

**Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council
For Community Transportation**

Minutes

February 21, 2023

Present: Ellen Avery, Chair, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC)*; Charlie Pratt, Vice-Chair, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Suzanne Bansley, Treasurer, *Cheshire County*; Frank Dobisky, *Thomas Transportation (TT)*; Mary Jensen, *Keene Senior Center (KSC)*; Meghan Marcucci, *Keene YMCA*; Lisa Steadman, *Citizen Member*.

SWRPC Staff Present: Terry Johnson, *Senior Project Manager*; Rich Clough, *Office Support Specialist*.

Guests Present: Robert Diluzio Jr., *Diluzio Transportation*; Tim LaBounty, *Diluzio Transportation*; Teri Palmer, *NH Statewide Mobility Manager*; Jennifer Robinson, *Cheshire County*.

I. Welcome

Chair Avery called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

II. Approval of January 17, 2023 Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of January 17, 2023.

Motion by Charlie Pratt, seconded by Frank Dobisky. Approved by unanimous vote, Lisa Steadman abstaining.

III. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was tabled.

IV. State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024-2025 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Combined Application

The draft SFY 2024-2025 FTA Section 5310 Combined Application was provided to the Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council (MRCC) as part of the meeting packet and copies were made available during the meeting. The application was developed by Suzanne Bansley based on submissions she requested from HCS, CVTC, KSC and SWRPC. The application due date is March 7, 2023. The NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has made available a total of \$490,600 for Region 5 for the two-year fiscal period beginning July 1, 2023. Suzanne Bansley presented the draft 5310 application budget showing a breakdown of expenditures for SFY 2024. The budget total was \$245,300. She stated that the total allocation for SFY 2025 will be the same and that specific line-item allocations will be determined and presented to the MRCC prior to the beginning of that fiscal year. She also noted that NH Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS) funds will cease in May 2024. Chair Avery noted that the Statewide Coordinating Council was attempting to identify other revenue streams to sustain statewide and regional-level mobility management activities. Suzanne Bansley asked the members of the Council to discuss any changes to the budget as presented. Line-item allocations were presented and agreed upon during the discussion. Subsequently the balanced operating budget was proposed for the application (refer to attached 5310 Budget DRAFT 02-21-23).

Motion: To approve Cheshire County as the Lead Agency for the SFY 2024-2025 FTA Section 5310 Combined Grant Application for the Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council.

Motion by Lisa Steadman, seconded by Charlie Pratt. Approved by unanimous vote, Suzanne Bansley abstaining.

Motion: To approve the submission of the SFY 2024-2025 FTA Section 5310 Combined Grant Application with accompanying SFY 2024 budget to the NH Department of Transportation.

Motion by Lisa Steadman, seconded by Frank Dobisky. Approved by unanimous vote with Chair Avery, Mary Jensen and Charlie Pratt abstaining.

V. Mobility Manager Update

Terry Johnson initiated follow-up discussion from the Keene Housing Kids Collaborative (KHKC) youth transportation program discussion that occurred at the January MRCC meeting. He said the goal of the program is to decrease the opportunity gap for 600 children and youth, 0-17 years old, from low-income households through providing transportation to youth programs offered by more than 40 community partners. He noted that KHKC has been working to address challenges that have arisen since the program's start. One challenge is that KHKC is not a transportation provider. KHKC enlisted Thomas Transportation to provide the service. He asked Frank Dobisky of Thomas Transportation to provide more information. Frank Dobisky stated that participation has increased from one family to seven since the program was launched. He noted that word-of-mouth and other outreach efforts played a significant role in increasing ridership. He stated that he serves as liaison between Thomas Transportation and KHKC. He said there is one dedicated driver and the program involves intricate logistics. He noted that there were a variety of destinations for the participants including music classes, fitness programs, recreation center, and the YMCA for swimming.

Terry Johnson said that the program was launched as a pilot. KHKC's two staff are responsible for administering the program. One challenge is that the KHKC Board requires a parent or parent authorized adult guardian to accompany the child. This can lead to multiple trips if the parent or guardian requests transportation to another destination while the child is attending a program. Frank Dobisky provided an example where a child spends two hours attending a program and the parent chooses to be transported home instead of waiting at the program location. Frank Dobisky was asked if Thomas Transportation could provide an adult monitor to eliminate the need for a parent or guardian to accompany the child. He noted that Thomas Transportation could do that at additional cost to KHKC.

Chair Avery said the January meeting discussion triggered an idea to purchase a van that could be shared between multiple organizations, including KHKC, and approaching Cheshire County for financial support. Suzanne Bansley offered to search for additional funding opportunities. Frank Dobisky said he is willing pull together some financial numbers for purchasing different types of vans. Teri Palmer said there is a state youth transportation initiative which is trying to use inactive buses from recreation centers, senior centers, churches, and other locations.

Terry Johnson suggested establishing a work group to explore what it would take to establish a program that involves sharing of vehicles among multiple organizations. Frank Dobisky, Teri Palmer and Suzanne Bansley volunteered to participate. Other recommended participants included KHKC Executive Director, Sally Malay, a representative from Monadnock United Way and Margaret Nelson of The River Center. Suzanne Bansley stated that such a program would align with Cheshire County's System of Care program.

VI. Partner Updates

Charlie Pratt reported that the HCS Swanzey to Winchester shopping shuttle service is not getting good response, even with door-to-door service. Additional outreach efforts will be attempted to attract riders.

Chair Avery invited Robert Diluzio, Jr. to provide an overview of Diluzio's transportation service. He reported that the COVID pandemic had a negative impact on much of their service which involves transporting riders to nursing homes and providing non-emergency medical transportation. He said ridership decreased significantly during the pandemic. Diluzio is looking to expand their transportation services including providing workforce transportation.

Meghan Marcucci reported that the YMCA is working on expanding services through the development of a community impact center.

Teri Palmer provided highlights of state-level activities including post-natal care packages offered by Dartmouth-Hitchcock Lebanon, statewide transportation to medical services, transportation for veterans, and volunteer driver initiatives.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Clough
Office Support Specialist