

Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation

MINUTES

December 8, 2015

Present: Michael Acerno, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Ellen Avery, *Contoocook Valley Transportation Center (CVTC)*; Kathy Baird, *Monadnock RSVP*; Suzanne Bansley, *Cheshire County*; Liz Chipman, *Keene Housing Kids Collaborative*; Karen Fabis, *American Red Cross – NH West Chapter (ARC)*; Bill Graff, *Monadnock at Home*; Jenna Schifflbein, *Cheshire Medical Center*; Kelly Steiner, *Monadnock United Way*.

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

I. Welcome and Introductions

Kelly Steiner welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

II. Minutes August 18, 2015

The minutes of November 17, 2015 were approved by unanimous vote.

III. Allocation Subcommittee

J.B. Mack explained that the idea behind having an allocation subcommittee is to ensure that there will be enough people without a conflict of interest who could help decide how to allocate funding. Many of the members of the MRCC are recipients of funding and therefore, cannot be a part of the allocation subcommittee. At the request of the MRCC, J.B. Mack reached out to people from the SWRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST), and the five people who are proposed to be on the committee are Kathy Baird, Rhett Lamb, Will Schoefmann, Kelly Steiner, and Chuck Weed.

J.B. Mack asked if there were any questions. Michael Acerno asked what would happen when the subcommittee brought its decisions back to the group. J.B. Mack responded that the group would need to vote to accept the subcommittee's recommendations; a quorum would need to be present for a vote to take place. Michael Acerno noted that when everyone with a conflict of interest leaves, there might not be a quorum, and J.B. Mack responded that might be the case. Kelly Steiner noted that while the allocation subcommittee's recommendations are advisory, it would be unusual not to accept the recommendations.

Liz Chipman asked if the MRCC should consider recruiting new members. J.B. Mack responded that he thinks outreach for new members is a good idea. Kelly Steiner noted that they are working on growing the group. She noted that Jenna Schifflbein and Liz Chipman are new members of the MRCC. Ellen Avery asked if Kelly Steiner, who is the chair of the MRCC and also a member of the allocation subcommittee, would get two votes. The same would be true for Kathy Baird and Chuck Weed. Suzanne Bansley said that she doesn't see this as an issue because they would still only have one vote in the MRCC. J.B. Mack noted that the City of Keene has subcommittees, and City Councilors on those subcommittees can vote on recommendations to the whole City Council, and then they also get to vote when the whole City Council is meeting.

Liz Chipman asked how the current subcommittee members were chosen. J.B. Mack responded that he asked the TAC and MAST at the request of MRCC because those groups have people interested and knowledgeable about transportation. Ellen Avery noted that there could be a better balance of MRCC members and non-members. She recommended that the MRCC continue to reach out to find more members. Kelly Steiner noted that there is another person she can reach out to at MUW. Suzanne Bansley noted that it would make sense to reach out to transportation providers such as Thomas Transportation. J.B. Mack said he would reach out to representatives from the Current, First Student and Ideal Taxi.

J.B. Mack asked if the group would like to vote to approve the slate as it stands. J.B. Mack noted that this is for a two-year term.

Motion: To approve the five people on the slate for the allocation subcommittee.

Motion by Michael Acerno, seconded by Ellen Avery. Approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Conflict of Interest Policy and Statement

Kelly Steiner asked the group if everyone had a chance to read the Conflict of Interest Statement. She then asked if anyone had any questions. Michael Acerno asked how he should handle potential conflicts of interest when they come up. He thinks there may be many instances where he might have a conflict of interest. J.B. Mack responded that there is a process in the bylaws for this; if someone thinks there is a conflict of interest, the group can discuss and collectively decide whether or not the person should abstain from voting on that agenda item. Kelly Steiner asked if there were any other questions or concerns. Suzanne Bansley noted that this will only be effective if the group is vigilant about keeping the Conflict of Interest Statement up to date. Kelly Steiner noted that this could be built into the process for electing new officers. Suzanne Bansley said that it may be a good idea to keep track of attendance and whether or not people have signed the Conflict of Interest Statement, and have it handy whenever there is a vote.

Bill Graff noted that one way to keep better track of attendance would be to have a sign-in sheet. Liz Chipman asked if it is necessary to sign the Statement on a yearly basis. Suzanne Bansley responded that it makes sense because people may change their affiliations.

