer service training, but we worry about their safety if they intervene in areas of dispute that are escalating. So, this is something we prefer to leave to the police officers.

Ben Saracco: I know Camden Metro police recently made the news for hiring a social worker for their staff, and thoughts to that for DRPA police?

CSSO Finnegan

- We partner with Volunteers of America on the NJ side and offer social services to every one of the unsheltered that we come into contact with.
- We have cards to give out to them and will assist them with contacting social services, if they are accepting of the help.

Ridership

What was the ridership during the September 4th evening opener and how did it compare to the Thursday night football game on November 14, 2024?

GM Rink

- The game on 11/4/24 we had 2,646 riders. This year we had 2,376.
- For the game on Thursday, we ran 2 extra eastbound trains, we only had 72 riders.

What was the ridership during the periods immediately before and after the overnight shutdowns and how do those volumes compare to pre-shutdown levels?

GM Rink

- We saw little reduction in our ridership prior to 9/1 and it has stayed the same since our last meeting.
- The ridership adjusted to the 2 hour headways can not give a good report yet, because last week was the first week with the overnight shutdown.
- Next month we should have more data to share.

Fare System & Technology

What is the timeline for eliminating the Freedom Card and what will its replacement be?

CEO Hanson

- There is no timeline for eliminating the Freedom card right now.

GTFS & Real-Time Data

What is the progress on maintaining GTFS with special service schedules?

GM Rink

- It is still on our agenda to do.



Wireless Service

Are there plans to restore Wi-Fi and/or wireless service in the Locust Street Subway section of the network? The loss of Xfinity Wi-Fi in the absence of cellular coverage has been a major issue.

GM Rink

- The Wi-Fi is up and running, I verified with Comcast that we have had no problems other than a small issue at Collingswood.

Has DRPA worked with cell carriers to provide cellular or Wi-Fi coverage at Franklin Square?

GM Rink

- We entered into an agreement with Xfinity and in the near future they will start work at Franklin Square to add Wi-Fi.
- T-Mobile is in all the stations. We have an agreement with AT&T to do the same, but they haven't moved forward with any of their improvements.

Facilities

How will the blocked off section of the Lindenwold parking lot be used? Can this space be used to collaborate with NJ Transit on bus routes?

GM Rink

- If we are talking about the East end of the parking lot it was closed because non transit people were parking there.

Overnight Shutdowns

How many official complaints has PATCO received about the elimination of overnight service and how does this compare with the number of cleanliness complaints?

CEO Hanson

- Several thousand complaints about cleanliness again over a period of years since Covid.
- PATCO reports zero direct complaints about overnight service, even though we've seen some on social media.

How effective were the weeknight shutdowns at maintaining cleanliness and order during weekend overnight operations?

CEO Hanson

- It is effective. We have a much cleaner area for our commuters. I would say it has exceeded our expectations for just beginning.

Questions from Social Media

Old Business

New Business

Next CAC Meeting: October 8, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Next DRPA Meeting: DRPA Board Meeting on September 17, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.