

# Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation

## MINUTES

February 23, 2016

**Present:** Michael Acerno, *Home Healthcare, Hospice Community Services (HCS)*, Susan Ashworth *Home Healthcare, Hospice Community Services (HCS)*; Ellen Avery, *Contoocook Valley Transportation Center (CVTC)*; Suzanne Bansley, *Cheshire County*; April Buzby, *Keene Housing*; Liz Chipman, *Keene Housing Kids Collaborative*, Bill Graff *Monadnock At Home*; Chuck Weed, *Citizen Member*; and Gary Welch, *American Red Cross*.

Staff members present were J.B. Mack, *Principal Planner*; Raul Gonzalez, *Planner*; Liz Kelly, *Planning Technician*; and Wendy Woodland, *Office Support Specialist*.

**Guests:** Joanne Carr, *Town of Jaffrey*; Hannah Cole, *Monadnock United Way*; Jane Lapointe, *HumanKind Consulting*; Sarah Lovering, *Monadnock United Way*; Jena Rutter, *ServiceLink*; Kelly Steiner, *Monadnock United Way*; Susy Thielen, *Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST)*.

### I. Minutes of February 2, 2016

The minutes of February 2, 2016 were approved by unanimous vote.

### II. Updates

Kelly Steiner updated the group on the Department of Labor grant, which will involve transportation. She remarked that The Endowment for Health hired a company named *Strategy Matters* out of Boston to write the grant. Monadnock United Way became partners when it was discovered that this would be a state grant. The purpose of this grant is to help strengthen families by providing workforce development assistance. It will provide educational training, transportation, and childcare services to lift families up who may not be in advanced skill jobs and moving them specifically into the advanced manufacturing field. The grant will work with employers in Manchester and the Seacoast region to help their employees. The MRCC will be involved in the discussion because there's no other connection to other regional coordinating councils. Manchester Community College will be the lead agency. Kelly Steiner gave warning that MRCC members may receive calls to action before March 16<sup>th</sup>. Kelly Steiner said that the group should be thinking about looking at Uber or at leasing vans that are sitting stationary. The biggest issue gap is that there needs to be 24/7 available transportation as part of this strategy because the workforce works second and third shifts. The grant is one million dollars per year for 4 years. Chuck Weed asked if they're working with RCAM for this grant, and Kelly Steiner confirmed that they are.

J.B. Mack discussed the GKCC Regional Issues Series. He mentioned that a forum is coming up that will be discussing Transportation on March 10, 2016 from 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. at KSC Alumni Center. The keynote speaker will be the new NH Department of Transportation Commissioner, Victoria Sheehan. J.B. Mack encouraged members to attend this event, and he will send out a reminder e-mail to the Committee. J.B. Mack also updated the group on the State Coordinating Council contacting SWRPC to prepare a 2015 annual report. J.B. Mack indicated that SWRPC staff will be putting together a summary on behalf

of the MRCC, which will be finished by March 1<sup>st</sup>. J.B. Mack will circulate this to the group before it's sent to the State Coordinating Council. Ellen Avery asked them to include the merger of American Red Cross and CVTC. Ellen Avery also mentioned that the member list needs to be updated.

### **III. Coordinated Plan**

J.B. Mack reminded the committee that there still needs to be a public comment period on this Coordinated Plan. It is a merger of Region 5 and Region 6 addendum, with an update on pieces of information that were outdated. J.B. Mack said that there is a requirement for this Plan to be updated every 5 years, and it was last updated 5 years ago. The Coordinated Plan update will need to be completed by June of 2017. Kelly Steiner asked if the Vision Statement will be changed prior to the end of the 30 day comment period. J.B. Mack replied that is something that could be left up to the group. Chuck Weed said that NH Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is working closely with counties to help them think in terms of Health Regions, rather than counties. Chuck Weed asked if the group could combine region 5 and 6 into one region, thereby making a consolidated vision statement, and asked the group if stakeholders from both regions should be included in this update process. J.B. Mack stated that he would reach out to members during the public comment period who are no longer involved in MRCC to get their input. Chuck Weed noticed that the MRCC does not have a Regional Transportation Coordinator (RTC) and asked for clarification on this. J.B. Mack answered that there were many challenges associated with an RTC, one of which is that there was an expectation that the HHS Medicaid would feed into this program, which did not happen. Insurance issues and funding issues also prevented the formation of an RTC position.

