

# Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation

## MINUTES

August 18, 2015

**Present:** Michael Acerno, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Ellen Avery, *Contoocook Valley Transportation Company (CVTC)*; Suzanne Bansley, *Cheshire County*; Gary Welch, *American Red Cross – NH West Chapter (ARC)*; Chuck Weed, *Cheshire County Commissioners*; Kelly Steiner, *Monadnock United Way*;

SWRPC staff present were J.B. Mack, *Principal Planner* and Mari Brunner, *Planning Technician*.

### I. Welcome and Introductions

Kelly Steiner called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m. and introductions were made.

### II. Minutes January 29, 2015

The minutes of May 21, 2015 were approved by unanimous vote.

### III. Member Updates

Kelly Steiner explained that this is an opportunity to share upcoming events or other issues that people should be aware of. J. B. Mack started out by saying that Tara Germond has moved on to a new position with the City of Keene. He noted that he will be taking over the committee at least temporarily, with help from Mari Brunner who is taking minutes.

J. B. Mack also brought up that there will be a Tri-State Transit Conference September 9 – 11. Michael Acerno announced that he is planning on attending this conference.

Ellen Avery brought up Medicaid. She noted that NHDOT prefers that volunteer driver programs have clients who have Medicaid use their transportation benefits through Medicaid, if they have the transportation option. She noted that CVTC is looking into the people they serve right now to determine who has Medicaid.

Suzanne Bansley noted that DOT has requested that clients bill Medicaid first. She suggested that Ellen Avery add a column to her intake form that asks if people have Medicaid. Ellen Avery noted that New Hampshire Healthy Families and Well Sense, two companies that the N.H. Department of Health and Human Services contracts with to provide Medicaid services, will provide transportation to their clients.

Michael Acerno noted that at some point, everyone will have to go through brokers and will not be able to bill people directly. He noted that HCS is working with a company called CTA, which has been very difficult. By the end of the year, they won't be able to take any direct calls from clients - they will have to go through CTA or another broker.

Suzanne Bansley noted that the best they can do is ask people if they have one of those two companies (Well Sense or New Hampshire Healthy Families), and then ask them to call those companies. If the company declines to provide the client a ride, they can call back and get a ride through CVTC just like normal. She noted that CVTC and HCS should both add a column to their intake form that asks if their

clients are eligible for Medicaid. Michael Acerno clarified that they already ask their clients whether they are eligible for Medicaid, and if they say yes, they work with their Medicaid provider.

J. B. Mack noted that everyone is trying to track unmet need. He asked if it is important to track who calls for assistance and is a Medicaid recipient. He noted that while this would not track unmet need, he is wondering if it could still be useful to track overtime as the new Department of Health and Human Service requirements evolve.

Ellen Avery noted that at a volunteer driver conference, they talked about this issue but she wasn't clear on what they should do. Kelly Steiner noted that the challenge will be keeping up with the system as it changes. The changes will go into effect in December and last through 2017, so it would make sense for organizations to come up with a plan.

Chuck Weed stated that the County Commissioners are worried about the Managed Care Organizations (MCO) providing Medicaid services. The County is hoping it can play a new role with needs assessment. It will be a much greater role than what they currently do, which is to support the elderly population through nursing homes.

Kelly Steiner noted that it might make sense to collect data on the people who are denied a ride through their MCO. She asked Ellen Avery to give an update at the next meeting on what she learns about this issue. Michael Acerno noted that Adventure Taxi has a business model that seems to be working well. J. B. Mack asked if the group likes the idea of inviting Adventure Taxi to the next MRCC meeting. Suzanne Bansley responded that yes, it would be a good idea to bring Adventure Taxi, because they are a major player and it fits with the group's overall goal.

Michael Acerno gave an update on the bus stop for the YMCA. The YMCA is trying to raise money for this. The City Express has resumed stops at Market Basket in preparation for the KSC students that will be coming back from summer vacation shortly. Michael Acerno also noted that he is working on a grant for HCS.