Motion: To adopt the Conflict of Interest Statement.

Motion by Ellen Avery, seconded by Kathy Baird. Approved by unanimous vote

Michael Acerno asked if the members of the allocation subcommittee will each get one vote per organization. For example, both Rhett Lamb and Will Schoefmann work for the City of Keene. J.B. Mack responded that Rhett Lamb would be representing the TAC, and Will Schoefmann would be representing MAST. Kelly Steiner added that there would be more than one person from MUW; she thinks they would be representing their organizations that they work with, not MUW. Suzanne Bansley noted that the subcommittee is making recommendations, not voting, and they are not necessarily members of the MRCC, so they don't need to follow the same process as official MRCC members.

V. Member Updates

Kelly Steiner asked the group to go around and give a brief update and introduce themselves because there are new people at the table. Liz Chipman introduced herself, and said that she had no updates. Ellen Avery gave a brief update of activities at CVTC. Karen Fabis noted that they are referring all eastern trips to CVTC. Kathy Baird did not have any updates. J.B. Mack gave an update on the new federal transportation bill that was recently signed into law, which is called the FAST Act. One of the

outcomes of this new bill is that the federal government is making an effort to make it easier for transportation providers to provide trips by setting up a committee to re-evaluate eligibility restrictions that federal agencies put on transportation funding programs. Kelly Steiner noted that Monadnock United Way is starting to see some gaps in people who need transportation services, for example the homeless population and youth. Another update is that Concord has shut down their two emergency shelters and is sending people to the Monadnock Region, and they are providing vouchers for people to get transportation to our region. Karen Fabis asked if the Hundred Nights shelter is open yet. Kelly Steiner responded that it opened on Thanksgiving, and has 20 people using its services so far. The capacity is 26. This is important to know because these people will probably need transportation services. Michael Acerno introduced himself and gave a brief overview of the services that HCS offers. He noted that the day after Thanksgiving they started service to the YMCA. The official ribbon cutting ceremony will be December 15th. Suzanne Bansley introduced herself, she had no updates. Bill Graff introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his organization. Jenna Schiffelbein introduced herself and noted that they funnel money through a grant to SWRPC. Mari Brunner noted that they have been working on active transportation projects.

Michael Acerno asked the group if it was aware that there is a bill which proposes to raise the cap from \$5 to \$10 for motor vehicle registration fees; currently Keene spends the money on general infrastructure. Michael Acerno noted that it would be a good idea to use some of these funds for public transportation. Kelly Steiner noted that this could be a possible advocacy campaign. Michael Acerno noted that the City of Lebanon puts all of the money into transit. Kelly Steiner noted that at some point, the MRCC may want to form a subcommittee to distribute information to towns across the region. She asked if anyone would be interested in being on such a subcommittee. J.B. Mack noted that before such a subcommittee is formed, it may make sense to figure out what the different organizations are already asking from towns.

Kelly Steiner asked if the group would be interested in discussing this further at the next meeting and there was consensus to follow up on this item.

VI. American Red Cross/Contoocook Valley Transportation Company Proposal

J.B. Mack provided some background on a proposal to transfer 5310 Purchase of Service responsibilities from ARC to CVTC for Dublin, Jaffrey, Rindge, Hancock, Greenfield, Peterborough, and Sharon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays starting January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016. J. B. Mack explained that he, Ellen Avery and Suzanne Bansley conducted a conference call a few weeks ago with NHDOT Bureau of Rail and Transit staff to learn how to communicate the service change to NHDOT. Shelly Winters, Administrator from the Bureau of Rail and Transit, requested that the MRCC send a letter or minutes documenting that the transition of services from the ARC to the CVTC was approved. A description of the change in service should be included in this communication. Ellen Avery noted that she put together a document with the requested information, which was distributed to the group. The timeframe for phase one is January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016. The biggest different will probably be for the riders, who will only have to call one number instead of remembering to call two different agencies depending on the day. Ellen Avery noted that their goal is to recruit 35 of the 38 Red Cross drivers and so far they have signed up 26. Ellen Avery explained that ARC and CVTC have different reimbursement rates; the ARC reimburses at a rate of \$15 per trip, whereas the CVTC reimburses at a rate of \$0.41 per mile. The ARC has a fleet that needs to be maintained, and CVTC does not.

