

Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council For Community Transportation

MINUTES

October 25, 2017

1:00 p.m.

Present: Ellen Avery, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC)*; Suzanne Bansley, *Cheshire County*; Kathy Baird, *Monadnock RSVP*; April Buzby, *Keene Housing*; Linda Diluzio, R. J. Diluzio Ambulance Service, LLC; Jim Duffy, *Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Hitchcock Center for Population Health*; Bill Graff, *Monadnock at Home*; Bob Perry, *Volunteers Enabling Transportation (VET)*; Erica Roper, *Windham Regional Commission*; Kelly Steiner, *Monadnock United Way (MUW)*.

SWRPC Staff present were J. B. Mack, *Principal Planner* and Mari Brunner, *Planner*.

I. Minutes of June 21, 2017

Kelly Steiner welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a round of introductions. The minutes of June 21, 2017 were approved as written by unanimous vote.

II. Election of Officers

Kelly Steiner announced that it is time to elect new MRCC officers. J. B. Mack explained that the MRCC bylaws stipulate that there are Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary positions, all of which have two year terms, technically start July 1st. He explained that the bylaws state that no officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms and proceeded to read aloud Section 4.03 of the bylaws which discusses the responsibilities of the officers.

Motion: To elect Kathy Baird as Chair, Michael Acerno as Vice Chair, Ellen Avery and Suzanne Bansley as Co-Treasurers and April Buzby as Secretary.

Motion by Bob Perry. Jim Duffy seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

III. Continuation of MRCC Future Projects Discussion

Kelly Steiner explained that the MRCC will be continuing its conversation to improve the MRCC's readiness to react to grant funding opportunities other than FTA 5310 calls for proposals with project ideas. J. B. Mack had presented a form to the MRCC to help the group prioritize project ideas and understand the kinds of projects in which existing MRCC partners would likely participate. At the last meeting, the group decided to answer the form's question as part of a facilitated discussion. She explained that she worked with Mari Brunner to plan a facilitated discussion.

Erica Roper entered the room.

Mari Brunner explained that the purpose of today's exercise is to 1) identify priority projects for the region, 2) identify who should be at the table and 3) figure out what roles each organization could play. She presented a Powerpoint slide showing a list of 17 project ideas, which she explained J. B. Mack had extracted from previous Southwest Region Coordinated Community Transportation Plans. She added that there were also some "write-in" ideas that MRCC partners contributed to the list. The list shown on the screen was as follows:

1. Increase local capacity to provide new long distance medical ride services
2. Increase local capacity to provide new weekend ride services
3. Increase capacity to provide new evening/off-hour ride services
4. Increase capacity to provide transportation for employment, education and/or job training
5. Increase capacity to provide youth transportation including transportation to and/or from daycare and afterschool programs
6. Provide travel training assistance for existing services (i.e. help new riders/clients navigate the transit system)
7. Meet 5310 service provider's current unmet demand
8. Purchase and pilot MRCC integrated ride scheduling software
9. Purchase shared dispatching services
10. Purchase brokerage services
11. Purchase seamless insurance coverage to share drivers and vehicles
12. Purchase joint vehicles and maintenance service
13. Implement driver training programs to ensure consistency in driver training
14. Create and implement a plan for shared vehicle standards
15. Develop and implement a framework to use under-utilized vehicles and drivers to meet needs (i.e. town recreation department vehicles, day care vans, school buses, etc.)
16. Conduct education, outreach, and advocacy to increase community participation and understanding of community transportation
17. Provide transportation services to people experiencing loneliness and social isolation.

Suzanne Bansley entered the room.

Ellen Avery stated that project idea #1 is something that the MRCC already does. J. B. Mack clarified that if some of the project ideas on the list are things that the MRCC is already doing, the MRCC should interpret those project ideas as enhancing or expanding those project ideas. Linda Diluzio said she thinks there is a need for more long distance medical services. She explained that her company receives numerous calls for long distance rides and often refers those people to HCS.

Ellen Avery asked if there was a difference between project idea #8 and #10. J. B. Mack explained that #8 refers to a ride scheduling software package that would be shared among riders, which would allow transportation providers to share data and perhaps refer riders to each other with the software. Project idea #10, on the other hand, involves an agency being a one-stop call in center to take requests for rides and then work with a variety of transportation agencies to assign rides as well as manage ride payments. Michael Acerno gave the example of New Hampshire's current system where a broker manages ride requests for Medicaid rides. April Buzby asked if one project idea cancels the other out? Michael Acerno responded that they are two different concepts that could be implemented independently.

