



APPROVED
Regional Coordination Council (RCC)
Meeting Minutes
1/27/2022

Attendees:

Janet Langdell, Interim Reg. Mobility Manager	Matt Waitkins, NRPC
James Wilkie, Caregivers	Emma Rearick, NRPC
Pat Murphy, Town of Merrimack (Remote)	Mason Twombly, NRPC
Kerry Miller, NTS (Remote)	
Lisa Emerson, Town of Milford (Remote)	
Jen Dumont, Lyndeborough resident (Remote)	
Bob Mack, City of Nashua Housing (Remote)	

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Langdell opened the meeting at 10:05am asking for a round of introductions.

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER UPDATES

NTS

Langdell asked Miller if she had any news to share from NTS. Miller responded that she is still adjusting to her role and did not prepare any news to share with the group. Langdell shared that Lori from NTS has told her that Hudson had been busy with paratransit applications, and Merrimack had been slow. Miller confirmed that was what she had been seeing.

CAREGIVERS

Wilkie shared with the group that in 2019 they did 1,583 one-way trips, in 2020 that increased to 2,255, and 2021 the number rose to 4,494 one-way trips. He noted that since he started with CareGivers, they raised the limit of rides a week from one to two, and now to three. He noted the increase was with groceries, medical appointments, and particularly dialysis. Wilkie explained that CareGivers services Manchester & Nashua and any of the towns touching/bordering them, with some exceptions. There are eligibility requirements for rides which are first income based and then need to be 62 or older, or have doctor confirmed disability. He noted that demand is up. He also shared he had hired a program coordinator who was doing an excellent job and expected demand to continue to rise as they did outreach in the communities.

Langdell inquired about how much of the trips were in the Nashua area versus Manchester area. Wilkie stated that it was roughly an 80-20 split with 80% coming from Greater Manchester and 20% coming from Greater Nashua. He also noted that they had seen a dip in requests from Greater Nashua at the beginning of the pandemic because United Way had really stepped up on grocery delivery.

SVTC

Langdell shared that ridership has been slowly increasing. She noted that that they are seeing an interesting shift and that rides from Wilton and Amherst had been increasingly significantly. She explained that this was because of the addition of a few dialysis patients from that area. She noted that they are watching the hours closely with the increase in rides from further distances. Langdell shared that they had some requests of handicapped persons trying to get to work. She noted they were trying to help with this if it works with the scheduling.

Langdell shared that it's the middle of local municipal budget season, and that she had been getting a good response from communities that provide a portion of the match monies. She noted that Milford had requested that it be a warrant article again. Langdell shared that SVTC was getting an average of six applications a month for paratransit.

REGIONAL MOBILITY MANAGER

Langdell shared that the focus had mostly been ironing out the description for the mobility manager position. NRPC is updating their website and reviewing the documents and resources that are available from the RCC that is on there. She shared that Nate Schelberg from NTS had corrected the RCC logo and provided them for use.

Murphy shared that she had recently had a need from someone to go from Merrimack to Bedford for a medical appointment and that it was frustrating to not have an option. She noted the person ended up taking a taxi for about \$100. Langdell asked about if Murphy had referred this person to CareGivers. There was discussion about if they would do those rides between regions. Wilkie confirmed that Caregivers could provide that service.

Emerson inquired as to what the "7" in the RCC logo referred to. Langdell answered that the state was divided into different RCC regions, and that Greater Nashua was numbered as region 7.

SCC UPDATE

Langdell shared that the statewide mobility manager position will be filled by a position through RLS Associates. She explained that the DHHS CDC Grant would be providing funding for the mobility management positions and programming related to mitigating the impacts of the pandemic in the five rural regions. She pointed out it would be great to watch what the rural regions are doing for programming, as there may be some inspiration there. Langdell inquired to Waitkins if he had heard any about that programming in the Peterborough area. Waitkins shared that there had not been much progress yet on the programming side and that they had chosen to focus on other priorities first. The mobility management blueprint and RFP is almost complete. She noted that suggestions from the SCC meetings had been taken into consideration.

Langdell spoke briefly about a significant issue that came up in late December regarding potential required matching funds from the three urban regions towards the mobility manager funding. For Region 7 this would have been \$12,000. This information from NHDOT was brand new and took everyone by surprise. It is fortunate that the SCC leadership and NHDOT were

able to clarify the funding plan and remove this requirement. . She shared that a new focus area for the SCC will be strategic planning and they are talking about a May event. She mentioned that the NHTA's "Public Transportation in New Hampshire" document, which is extremely helpful, is being updated and we'll send out the link available. The next SCC Meeting is February 3,2022 and would be hybrid.

Wilkie asked about whether other providers had been having issues along the lines of enforcing covid protocols. He noted they had a situation in which a volunteer had refused to wear a mask and the rider refused to take the ride as a result. Langdell shared they did have an incident in which a rider would take the mask off after entering the bus. The passenger was immediately taken home as a result. Langdell noted that it is the FTA policy is to be masked on the buses and they need to follow those rules. There was some continued discussion on this topic.

REGIONAL MOBILITY MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION

Langdell shared that they had updated the position summary and opened the floor for any comments on the document. Murphy shared that she felt that all the issues had been addressed and she felt that the job description was well done. Waitkins gave a brief explanation of the job description and the background of the effort to bring about full-time regional mobility managers. Wilkie asked about whether the salary is enough to be enticing, stating he wasn't sure about that. Miller asked whether the position was brand new. Langdell explained that it is not exactly new but will now be full-time region wide. She noted that the role would work with the NTS mobility manager to ensure that processes are not duplicated.

The Regional Mobility Manager job description was adopted by consensus of the Nashua (Region 7) RCC, and it was agreed that NRPC could move forward with the hiring process once the FY22-23 5310 contract revisions are confirmed.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER STUDY

Waitkins gave a background of the project and explanation of its purpose. He shared the results of the first portion of the public outreach which was aimed at surveying VDPs that currently serve at least some portion of the region. He noted that it was determined that there were 6 VDPs operating within the region and 21 outside the region in New Hampshire. 27 Total surveys distributed, 18 completed, and 67% completion rate. Waitkins then shared results of the survey with charts corresponding to each question on the survey. He explained the results for each question. Waitkins then explained the next steps of the public outreach process. He shared that the survey of current and former volunteer drivers is next. He states that he was going to look into whether any group had already surveyed their drivers. He also said it would be good to do a focus group of former FISH drivers, and possibly the Milford Methodist Church volunteer drivers.

Waitkins continued by explaining the outreach program and stating that he wants to try to keep the number of surveys under control. He noted that they had collected a lot of information from organizations from the Locally Coordinated Transportation Plan. Langdell noted that best management practices is part of the VDP study proposal. She requested that if anyone knows of any good examples of VDPs other than in the region to please send that information to Matt. Dumont brought up that community Facebook groups could be a great place to get some of this

information out there. Waitkins then gave a brief overview of the timeline for the project, noting that he hopes to have the Phase 1: Public Outreach by June.

OTHER BUSINESS

Langdell asked Wilkie if he would be willing to have a conversation about service in the western part of the region. Wilkie stated yes, he would like to, and that they now have a staff person that is dedicated to expansion. Langdell asked Dumont if they could also have a conversation around service. Dumont responded that it would be good to have that conversation, and that there are so many groups and committees she is really trying to figure out who does what.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

NEXT MEETING:

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 24 AT 10AM