J.B. Mack said that the document would go through the 30 day comment period and barring any substantive changes, it would automatically pass. If it does have substantive changes, it would come back to the MRCC for discussion.

**Motion: To approve the Addendum to the Coordinated Community Transportation Plan for Southwest New Hampshire (RCC Regions 5 and 6) dated February 23, 2016 for a 30 day public comment period. This motion also officially endorses the Coordinated Plan if no substantive changes are issued over the 30 day public comment period. The Executive Committee, by simple majority vote, shall determine if substantive changes are warranted. If substantive changes are warranted, the changes will be brought back to the MRCC at its next meeting for discussion.**

Motion by Chuck Weed, seconded by Ellen Avery. Approved by unanimous vote.

### **IV. 5310 Formula Grant**

Kelly Steiner reported that CVTC applied for a 5310 Formula grant and was the only applicant. J.B. Mack gave some context, and reported that the MRCC Allocation subcommittee has had to move very quickly on this grant. They put together an application and scoring rubric for the grant. The allocation subcommittee met on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and put together a recommendation. The group is recommending that MRCC fund the volunteer coordinator role in the amount of \$33,342 with some contingencies, and that the group have a discussion regarding the balance of \$19,952 with Ellen Avery regarding her portions of the grant. J.B. Mack noted that this application is past the DOT deadline, but they will do whatever they can to speed up the process. The allocation subcommittee was in agreement that there were too many questions to fully discuss with Ellen Avery in such a short amount of time, which leads to the need for a discussion with Ellen Avery in the future.

**Motion: To approve the MRCC Allocation Subcommittee's recommendation on the SFY 2017 Formula Fund application submitted by the Contoocook Valley Transportation Company (CVTC). The MRCC Allocation Subcommittee's recommendation is to endorse the allocation of \$33,342 of the \$52,395 Formula Funds earmarked for Region 5 and 6 towards the proposed Volunteer Driver Program Coordinator (40 hours per week) position described in the CVTC application. This motion also provides the MRCC Allocation Subcommittee the latitude to meet with and negotiate with CVTC on the remaining aspects of a scope of work to provide mobility management services on behalf of Region 5 and 6.**

Motion by Chuck Weed, seconded by Susan Ashworth. Approved by unanimous vote.

## **V. MRCC Vision Discussion**

Jane Lapointe of HumanKind Consulting was introduced and described her background in management consulting. She then proceeded to review what the group discussed at the last meeting in December. She stated that the purpose of this meeting is to craft a vision for MRCC that expresses the aspiration and ambitions of Committee members, and to draft a vision for coordinated transportation services that will serve to inform ongoing decision-making, actions and planning.

Jane Lapointe reminded the group that at the last meeting, they had envisioned what transportation in the region would look like in 2025. A few things the group had brainstormed were: an efficient transportation system, a robust blend of public and private participation and investment, and a system that people would choose to use even if they had other options. The group also envisioned cities and towns building housing with transportation services in mind. Chuck Weed mentioned that public health conversations should also be about transportation.

Jane Lapointe continued to refresh the group on the previous discussion, and touched on who would benefit from the ideal transportation system in 2025, and how the group envisioned achieving this vision for the future. Kelly Steiner mentioned that our region doesn't have good transportation for students who are attempting to get to school, and asked that student services be added to the vision process. Chuck Weed asked that Jane Lapointe add that community transportation in 2025 will be so widely accepted and used that communities are willing to pay for it. There was some discussion in the group about what conversations would have to happen in order to help the community begin to value and financially support public transportation.