Kelly Steiner asked how the list on the screen relates to the State Coordinating Council's (SCC) priorities. Michael Acerno said that operating standards and vehicle standards are SCC priorities. J. B. Mack explained that the SCC, like the MRCC, wants to accommodate a range of populations with transportation needs if possible, but specifically notes the need for transportation for seniors, people with disabilities and low income populations.

After everyone at the meeting felt comfortable with the meanings behind each of the seventeen project ideas, Mari Brunner explained that the group will begin to prioritize the project ideas. She passed out a handout that asked each partner to mark down if they are a "provider", "rider/client", "funder" or "other". Additionally, the group was asked to indicate the level of impact on the community (high, medium or low) as well as the capacity/readiness of the region (high, medium or low) for each project idea. Mari explained that the group should not restrict its assessment of capacity/readiness to existing MRCC partners, but rather all of the potential partners that could contribute to projects in the region. Bill Graff asked if he was not an expert on a project idea, should he leave the project idea blank? Kelly Steiner said that everyone should try and address each project idea, regardless of their expertise. After each person had filled out the handout, Mari Brunner led a "dot exercise" asking each person to place a dot next to any project that they marked as "high" for level of impact and "high" for capacity/readiness. When only a couple of project ideas surfaced, Mari requested people to also mark any project ideas that were "high" and "medium". The following six projects emerged as project priorities:

- Project idea #16, "Conduct education, outreach, and advocacy to increase community participation and understanding of community transportation," with eight dots (three from "providers", three from "other", one from a "funder" and one from a "rider/client");
- Project idea #7, "Meet 5310 service provider's current unmet demand," with four dots (two from "providers", one from "other", and one from "rider/client");
- Project idea #5, "Increase capacity to provide youth transportation including transportation to and/or from daycare and afterschool programs," with three dots (two from "providers" and one from "other");
- Project idea #13, "Implement driver training programs to ensure consistency in driver training," with three dots (one "provider", one "other" and one "rider/client");
- Project idea #15, "Develop and implement a framework to use under-utilized vehicles and drivers to meet needs (i.e. town recreation department vehicles, day care vans, school buses, etc.)," with three dots (two from "other" and one from "provider");
- Project idea #17, "Provide transportation services to people experiencing loneliness and social isolation," with three dots (two from "providers" and one from "other").

After the group completed the first handout, Mari Brunner handed out a second document which asked each organization to evaluate the six priority projects. Questions on the form asked each MRCC partner to determine if the project aligned with one or more of the MRCC's goals, what role the organization could play in the project, what the probability was that the organization would participate in the project, whether the organization would be a project leader, participant or observer, and what other organizations should be involved in the project.

After each organization filled out the second handout, Mari Brunner facilitated a conversation about each priority project, focusing on what kinds of roles organizations could play and what other organizations should be involved in the project. For project idea #16, "Conduct education, outreach, and advocacy to increase community participation and understanding of community transportation", Kathy Baird

commented that outreach and education was a good fit for Monadnock RSVP. Ellen Avery said she checked off a number of roles for CVTC. April Buzby said resource development applied to Keene Housing and explained some of the in-house resources Keene Housing has to offer for project idea #16. Mari Brunner asked if organizations answered that there was a high probability that people would participate and most people said yes. Mari Brunner asked what organizations should be involved in this project idea that are not currently sitting around the table. Participants listed town leaders, town welfare officers, marketing/branding consultants, college students and businesses.

For project idea #7, “Meet 5310 service provider’s current unmet demand”, Bob Perry and Michael Acerno said that VET’ and HCS’ roles could help try and meet demand. Mari Brunner asked what other organizations should be involved. Kathy Baird suggested private providers. Michael Acerno and Bob Perry said any drivers. Erica Roper asked if the MRCC provided mileage reimbursement and said that college students might be a good resource. Other groups mentioned that could be involved included retiree groups, a representative from the Veteran’s Administration and churches.

