



Regional Coordination Council (RCC7)



Meeting Minutes 10/27/2022

Attendees:

In Person:

Ellen Avery, CVTC
Carol Brooks, SVTC
Stephanie Churchey, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center
Janet Langdell, SVTC
Donna Marceau, Mobility Manager
Pat Murphy, Town of Merrimack Welfare
Don Pare, Gate City Bike Co-op
James Wilkie, CareGivers

Remote:

Sara Ceaser, United Way of Greater Nashua
Ashley Derr, Gateways Community Service
Kristin Kostecki, Meals on Wheels
Julian Long, Nashua Urban Programs
Bob Mack, City of Nashua Welfare
Kerry Miller, Nashua Transit System
Iraida Munoz, City of Nashua Public Health
Teri Palmer, Statewide Mobility Manager

NRPC Staff:

Vince Noga, Transportation/Planning Analyst
Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator
Kristin Wardner, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

Donna Marceau opened the meeting at 10:03am.

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATES

Introductions were done with in-person and remote participants.

3. REVIEW SEPTEMBER 22, 2022, MEETING MINUTES

Marceau asked for any corrections to the September 22, 2022, meeting minutes.

Amendments:

- On Attendee list: add affiliation to Yvonne Goodwin - Greater Nashua NAACP
- On Attendee list: remove Residents section

Pat Murphy motioned, with a second from Carol Brooks, to approve the September 22, 2022, minutes with changes. The minutes were approved by consensus.

4. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER UPDATES

NTS

Kerry Miller gave the update:

- Big uptick in applications for demand response, while dealing with a driver shortage.
- Community outreach continues – Merrimack Senior Fair, Adult Learning Center Job & Resource Fair.
- Teri Palmer asked about the driver shortage – Miller did not have the particulars.
- In response to Marceau, Miller stated she didn't have an update on the Hudson funding.

SVTC

Janet Langdell gave the update:

- Rides doing well in Souhegan Valley (6 towns).
- About 37% ahead for first quarter of this fiscal year compared to last year – still behind Covid numbers. They receive about 5-6 applications each month.
- Community outreach continues – Hollis Old Homes, Mont Vernon events
- Carol Brooks spoke about the Mont Vernon event at Lamson Farm and said there was a lot of interest.

CAREGIVERS

James Wilkie gave the update:

- Rides are steady.
- Volunteer recruitment is always a challenge. Have had success with Facebook ads.
- About 2 weeks away from taking clients in Wolfboro area.
- Langdell asked about volunteers from Amherst, Milford, Hollis areas. Wilkie stated they are close to being comfortable but there isn't a lot of interest outside of Nashua. Langdell said SVTC does refer people to CareGivers.

GATE CITY BIKE CO-OP:

Don Pare gave the update:

- Entering passively active season. They will still be available and can make arrangements to assist if needed.
- On average the Co-op gives away about 10 bicycles a week and receive about 20 donations. They are trying to locate a source or agency for the surplus of bicycles they have.

Marceau mentioned that the Gate City Bike Co-op is holding their board meeting at the NRPC office on Monday, 11/7.

Waitkins read Miller's message from chat:

Kerry Miller: One thing I forgot to mention is that NTS was approached by the city's public access TV station to do a regular show (monthly or bimonthly perhaps) about the different things going on with Nashua Transit. We're going to start out by filming an introductory segment sometime next month. It'll be like a meet the leadership team kind of thing. Beyond that, the show would cover anything from general updates, events, programs and the different ways we engage the community with our services. So, pretty cool!

Langdell suggested it would be good to include travel training in the video (transit vs. fixed route) and that they could collaborate to do something geared toward the Hudson/Merrimack/Souhegan Valley outer routes to have posted on local access.