Chuck Weed also asked that the visioning process include the common good in attempting to change the social norm. April Buzby remarked that changes and attitudes around public transportation are happening in various communities around the country and around the Region. Suzanne Bansley added that we need to look to what rural communities are doing in order to relate to the makeup of our own Region. Kelly Steiner remarked that the incentive for people to use public transportation will be affordability and accessibility. Susy Thielen noted that a majority of the changes in the Region are a result of a few, strongly focused people or groups. Change takes concerted effort, and requires the younger generation to become more inspired and involved.

Kelly Steiner noted that Region 5 and Region 6 have two different vision statements and asked how to combine the two into one in order to better represent the MRCC. Jane Lapointe encouraged the group to begin thinking about the goal of how to change the culture, which could help the group dial down its vision statement. She remarked that refining a vision will help the group understand its larger purpose.

Kelly Steiner reminded the group that a simple vision statement that is direct and clear is what will help identify the group and be understandable and appeal to others. Ellen Avery said that transportation is achieved through an integrated system, a shift away from managing assets by individual providers. It's a horizontal integration rather than a vertical integration. Customer travel experience has to be a main priority - that transportation is customer service based.

Kelly Steiner reminded the group to pull the most important five or six words that define the MRCC vision. Jane Lapointe asked the group to pull out the most essential five or six words or phrases. She asked if the vision is solely defining the MRCC organization or if it's also defining community transportation. Having a shared compelling vision will help bring others in. Creating a vision isn't a linear function, it's cyclical. Susy Thielen pictured a car carrier with components of MRCC work. Some words/concepts brainstormed by the group included *cooperative, coordinated, integrated, accessible (broadly defined), diverse (multi-modal), fewer cars/soft footprint, environmentally friendly*. Bill Graff mentioned "who is this for?" What is the "who" in our vision statement? Liz Chipman asked if it was just the poor and elderly who use public transportation, or is it everyone? Joanne Carr commented on the class divide regarding public transportation. Kelly Steiner mentioned that the younger generation values public transportation more than their predecessors. Jane Lapointe mentioned that it's important to acknowledge the issues that are important to the MRCC including class divide, changing cultural norms, etc. SWOT analyses are a significant way to start developing strategies to achieve vision.

Kelly Steiner reminded Jane Lapointe that Liz Chipman had suggested *sustainable* would be a good word to include. Jane Lapointe asked how we were defining sustainability? environmentally? economically? J.B. Mack mentioned that economic sustainability is particularly important in the context of transportation, particularly because we are subject to shifts in federal policy since so much of our funding comes from federal sources. Jane Lapointe said that transportation systems are too reliant on federal money. J.B. Mack said that "locally 'owned'" would describe the MRCC vision effectively - a regional transportation system that is locally/regionally invested in. Joanne Carr mentioned that a co-op ownership and investors would be important in furthering the locally oriented vision of the Monadnock regional transportation system.

Other words about vision that were recorded include: *innovative, reliable, convenient, community, equitable, safe, and consumer-driven*. Jane Lapointe reminded the group that thinking of the vision from a social entrepreneurship perspective could be strategic. Affordability was mentioned and Jane Lapointe asked affordable to whom? It was determined that transportation should be affordable to users and owners/providers.

Jane Lapointe posed this rhetorical question to the group: *How did cars become the primary form of travel? And what can we learn from that?* She then asked the group to start brainstorming a vision statement to themselves or with small groups and then the larger group can refine it together.

Susan Ashworth read her small group's statement: *Create and sustain an environmentally friendly and affordable community transportation network*. Liz Chipman read her group's ideas: *convenient, reliable, public transportation network that is affordable, sustainable, and utilized by all segments of the community*. Joanne Carr read her group's ideas: *Affordable, equitable, environmentally friendly community transportation network*. She also brought up the idea that meeting the need within the community is important. She also mentioned *social cohesion, social equity, and social capital* which the MRCC network could provide/facilitate.

