



LOCAL DIVISION 1548
AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION AFL-CIO,CLC
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July 31, 2026

Select Board
Town of Chilmark

Re: Possible Strike at the VTA:

Dear Board Members,

I am writing this letter in the hope we can avert a potential strike at the VTA by the drivers who are members of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1548.

As you may have seen in the papers, contract negotiations between the Union and Transit Connection have broken down and the possibility of a strike looms. As in many negotiations, it usually comes down to money. The Union has requested a 6% pay raise in each of the next three years. The Company has countered with a 3.5% over that same time frame. Their proposal isn't keeping with the rise in inflation, and it isn't comparable to other RTA's in Massachusetts.

Last year the state awarded the RTA's \$25 million dollars through the Fair Share Supplemental Budget specifically for workforce recruitment and retention. I have enclosed a copy of the fact sheet put out by the Senate President's office note the highlighted portion (page 3). This money was sought after by the Union's in an effort to raise pay for bus drivers and help recruit new drivers. In my negotiations with the CCRTA and GATRA this money was granted in pay increases to help retain the current drivers and raised the starting pay to help in the hiring process just like it was intended.

When we came to the VTA requesting the same type of raises we were told the money was already spent. My question is where was it spent? It certainly wasn't spent where it was intended. I have enclosed a copy of the Administrator's pay since FY 2019. Over that period of time her salary has increased by over \$65,000 and increased by over \$29,450 last year alone. In looking at the minutes of the Advisory Board I can find no reference related to these raises. It pales in size to the driver's pay.

Since each town has a representative on the Board I ask you to find out who authorized her pay increases and where is the money that was earmarked for the bus drivers. At the very least it would appear that a misappropriation of funds has taken place.



It is not my desire to call a strike which would disrupt the lives of the citizens and visitors to the island. Many people rely on the bus service to get around; however, I have a responsibility to the drivers who make the system run. It is no secret that the VTA needs more drivers. I see the runs that are being cancelled due to lack of drivers. It doesn't have to be this way but unfortunately it seems like things won't change unless the Advisory Board which you control forces a change.

At this time the Union is calling for the Administrator to tender her immediate resignation. I am going through other channels to try and make this a reality. I take this misappropriation of funds very seriously as I am sure others in state government will.

I am holding off calling for a strike while I see if other measures can be more effective. I ask that you put your constituents first and get some answers as to what is going on at the VTA.

I am available for any questions or concerns you might have.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this matter.

Very truly yours,

Charles A. Ryan III
President / Business Agent

Encl: