

July 8, 2019

Alice Butler, Chairman
Board of Directors
Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority
11 A Street, Airport Business Park
Edgartown, MA 02539

Dear Chairman Butler,

As you are aware, we, the bus drivers of the VTA, have been on strike since June 28. Despite the best efforts of Administrator Angela Grant to misinform and misrepresent us and our union, we have received overwhelming support from islanders, the local business community, local faith communities, our riders, three presidential candidates, three U.S. Senators, two U.S. Congressman, and the state representatives and senators who represent the island.

During this time, Administrator Grant has:

- misled the public about service operating "at 100%" when in fact it has not been fully operational during any period over the past eleven days.
- spent a fortune in taxpayer funding to recruit; transport; lodge; and pay replacement workers at wage rates higher than we currently earn, higher than we have requested in negotiations, and higher than is paid to seasonal workers.
- entrusted the safety of our riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers to replacement drivers who had never been trained to operate vehicles on our roads.
- refused to compel her contractor, TCI, to return to the bargaining table.
- refused to compel TCI to consider proposals passed by the union to the federal mediator.
- rejected the union's offer to enter into binding interest arbitration with a neutral third party.

This list only accounts for the past several days. A full accounting of the cost to taxpayers of her years-long anti-union crusade is being undertaken by our union and will be forwarded to you upon completion.

During this time of unprecedented tumult and crisis at the agency, the VTA Board has not held a single public meeting. This failure to engage in even its most basic oversight and governance responsibilities creates the appearance of approval of Grant's mismanagement of the collective bargaining process and of the agency's finances.

The Board's failure to fill two vacant seats representing riders and people with disabilities, despite those seats being required by state statute and sought by qualified individuals in our community, further suggests that the Board has abandoned the mandate entrusted to it by our towns and the State of Massachusetts and relinquished total control of the agency to an unelected administrator.

We write to request that you take immediate action by scheduling a VTA Board Meeting this week to address the ongoing strike and these Board vacancies.

Sincerely,

Striking VTA Drivers, ATU Local 1548