



**Regional Coordinating Council (RCC)
Meeting Minutes
06/09/17**

Attendees:

Carol Brooks, SVTC
Camille Pattison, NTS
Tom Young, Town of Litchfield
Rebecca Harris, Transport NH
Dennie Townsend, SVTC
Rebecca Crowther, SVTC
Beth Todgham, SNHS

Janet Langdell, SVTC
Eloise Carleton, SVTC
Matt Waitkins, NRPC
Karen Baker, NRPC
Steve Falbel, The Steadman Hill
Consulting Team
Jennifer Zorn, McFarland Johnson

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Waitkins opened the meeting at 10:07 am followed by a brief overview of the agenda.

REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 3, 2017

Waitkins referred to the minutes of February 3, 2017 included in the agenda packet and asked if there were any comments or changes. Langdell noted minor grammatical errors on pages 2 and 4. Baker read an email from Pat Murphy (not present) from Merrimack with a correction on page 4, 3rd full paragraph, 4th sentence that should read "Murphy said that she would bring this to the *Town of Merrimack* and Todgham said she could bring it to SNHS."

Brooks motioned to approve the minutes as amended with a second from Carleton. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: NASHUA TRANSIT SYSTEM (NTS) APPLICATION FOR FTA 5310 CAPITAL FUNDING GRANT

Waitkins explained that NTS intends to apply for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 Capital funding grant and is seeking support from the RCC in the form of a vote to apply for this funding. Pattison explained in more detail. NTS is seeking funding that would cover the cost of one replacement van that would be used primarily in rural areas. This van would be the designated Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative (SVTC) vehicle because much of the SVTC region is considered rural. Waitkins showed a map of the Nashua Urbanized Area and Pattison pointed out the rural vs. urban areas across the region. She noted that since most of the SVTC service area is designated as rural, a case could be made to use FTA funding that is designated for rural areas to purchase the van. Pattison noted that back in 2011 there was 2.3mil in federal funds which have since dropped by 1.4mil. Any surplus FTA funds have been used to purchase new busses and vans but NTS still needs to locate funding to replace 3 trolleys and 3 more vans. She hopes to procure Section 5339 funding to replace the trolleys.

Pattison said that NTS is seeking \$110,500 of Section 5310 funding to cover the cost of one replacement van. The van will be used in rural areas, so it is therefore reasonable that Section 5310 rural funds could be used to purchase the van.

Pattison added that a letter of support from SVTC and from the RCC is what NTS is looking for.

Langdell asked how many vans NTS has. Pattison said they have 9 paratransit vans are getting 6 new ones. Pattison informed the group of the FTA Transit Asset Management (49 CFR Part 625) rule established on July 26th 2016 which requires transit agencies to establish and adopt performance targets for Transit Assets by January 1st 2017 for the following fiscal year of which Nashua Transit System has subsequently developed to meet their deadline. She also noted that NTS's fleet is really aging and there are time and regulation requirements on procuring.

Langdell stated that if SVTC can't purchase service from NTS, then they would have to buy on their own, at least 2 vans which would result in overhead and other issues if they could not purchase service from NTS. She felt this was appropriate and that SVTC would be in support of NTS's application. Harris suggested noting this in their letter of support and to also note it increases collaboration and resources.

Townsend questioned what happens to the old paratransit vans. Pattison discussed briefly the process taken in the past on selling off of fixed route busses and that going forward she would have them appraised first to find out what the minimum amount is to get for them and put out a RFP or auction them with a minimum. She added that they would be selling off 7 or 8 of them and would use the money to purchase a new van.