#### **IV. Proposed Letters of Support**

J. B. Mack announced that two MRCC member organizations have requested letters of support from the MRCC for Federal Transit Administration funding.

J. B. Mack explained that the first letter of support is for HCS's grant application for new buses and supporting computer software.

**Motion: To authorize SWRPC to submit the letter to NHDOT as written.**

Motion by Ellen Avery, seconded by Gary Welch. Approved by unanimous vote.

The second letter of support is for Monadnock Family Services' (MFS) application for FTA Section 5310 funds. J. B. Mack explained that the application is for an additional vehicle to support the MFS program in Jaffrey.

**Motion: To authorize SWRPC to submit the letter to NHDOT as written.**

Motion by Ellen Avery, seconded by Gary Welch. Approved by unanimous vote.

## V. Policy Subcommittee: Recommended MRCC Bylaw Changes

J. B. Mack explained that the Policy Subcommittee has been working to update the MRCC Bylaws. Chuck Weed asked if it would make sense to involve Hillsborough County. J. B. Mack noted that it has been historically difficult for people in the eastern part of the region to make it to meetings in Keene, with Ellen Avery being the exception. Ellen Avery noted that there used to be two separate regions, Regions 5 and 6, but they were combined because the same players were working in both regions. J. B. Mack noted that he is open to suggestions on how to get Hillsborough County stakeholders more involved.

J. B. Mack continued going through the changes the Policy Subcommittee is proposing. One change they proposed was to eliminate references to monthly meetings because the group tends to meet on a quarterly basis. Ellen Avery asked about section 3.02 and why they took out the language related to voting. Kelly Steiner explained that there was a lot of repetitive language, and they thought the voting section was sufficient. J. B. Mack also noted that currently there is an officer position called "Secretary/Treasurer." They are recommending that this position be split into two positions, a Secretary and a Treasurer. They are also recommending that officers have a 2-year term instead of a 1-year term. Kelly Steiner noted that the reasoning behind the 2-year term recommendation is to promote officer continuity especially if the group meets on a quarterly basis.

Another recommendation is to change the requirements from a 2/3 majority vote to a simple majority vote, and that this be based on members present. Section 5.05 talks about the quorum needed for a meeting, which is a majority of the membership in good standing. A member in good standing is a member who has attended at least 75% of the meetings in the previous 12 months. J. B. Mack noted that it is his understanding that this has not been tracked. He plans to track this from now on in order to foster a group that is focused on creating a more coordinated system, and not just about allocating grant money. Kelly Steiner recommended that excused absences, such as an MRCC member providing the officers advance notice that they will not be able to make a meeting, should not negatively impact the member in good standing policy.

The policy subcommittee also recommends that a MRCC subcommittee, which may include volunteers outside the MRCC, make recommendations on future FTA funding, and then develop an arrangement with an outside impartial body to vote on the final distribution of funds. J. B. Mack noted that possible outside bodies could include the United Way, the Cheshire County Commissioners, Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) Steering Committee (formerly the MRTMA), and the SWRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

Kelly Steiner suggested that people should talk to their respective groups (Monadnock United Way, MAST, TAC, etc.). She noted that it will be important to create a volunteer team that is very familiar with transportation issues and the Monadnock United Way funding process. J. B. Mack asked if the group would have to vote on the membership of a subcommittee. Suzanne Bansley responded that it would require a vote.

J. B. Mack suggested that committee members ask their respective groups for volunteers and then reconvene at the next MRCC meeting to come up with a process for this volunteer team. Kelly Steiner asked Chuck Weed if he could check to see if a Commissioner would want to sit on this volunteer team.

J. B. Mack noted that the second sentence of Section VI: Voting should now read: "Election of officers and contractual commitments of the MRCC or its members are considered substantive issues." He also noted that the policy subcommittee decided to take out proxy voting. Chuck noted that Article X: Conflicts of Interest Disclosures does not have a definition of the term "conflict of interest." Ellen Avery

noted that it may make sense for people to declare their conflict of interest in written form so it is on record.

