

**Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council  
For Community Transportation**

**Minutes**

**October 19, 2023**

Present: Frank Dobisky, Chair, *Thomas Transportation*; Jennifer Robinson, Treasurer, *Cheshire County*; Erica Alusic-Bingham, *Southern New Hampshire Services*; Ellen Avery, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company*; Kathy Baird, *RSVP Volunteer Center*; Alberta Bronson, *The Lukas Community*; Alice Cable, *Fall Mountain School District (SAU 60)*; Sally Malay, *Keene Housing Kids Collaborative*; David Meader, *Citizen Member*; Lisa Steadman, *Liberty Mutual*; Alison Welsh, *Cheshire County*.

SWRPC Staff Present: Terry Johnson, *Senior Project Manager*; Jason Cooper, *Planner*.

Guests: Teri Palmer, *NH Statewide Mobility Manager*.

**I. Welcome**

Chair Dobisky called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and introductions were made.

**II. Approval of September 19, 2023 Minutes**

**Motion: To approve the minutes of September 19, 2023.**

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

**III. Treasurer's Report**

Jennifer Robinson explained that contracts have been split into two lines as the calculations for Cheshire County's indirect amount are still being sorted out with the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT). Sally Malay inquired as to why the KHKC project budget appears higher than expected. Jennifer Robinson responded that the budget represents the total funding amount which spans the two-year contract with the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS).

**V. Community Transportation Month Celebration**

The MRCC took time to acknowledge the activities that have occurred during October which marks the first annual statewide Celebrating Community Transportation Month (CTM). CTM partners include the NH Transit Association, State Coordinating Council (SCC), Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC), and transportation providers. Chair Dobisky thanked Ellen Avery who provided a cake and handed out buttons that were produced to commemorate the month. Ellen Avery described promotional activities that CVTC and other transportation providers have been involved in during the month. She said that full-page ads were published in the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript and Monadnock Shopper News recognizing HCS bus drivers, and CVTC and KSC volunteer drivers for their service. The ads were sponsored by Monadnock Community Hospital and Cheshire Medical Center. Both hospitals were eager to support CTM.

Teri Palmer provided details on celebrations happening statewide during the week of October 15<sup>th</sup> including pizza parties for drivers. She said that CTM overlaps with the Commute Smart NH Buses, Bikes & Brooms challenge. The challenge is promoted to employers and individuals to encourage people to commute using alternate modes of transportation such as carpooling, public transit, walking, biking, and skateboarding for which they can earn rewards. She said there is hope that CTM will be an annual occurrence in October. Terry Johnson reported that he worked with the Cheshire Medical Center to distribute Buses, Bikes & Brooms challenge promotional materials to 37 employers that are participants in the Wellpowered [https://orgswrpc.sharepoint.com/sites/SWRPCFileShare/Shared Documents/Data/Transportation/UPWP 2024-2025/500\\_TechAssistance/505\\_RCC/Meetings/MRCC/MRCC 2023-10-17/MRCC Minutes 2023-10-17 draft.docx](https://orgswrpc.sharepoint.com/sites/SWRPCFileShare/Shared Documents/Data/Transportation/UPWP 2024-2025/500_TechAssistance/505_RCC/Meetings/MRCC/MRCC 2023-10-17/MRCC Minutes 2023-10-17 draft.docx)

Worksites program supported by the Center for Population Health. Teri Palmer said CTM recognized a transportation mode each week throughout the month including fixed route public transit, volunteer driver programs, demand response, paratransit and veterans' transportation, and biking, walking, and other micromobility options. Kathy Baird mentioned that HCS is providing free rides on City Express and the Friendly Bus during the week of October 15<sup>th</sup> as part of this celebration.

Ellen Avery and Teri Palmer discussed their plans to bring a Bus Rodeo to New Hampshire. Alison Welsh asked for clarification on what a Bus Rodeo is. Erica Alusic-Bingham explained that it is a challenge for bus drivers to show off their safety and driving skills.