Todgham talked about retro-fitting old stock into mobile food trucks Langdell said to put her on the list if the vans could be retro-fitted (not for SVTC). Pattison noted that the trolleys are not good for everyday use such as in colder weather. Townsend stated that she was also in full support of the application noting that it was for capital and not direct services. Waitkins showed a proposed motion for the group. After discussion and some modifications to the motion,

Todgham motioned with a second from Townsend that The Region 7 (Nashua) Regional Coordinating Council resolves to support the Nashua Transit System (NTS) application for FTA Section 5310 Capital Funding for \$110,500 to purchase one handicap accessible, 15 passenger low-floor van that will be used primarily to serve the rural areas of the region. All were in favor.

Pattison stated that she would need a letter of support from the RCC on NRPC letterhead.

DISCUSSION ABOUT 2016 NEW HAMPSHIRE STATEWIDE COORDINATION OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES PLAN

Waitkins provided a brief history of the Statewide Coordination of Community Transportation and the most recent update and re-write of the plan. He passed the floor to Harris to provide an update on the most recent discussions at the SCC regarding the plan rewrite.

Harris stated that a report is just a report and it what you do with that report. She stated that the SCC felt that there was not a clear strategic direction in the rewrite and it was more of

laundry list. She noted that they are in the middle of a change currently on the roles, goals and strategies and will have it ready by mid-August. Instead of a do this, do that list, the SCC is working on a theory of change framework.

Harris stated that the SCC had agreed on a definition of coordination and wants successful coordination and increased levels of trust between RCC's and the SCC. In addition, establishing what they need to do to get to the definition of coordination (reduction in gaps in service and how to get there, how to reduce redundancy and increase efficiency to serve more individuals,).

Harris noted that SCC is working on this framework that all the recommendations can fit into. Langdell stated that the 5310 Purchase of Service is a 2 year grant with ½ year left until the next round and Formula Fund grants are annual. She asked what Harris anticipates on the regional level for formula funds with this framework adding that in the current document, the outcome measures do not seem appropriate for what SVTC is doing. Harris noted that there is a lot of disagreement at the SCC level on using formula funds for mobility management but they are still working on that. Langdell asked if she anticipated them coming to an agreement by December of 2017. Harris said she hopes to. Langdell also asked what outcome does this serve expressing her concerns with 5310 grants coming in January and the potential impact to the region. She suggested that if the SCC can't come to an agreement by the end of the year to take another year so all regions can continue what they are doing. Langdell said it would be good if the SCC posted their draft minutes within 10 business days. Harris said that is difficult because they have no staff support. She added that the SCC will look at the outcome measures and see measures make sense.

NHDOT STATEWIDE STRATEGIC TRANSIT ASSESSMENT (SSTA)

Waitkins informed the group that this study will inventory and assess the needs of New Hampshire's public transit systems and intercity bus transportation. The Steadman Hill Consulting Team will lead a discussion and will be seeking input about the unique transit needs of our region. Waitkins introduced Steve Falbel from Steadman Hill and Jennifer Zorn with McFarland Johnson. Falbel provided an overview of the SSTA noting that it is a 2 year statewide project that focuses on fixed route and inter-city bus. He added that this would be more of a discussion on transportation needs, data sources and to gather information from the region and incorporate it into this study. He noted that there will be 4 phases:

- Existing Condition – Inventory of services
- Public Outreach – Stakeholders and general public (Overviews with NHTA & RPC's done)
- Development of Sustainable Public Transportation System in NH – 2018
- Park n Ride Study – Wrap up then final report

Falbel started off by asking the group to introduce themselves and tell him what they perceived as the greatest need in their region.

Pattison introduced herself and referred to the recently completed NTS Comprehensive Plan which outlined the needs most recognized through public outreach to the general public. The needs that came from that were bus service earlier on Saturdays, Sunday service, and Walmart trips. She noted that they are not a transit authority so they can't use Nashua taxpayer money for transportation to other communities, but they are looking into a pilot program and dovetailing it with the SVTC. Additionally, a big need was fixed routes to Merrimack and Hudson.