Suzanne Bansley asked if they are proposing to move \$12,570 from ARC to CVTC. J.B. Mack responded that he thinks CVTC is asking for the projected number, which is \$15,840. Kelly Steiner asked if there were any questions. Ellen Avery noted that they would invoice monthly, so they will be

able to see ahead of time whether they will need more funding or not. Ellen Avery noted that Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday trips are reimbursed at a rate of \$15/trip, whereas normally they reimburse at a rate of \$0.41 per mile. Suzanne Bansley asked if this means that they are paying drivers one rate, but getting reimbursed at another rate. Ellen Avery responded that no, this would not happen. She added that they will most likely switch everyone over to the \$0.41 per mile reimbursement next year.

Karen Fabis noted that they can revisit the numbers at the end of April to figure out if CVTC needs more or less funds. Michael Acerno asked if the ARC will be providing services through the end of June, or if they anticipate running out of money. Karen Fabis responded that they will be providing services whether or not they run out of money. Kelly Steiner asked if this needs to be a motion that puts this in writing. Suzanne Bansley suggested a letter from the ARC to the MRCC that would be attached as an amendment and sent to the DOT. Kelly Steiner asked for a motion for ARC to draft a letter to the MRCC to be included as an attachment to an amendment to the DOT that states their commitment to provide the same level of transportation as they are providing now in the western part of the region at least through June 30, 2016.

Motion: For American Red Cross to write a letter to the Monadnock Region Coordinating Council stating that it would provide the same level of transportation as they are providing today in the western part of the Monadnock Region (e.g. Alstead, Chesterfield, Gilsom, Harrisville, Hinsdale, Keene, Langdon, Marlborough, Nelson, Richmond, Roxbury, Stoddard, Sullivan, Surry, Swanzey, Troy, Walpole, and Westmoreland) at least through June 30, 2016. This letter would also be attached to an amendment regarding the 5310 Purchase of Service transfer of funds and services currently under discussion.

Motion by Suzanne Bansley, seconded by Michael Acerno. Approved by unanimous vote with Karen Fabis and Ellen Avery abstaining.

Kelly Steiner asked if there was any further discussion regarding the two numbers provided by Ellen Avery. Suzanne Bansley asked if Ellen Avery would be ok with splitting the difference or taking the average of the two numbers as the target number of rides. Ellen Avery noted that the number of trips from January – June 2015 was 838, the projected number of trips is 1,056 for the six month period, so the average between the two would be 947 trips. If CVTC wants to be reimbursed at a rate of \$15 per trip, this would result in \$14,205, which is roughly in the middle of the actual numbers from this past year and projected for this year. J.B. Mack asked Karen Fabis if this would leave ARC with enough money. He noted that ARC has been drawing down about \$5,000 per month, and they would have roughly \$6,000 left in January. Karen Fabis responded that it would be acceptable and could be revisited by the MRCC at a later date.

Suzanne Bansley recommended that the group vote to transfer funds based on the amount of trips that occurred in 2015, or \$12,570. She noted that CVTC would bill her for \$15 per trip, unless the drivers asked to be reimbursed at a rate of \$0.41 per mile. Ellen Avery agreed, and further clarified that trips would not be double charged at \$15 per trip and \$.41 per mile.

Motion: To transfer \$12,570 from ARC to CVTC based on the actual number of trips between January and June of 2015 of 838 at a rate of \$15 per trip, and that the MRCC reconvene in April or June to reassess this amount.

Motion by Suzanne Bansley, seconded by Michael Acerno. Approved by unanimous vote with Karin Fabis and Ellen Avery abstaining.

J.B. Mack asked what the ARC will do if they draw down their funds before June, which is highly likely. Suzanne Bansley responded that the ARC would not be reimbursed, but they should still submit invoices so they can keep track of how many trips they provided.

VII. Next Meeting

J.B. Mack noted that at the last meeting, the group had talked about meeting in January or early February and invite Jane LaPointe to come back. J.B. Mack asked if the group is ok with January or early February. The group concurred. J. B. Mack said he will send out a doodle poll.

VIII. Public Comment

There were no members of the general public present.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Brunner
Planner

DRAFT