5. SCC UPDATE

Marceau continues to attend the monthly SCC meetings and gave some highlights from the 10/6 meeting, to include that NH is receiving national attention for their mobility management program; there is a gap with volunteer driver programs region to region; and diversity, equity and inclusion is a huge effort with the program. She briefly reviewed programs discussed at the last RCC meeting: Unite Us and Commute with Enterprise. In response to Langdell's question about the "grey areas" in the Enterprise program, Teri Palmer stated there is a meeting tomorrow (10/28) regarding it and she hopes there will be a lot of answers. She explained the specifics of the program and stated that it could be an

amazing program if there can be employer buy-in. Some known limitations are you cannot use a paid driver and volunteer driving programs cannot lease the vehicles. Marceau stated more highlights of the 10/6 SCC meeting were youth initiatives; the possibility of having a consumer representative / advocate at the SCC meetings; and the need for standardized bylaws for the RCCs.

Munoz shared that Nashua Public Health has a radio show every Friday and can coordinate with others to come discuss public transit and other available services. It is on WSMN 1590 AM hosted by Bobbi Bagley and Lisa Vasquez.

In response to Langdell, Marceau said that there has been nothing set on updating the SCC bylaws.

6. REGIONAL MOBILITY MANAGER UPDATE

- Marceau reviewed what she has been working on since the last month. She continues to get calls from residents, agencies, etc. She gave a couple examples of calls – someone needing to get to work, a dialysis case, and someone from Litchfield needing to get to medical appointments.

Ellen Avery arrived at the meeting.

- Outreach: Hispanic Network, Cultural Connections meeting, Continuum of Care, Merrimack Senior Fair, municipal outreach, and more; She has dropped into several places and dropped off brochures and introduced herself.
- Langdell asked for clarification about the dialysis call Marceau received – Marceau said that someone from Lahey Clinic called for a client that needed to get from Dracut to Derry. Langdell explained that recently they have seen residents that have had to travel longer distances for dialysis.
- Marceau mentioned a public health initiative she learned about: Applied Health Leadership Project – focus on transportation through public health. It is grant funding for the city of Nashua and she assisted with compiling the required documentation.
- Mobility Manager’s meeting is held twice a month. Discussed outreach and emerging from Covid.
- She would like to finish up the Transportation Guide soon and welcomes input.
- She will be working on updating the bylaws and would like more agencies to sign MOU.
- Marceau received an email from Fred Butler regarding 5310 Capital Funding – Waitkins discussed details. The funding is for accessible vehicles and capital equipment and the application deadline is December 5th. Those eligible to apply are private non-profit organizations, local government authorities, private operators of public transportation including shared ride and taxi services.

Langdell asked Waitkins when the 5310 RCC funding solicitation will come out. It is normally late-December but heard it may be November. Palmer stated she can ask NH DOT and report back. Palmer asked for clarification about leftover money and if it is left over 5310 funds from this contract period. Langdell said there will be 5310 funding remaining and normally that goes back into the pot to be resplit out.

7. REGIONAL VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM STUDY

Ellen Avery, Executive Director, CVTC, introduced herself. Marceau invited her to discuss volunteer driving and to get her input on the potential of a new program. Avery explained that CVTC began in 2008, she joined in 2013. CVTC started by serving 13 towns and now serves 33. She explained that the

NW chapter of American Red Cross was running a medical transportation program that ended in 2017, and CVTC absorbed the program. Regarding volunteer driving programs in urban settings, she discussed CVTC and Keene: there is a service in Keene (Friendly Bus and City Express) that they regularly collaborate with and refer Keene residents to. She thinks there is value in volunteer driving programs. Langdell said SVTC had a similar collaboration with FISH, now defunct. She stated the feasibility study is meant to look at our region, what resources are available, is there a potential for a pool of drivers.

Avery discussed volunteer drivers – she believes it is a continuing process and involves planting seeds. They do have a pipeline of drivers - their ride requests are high right now, as is their unmet need in part because they don't dispatch and it is based on driver availability. Langdell asked about CVTC eligibility: Avery said they mostly serve older adults and those with disabilities per 5310 funding. But they will serve those under age 60 if there is a definite need. Waitkins said the feasibility study aims to determine if there is a source of volunteer drivers and he is not sure how that can be quantified. Langdell thinks the question is do we think we have pockets of potential volunteers. Brooks asked how CVTC drivers handle those with wheelchairs, medical equipment, etc. Avery said ideally the rider manages their own equipment, they try to protect drivers – no lifting, no going in homes, etc., but a lot of it is case by case when they register new drivers. Langdell stated that under the 5310 program if you are getting funding and providing ambulatory rides you must be able to accommodate accessible rides. The funding allows for the ability to provide an accessibility van.