Langdell introduced herself and stated that a bus to work comes up a lot as an important transportation need as well as connections to Manchester, Exit 6 in Nashua and connections with commuter rail and bus service. Falbel asked what she has heard about connecting to Lowell, noting that he has not heard a lot of requests about service to Lowell, Salem or the CART region. Langdell said there are requests for Nashua to Boston, Peterborough and some healthcare facilities in Wilton and some requests for SVTC to go to Keene. Waitkins added that there are requests for service from Keene to Nashua for Boston Express.

Todgham noted getting clients from Nashua to Lebanon for services that can't be done anywhere else is also a challenge. Langdell added that there is a need for services to the VA in Manchester and services of the VA in Hooksett. Townsend noted that the DAV has limited services.

Falbel asked if there were any issues with intercity bus services or parking to get the bus and Boston Express. Pattison noted that Exit 8 Park n Ride would be expanded to include 25 extra spaces due to an upcoming repaving and re-aligning of the parking spots. Pattison noted that she read that Flatley Company is paying for a van service from Alewife in MA up to Tara Heights Commons in NH. Langdell commented that Alene Candles does something similar for workers from Lowell.

Todgham noted the issues with transportation from Nashua to the Manchester Airport. Pattison informed the group of the new NTS bus summer trips to the seacoast and that they are looking into Canobie Lake trips for next year if this is successful. She added that the first bus trip was this past Saturday.

Langdell voiced the concerns of Merrimack on transportation issues as connections to Manchester and Route 3 Daniel Webster Highway for shopping and medical trips. Currently they have paratransit services with NTS. Young felt that was a need for Litchfield as well.

Falbel asked the group about rail. Pattison stated that the Nashua Mayor is working to get a park n ride in Nashua. Harris commented that the initial choice for rail was service to Manchester. Another member commented that the original plan was to have service to Concord and now they are just trying to come up with feasible modes. Pattison stated that Tyngsboro and Chelmsford want rail stops. Harris added that currently, rail is not favorable in NH. Harris asked if every town in the Nashua Region is served by some form of transportation. Langdell said she does not think there is anything in Pelham, Mason, Lyndeborough, and

Litchfield, adding that Lyndeborough does have access to FISH only for non-emergency medical and there is a limitation do to the availability of volunteers.

Falbel asked how many trips SVTC provides. Langdell replied about 300 trips a month, Monday through Friday from 8:30-6:00ish. She noted that there have been requests for same day dial a ride services. Currently, it is 2 days and the scheduling is done by NTS for SVTC. Falbel asked about park n ride needs. A member noted that she had heard that folks use the Kohl's off Exit 6 as one and there is a vanpool park n ride of Exit 5, which is on the DOT list. Langdell said if NTS came to Milford it would be good to have one in Milford.

Falbel asked if they had any sense of what kind of users there are for carpooler's vs. vanpooler's vs. bus. He also noted that they would use NRPC and local partners to get surveys out for input as a means of public engagement.

Harris asked what Falbel hoped to accomplish by gathering public input. Falbel said to get input on stuff you may not know; on specific suggestions. He added that it is good for support when bringing to the legislature. Townsend said communities are valued more when asking the public for their input. Langdell suggested looking to larger employers for more 1 on 1 or networking. Langdell said she appreciated having this dialogue. Harris asked if they would be having other regional RPC conversations and if they would be asking the RCC members to come to those meetings. Falbel said there are a couple meetings set up and that he was leaving it up to each RPC.

Langdell asked Harris how many "human services" vs. just public transportation are at the RCC tables. Harris replied that it is mostly human services agencies at the RCC tables.

Townsend asked when they anticipated the project would be done. Falbel said it was a 2 year project and hoped to wrap it up in 2018.

Waitkins asked the group which day works best for the group so he could set the next meeting date. After further discussion, they decided that September 8, 2017 at 10:00am would work best. Waitkins asked the group to send him suggestions for agenda topic items. Langdell said she would like to hear about the SCC outcomes since they should be wrapped up by August. She added that they need more people at the table.

The meeting ended at 12:08pm.