Kelly Steiner said her group focused on generating a "consumer level" vision statement. *A safe, easy-to-access transportation system network for all ages*. Ellen Avery read her group's statement - A

*sustainable, regional transportation system for all.* J.B. Mack read his group's statement - *A regionally - owned, user-friendly, affordable, and resilient community transportation network.*

The group unanimously decided that transportation network was the way we envisioned regional transportation. Chuck Weed mentioned that "safe" might not be the best word to include in a vision statement because it's so weighted and people interpret it differently. Ellen Avery brought up the difference between the vision and mission. Jane Lapointe said that the vision is where the image is derived from. Joanne Carr brought up the idea of having a logo or image of a word cloud that shows all words the group has brainstormed. The group considered having the vision be "*building a transportation network that works for all, or for everyone*". Kelly Steiner and her group mentioned that they liked "easy to use" as a way to describe the network. Ellen Avery mentioned that she liked "Regional transportation network that works for everyone". Suzy Thielan mentioned that MRCC might not want to include "everyone" because it doesn't necessarily work for everyone. Jane Lapointe said that if the vision is for everyone then you can invite everyone to the table to be part of the conversation. Ellen Avery mentioned that she liked that "everyone" refers not only to the providers but also businesses, etc. Jane Lapointe mentioned that this all-inclusive definition also refers to bike paths and complete streets focusing on the environmentally friendly piece. Can MRCC be a convener or catalyst to this vision statement and how can MRCC bring in other groups into this vision statement and this work?

Kelly Steiner brought up that conversations could emerge surrounding the words that we've brought up- what does accessible mean and how do we achieve this? What does sustainable mean and how do we achieve this? Jane Lapointe said that this vision is really about values and that it could be strategic to let those core values emerge themselves. The group agreed that "**A regional transportation network for everyone**" was a good vision statement that was to the point, concise, and clear. J.B. Mack expressed concerns that the statement might not reflect the Monadnock Region's uniqueness but still like it. Joanne Carr mentioned that it could be significant to keep it simple enough that many groups will participate in achieving this vision. The group decided that a word cloud that further described what a transportation network for all looked like was still necessary (accessible, affordable, environmentally friendly, etc.).

Jane Lapointe led the discussion on the MRCC mission statement. She wrote out region 5 and region 6 mission statements. Region 5 statement: *Establish framework for community transportation coordination that raises awareness of community transportation needs and knowledge of services and encourages involvement from the entire community facilitates creation of regional services to benefit users.* Region 6 mission statement elements included: *implement and facilitate community transportation coordination framework that encourages participation, involvement, and support from the entire community, facilitates creation of regional transportation services to benefit users, providers, and purchasers.*

Jane Lapointe encouraged the group to look at the statements and pick out what works and what should be changed to define the MRCC vision statement. Kelly Steiner mentioned that the MRCC may not be actually coordinating a transportation system - that the MRCC may be setting up the framework for a system to be coordinated. The MRCC currently doesn't have the capacity to coordinate a system.

What is the action word for the mission? Is it coordinate? Build? Facilitate? Catalyze? The statement evolved to "Build an integrated regional transportation network that actively engages the entire community." Kelly Steiner mentioned that she liked the word "innovative" in describing the mission. Ellen Avery suggested "Ensure" to replace the verb "Build". Others agreed that build might be the wrong word to use to describe the MRCC work. Bill Graff suggested the statement "Actively engage the entire community to build an integrated regional transportation network". The group liked this statement.

Susan Ashworth asked what integrated meant in this context. Chuck Weed responded that integrated referred to connected, joined together. Kelly Steiner said that network and integrated are too similar or mean the same thing. Joanne Carr mentioned that the mission sounds too similar to the vision statement and that it might need more information about what this network is and looks like.

The statement evolved to: *Actively lead and engage the Monadnock Region in building an innovative, coordinated, and resilient transportation network.* This touches on the “sustain” piece that was brought up by Liz Chipman and Michael Acerno - that it is just as important that the MRCC develops strategies to sustain a regional transportation network as it is to develop one.

Jane Lapointe reminded members to think about a SWOT analysis to develop strategies that help to achieve the mission statement and address specific organizational goals.

Kelly Steiner asked how people felt about the current mission statement and said that we can revisit this at a future meeting. No one objected to the current mission statement.

## **VI. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting date was not specifically decided at this meeting.

## **VIII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Woodland  
Office Support Specialist

Liz Kelly  
Planning Technician