## **VI. SCC Bylaws**

Terry Johnson provided background information and opened discussion on draft bylaws for the RCCs that were developed by the SCC Governance Workgroup. The draft bylaws had been distributed with the MRCC meeting packet in advance of the meeting for review and comment. He provided legal background on the structure of the SCC and RCCs. He said the SCC was established to provide guidance for the coordination of community transportation options in New Hampshire and approve the formation of RCCs. The RCCs are responsible for facilitating the implementation of coordinated community transportation in their regions. The SCC and each RCC have their own sets of bylaws.

Terry Johnson informed the MRCC that the draft includes a set of uniform bylaws that, when finalized, are intended for adoption by the RCCs. The SCC Workgroup set a deadline of October 19<sup>th</sup> for written comments from the RCCs. The Workgroup scheduled a one-hour meeting on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00 p.m. to review and discuss the comments received. He said the purpose of today's discussion is to take input from the MRCC to relay to the SCC Workgroup. He added that Ellen Avery, Teri Palmer and he will be attending the October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Terry Johnson reviewed consolidated comments he received from Suzanne Bansley and two other regional planning commissions. He invited members to provide additional comments and informed the MRCC that all comments would be forwarded to the SCC Workgroup before the October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Several members expressed a general concern that the bylaws are overly prescriptive and do not necessarily represent the unique structures of the different RCCs. Chair Dobisky brought attention to specific language regarding the use of the word coordination vs. coordinating in the bylaws in relation to the title, "Regional Coordinating Council". Teri Palmer assured the group that the correct language is coordinating and will be addressed in comments to the SCC Workgroup.

Terry Johnson brought attention to specific sections of the document. He pointed to a passage describing the role of the lead agency as fiscal agent for the RCC. In written comments, it is noted that lead agencies are more than fiscal agents as they also have administrative and oversight responsibilities for the Section 5310 funding they pass through to their subrecipients. In her comments, Suzanne Bansley pointed to a passage that says the lead agency provides day-to-day supervision of the Regional Mobility Manager (RMM). She indicated that, presently, Cheshire County does not provide day-to-day supervision and could not do this under the current contracting structure. Cheshire County outsources this role to SWRPC which provides daily supervision of the RMM. Teri Palmer concurred that supervision of the RMM would place an extra burden on lead agencies and would represent a change from their currently established duties.

Teri Palmer provided more examples of how mobility management is unique in different parts of the state and therefore, difficult to govern under one set of bylaws. She discussed how the defined role of the RMM is to find the best transit solutions for individuals depending on the options available in the given region. Erica Alusic-Bingham noted that she did not find language in the draft bylaws to support RMMs identifying gaps in existing transportation options. Teri Palmer responded that such language exists in the NH Statewide Mobility Management Network Blueprint for Implementation.

Ellen Avery noted that the mobility manager network is in its second year and that there has been a significant amount of learning. Teri Palmer responded that as of June 1, 2024, the funding for mobility management will be changed, which will stimulate changes to the program. Because the NHDOT is likely to be the primary source of funding for RMMs, they will have more oversight of the mobility management network. She also said that the statewide mobility management blueprint will be updated in the near future which may bring additional changes.

Ellen Avery brought attention to a passage regarding RCC's having discretion to provide stipends to allow for participation by individuals who cannot afford to volunteer their time and/or travel expenses. Teri Palmer responded that this is not feasible and may need to be cut as RCCs do not have funding for this.

Terry Johnson indicated that MRCC membership has doubled in recent years, while the MRCC bylaws call for a minimum of five members to be physically present to constitute a quorum. David Meader voiced concerns about allowing five voting members to have decision making authority on behalf of the MRCC membership which currently stands at 20. He expressed interest in increasing the quorum. Sally Malay agreed. Ellen Avery brought up the lack of language regarding conflict of interest statements for voting members and said that she would be pushing for the inclusion of more specific language on this topic in the draft bylaws.

#### **IV. Partner Updates**

Alison Welsh discussed an NH Judicial Branch Request for Proposals (RfP) for providing statewide transportation services for Drug Court participants that was previously released. She said the RfP needs restructuring before it is re-released.

Teri Palmer mentioned that a task force is being formed to help facilitate more transit options for individuals with disabilities. She may be called upon to join the task force. If this happens, she will solicit input from the MRCC and other RCCs.

#### **VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

#### **VIII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jason Cooper  
Planner