For project idea #5, “Increase capacity to provide youth transportation including transportation to and/or from daycare and afterschool programs,” Mari asked what roles MRCC partners could play. Michael Acerno stated that HCS could provide transportation. Ellen Avery stated that CVTC could provide social service and medical trips. April Buzby said that there is a possibility that Keene Housing could be asked to provide match. Jim Duffy stated that Cheshire Medical Center may be able to provide advocacy, outreach and education, grant writing services. Ellen Avery asked if there is really any data to show need. April Buzby responded that for the Keene Housing population, there is definitely a need. There are many children that can’t go to school or other activities. Mari Brunner said that she is aware that the same thing has been described by The Grapevine in Antrim, as well as schools, in a recent System of Care study. Ellen Avery asked if there is liability risk in transporting youth? She explained that CVTC has a policy that a child has to be accompanied by an adult. April Buzby said that she is aware of some programs in Massachusetts, Maine and Alaska. Mari Brunner asked who else may be needed at the table to implement this project idea? April Buzby suggested the School Administrative Units and the YMCA. She noted that YMCA transportation program is limited because it does not go outside of Keene. April added that there is a range of youth that need transportation from early childhood for afterschool activities to high school for after school activities or employment. Mari Brunner asked who should be involved for older kids. April Buzby suggested Jobworks and employers as possibilities.

Mari Brunner led a line of similar questions for project idea #13, “Implement driver training programs to ensure consistency in driver training.” Linda Diluzio said that her agency could potentially help with training because their drivers are trained all the time. Kathy Baird said that agencies that might be good to have at the table include the American Association of Retired Persons, which has a defensive driving program. Suzanne Bansley suggested that the Department of Motor Vehicles be invited to the table. Bob Perry suggested that this training be most appropriate for volunteers. Erica Roper said that one type of training that Vermont is looking at more is “sensitivity training.” Michael Acerno volunteered to train drivers on defensive driving, which he said is about a 4 hour training.

In reaction to project idea #15, “Develop and implement a framework to use under-utilized vehicles and drivers to meet needs (i.e. town recreation department vehicles, day care vans, school buses, etc.),” Michael Acerno said that it would be very hard to implement this project idea, because people need to be licensed to drive certain vehicles. He said that he was not sure what role HCS could play in this project idea. He explained that HCS sometimes has drivers that are underutilized, but HCS would not want to loan out vehicles. Ellen Avery said that she brought this idea up. She gave an example of towns having grocery

shopping days, and using one vehicle on different days to take residents from different communities shopping. Towns could enroll to use the van as opposed to every town having its own vehicle. She explained that this idea could be a good grant opportunity to supplement CVTC's services. April Buzby noted that she has seen examples of churches coordinating with food kitchens and said that churches, towns and nursing homes might be interested in this type of service.

For project idea #17, "Provide transportation services to people experiencing loneliness and social isolation," Kathy explained that this is what MRSVP does. Jim Duffy said he thinks he wrote that idea explaining that he has come across data that shows a third of the senior population served by Cheshire Medical Center listed social isolation as an issue and 60% listed transportation as a problem. He explained that the hospital contacts CVTC or VET to provide rides to many of these individuals. Michael Acerno noted that the Friendly Bus is perfect for providing this service for anywhere in Keene. April Buzby stated that Monadnock Development Services and Monadnock Family Services have support groups for its non senior clients when they go other places rather than the office, but these kinds of services are not available on weekends or after hours. Ellen Avery suggested that peer to peer services would be an important solution for this project idea.

IV. Partner Updates

J. B. Mack announced that NHDOT has reached out to all the regional coordinating councils to see if they have feedback for NHDOT as it considers changing its policy that no vehicles under 10 seat minimum can be purchased with FTA 5310 capital funds. Michael Acerno said there are minimal vendors that provide this option. There was a question as to whether accessible seats are a requirement for the vehicle. Bob Perry said that reducing the size to minivans would allow for more efficient vehicles.

Ellen Avery announced that back in late summer, her entire volunteer pool received the "Spirit of NH" recognition from Volunteer NH. They were selected to receive the "outstanding volunteer service" award. November 7th is the award ceremony and many CVTC volunteers will be attending.

Kathy Baird announced that MRSVP hired a coordinator and she started today. Her name is Jazmin Belcoure, who will be based in Keene, and is expected to be in Peterborough two times per month.

Bob Perry said that VET is doing some strategic planning. VET's goal is to stay 100% volunteer operated.

Michael Acerno said that the MRCC's 5310 POS providers are all way ahead of schedule in use of 5310 funds. He said that there is a huge need and not enough money.

V. Public Comments

There were no public comments

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be December 19th at 9:00 a.m.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. B. Mack
Principal Planner