J. B. Mack offered to do research on written declarations of conflicts of interest. Kelly Steiner noted that the group could require all members to sign a conflict of interest statement. She asked if the group supports the idea of requiring members to sign a conflict of interest statement in order to be in good standing. Section 3.02 should now read: “To maintain good standing, a member shall have signed a conflict of interest statement; shall attend at least 75% of the meetings in the previous 12 months, miss no more than two consecutive meetings in a calendar year; and is encouraged to serve as a member of at least one of the MRCC subcommittees.”

**Motion: To amend the bylaws as discussed (copy attached to minutes).**

Motion by Ellen Avery, seconded by Gary Welch. Approved by unanimous vote.

## **VI. Outreach and Advocacy Subcommittee: Update**

J. B. Mack noted that at the previous meeting, the MRCC created a MRCC subcommittee that would focus on creating a vision for a coordinated system. This committee convened and had a good discussion which resulted in subcommittee members recruiting some outside “non-community transportation” stakeholders to be part of the group. During that process, some of the new recruited members began talking about a vision including such things as the Dillant Hopkins Airport. Former staff member Tara Germond had recommended that the group better define its scope and the boundaries of community transportation before moving forward. Kelly Steiner asked what the group thinks about forming a smaller group that will work on defining the vision and scope of the MRCC and then presenting to the larger group. Kelly Steiner noted that the purpose statement could be a good starting point.

Ellen Avery noted that the group probably would not need help from Jane Pointe, a consultant, to go through the visioning and scoping process. She also noted that the group should focus on how they fit into the larger picture. Kelly Steiner asked if the group wants to schedule a meeting to go over the visioning and scoping work. Suzanne Bansley suggested that the larger group work on this, and not just a subcommittee, in order to be more inclusive. Kelly Steiner noted that in that case, the process should be professionally facilitated because the group doesn’t have the capacity to facilitate this process.

Kelly Steiner asked if the group supports asking Jane Pointe to help facilitate this special visioning meeting. She noted that she will try to schedule something in the late fall, perhaps at the next quarterly MRCC meeting.

## **VII. Election of Officers**

Kelly Steiner noted that the old bylaws required the group to elect new officers at the start of each fiscal year which is technically June. She noted that it is difficult to have those positions be filled by members with neutral roles due to limited membership in the MRCC.

**Motion: To elect Kelly Steiner as Chair, Michael Acerno as Vice Chair, Suzanne Bansley as Co-Treasurer, Ellen Avery as Co-Treasurer and the SWRPC staff person (currently J. B. Mack) as Secretary.**

Motion by Gary Welch, seconded by J. B. Mack. Approved by unanimous vote.

## **VIII. Treasurer Report**

Suzanne Bansley noted that she has reorganized the report slightly from the year before. She has changed the reporting to include a section on Service Quantity. This section is required for end of year reporting, but it is easier to track this throughout the year instead of trying to collect that information all at once. Suzanne Bansley brought up the definition of “trips denied.” If the trip was canceled due to weather or because the rider canceled the ride, this does not count as a trip denied. When a volunteer is not available to provide a ride, that counts as a trip denied. Kelly Steiner asked if this definition is in writing. Suzanne Bansley responded that although the definition has been communicated a variety of times, she does not believe it has been shared in written form. J. B. Mack asked if a vehicle breaking down would count as a trip denied. Suzanne Bansley responded that yes, that would count as a ride denied because it is something that could be improved.

Ellen Avery said that she will send the end of year financials to J. B. Mack who can then forward them to the group.

Suzanne Bansley noted there is a small error in the report; it should say 13 trips denied and 54 trips provided for CVTC, not 54 trips denied and 13 trips provided.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

The group decided to send out a poll to schedule the next MRCC meeting in November.

## **X. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Brunner  
Planning Technician