Wilkie said he doesn't think adding another VDP program in the area is the answer, rather reinforcing what is in existence. The driver pool is limited. He mentioned the statewide VDP initiative and thought it may be more beneficial for it to mention the specific regions/programs looking for drivers. His opinion is the established programs should be strengthened. Adding to the mix could make it territorial. Langdell mentioned Caregivers does have income limits and does not serve all the area so when looking at solutions, will need to look at all the limitations. Wilkie said that all the programs have created partnerships and refer clients to the appropriate program for their region.

Avery explained that when CVTC started, the director created town groups to get out and talk to people and she wonders if something similar would be beneficial for the communities out there that have nothing. Langdell said all the small towns have a core group of people. Avery mentioned a call she got from a Wilton resident who is interested in doing something for their town.

Waitkins said it seems that there is another piece that needs to be created and Langdell said they need to build on what they have and there needs to be creative solutions for gaps in service. Wilkie agrees that the specific gaps need to be identified before moving toward a solution. In response to Avery, Langdell said there are 13 towns in the region and Nashua Transit and paratransit service 9 of those; one town is serviced by another VDP (Salem CareGivers services Pelham); Caregivers services the towns contingent to Nashua; and a church group that gives rides in Milford for members. Riders in the region are limited to the locations that they can get transportation to. Langdell said that SVTC has been asking how to integrate routes better to serve, for example, someone needing to get from Merrimack to Milford or vice versa - how to get people from town to town how without upsetting the funding because each program is funded in different ways. There was agreement that a gap analysis needed to be done and Langdell stated the other part is do we have pockets of potential volunteers. She said that it would be ideal to bring volunteers on that live in a specific town who are willing to at least drive clients in contingent towns or within a certain radius.

In response to Wilkie, Avery said they use a scheduling program that was created for them in 2008. Caregivers uses RideScheduler, a web-based program.

8. OTHER TRANSPORTATION ISSUES OR CONCERNS

None

9. ADJOURN:

As of now, there will be no November meeting. Langdell stated it should be left open depending on the timeline for the RCC funding. There was a discussion about combining the November and December meetings and holding one the beginning of December. It was agreed to wait for the email regarding the funding solicitation timeline before deciding.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41am.

From Zoom Chat:

00:57:30 Kerry Miller: One thing I forgot to mention is that NTS was approached by the city's public access TV station to do a regular show (monthly or bimonthly perhaps) about the different things going on with Nashua Transit. We're going to start out by filming an introductory segment sometime next month. It'll be like a meet the leadership team kind of thing. Beyond that, the show would cover anything from general updates, events, programs and the different ways we engage the community with our services. So, pretty cool!

01:00:26 Teri Palmer: This is awesome!!

01:03:11 Iraida Muñoz- Public Health Equity Officer: Our Radio Show Public Health hour are every Friday at 10am. We can coordinate a visit to the radio station to talk about Public Transit and available services. Feel free to reach out to me or Lisa Vasquez (Behavioral Health Strategist).

01:03:55 Teri Palmer: Iraida where can I find the radio show?

01:04:22 Kerry Miller: Iraida that's an awesome idea thank you!! I know Lisa, so I'll reach to you and her in the future to see how we can coordinate that.

01:04:55 Iraida Muñoz- Public Health Equity Officer: 196 Main Street. Masonic Building.

01:05:39 Kerry Miller: It's WSMN 1590 AM or 95.3 FM

01:06:26 Iraida Muñoz- Public Health Equity Officer: WSMN 1590

01:07:20 Iraida Muñoz- Public Health Equity Officer: And we do a recap in Spanish by the end of the program..

01:08:38 Kerry Miller: Nice!!

01:42:26 Teri Palmer: Thank you everyone!! I am going to jump onto the 5311 meeting!

02:19:43 Kristin Kostecky, Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County: Thank you!

NEXT MEETING:

NO NOVEMBER MEETING – DECEMBER MEETING DATE TBD

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY KRISTIN WARDNER, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT