



Locally Coordinated Meeting Minutes

10-11-06

Attendees:

Shayana Owen, Nashua Area Health Ctr.
Lori Lorman, NTS
Bob Jeniski, NTS
Pat Schoch, Service Link
Betsy Portash, Nashua Pastoral Care
Bob Mack, Nashua City Welfare
Ellen Groh, Granite State Organizing Proj.
Mary Beth Smaha, Area Agency
Jebb Curelop, Life Coping
Marcia Nelson, FISH
Joan Darragh, St. Joseph's Community Serv.

Terry Crotty, GSIL
Lance Forrester,
Suzanne Keller, So. NH Medical Center
Mike LaChance, YMCA
Pat Murphy, Town of Merrimack Welfare
Camille Pattison, NRPC
Steve Williams, NRPC
Matt Waitkins, NRPC

The meeting began at 12:04.

Camille Pattison opened the meeting with introductions and an overview of the Locally Coordinated Transportation plan process. She went on to discuss what was accomplished during the last meeting, the goals for today's meeting. She proceeded by introducing Matt Waitkins who summarized the findings of Transportation Survey #1 and #2. Some of the questions posed and comments made during the review of results are listed below.

Questions/Comments from Survey Summary #2:

1. Lance Forrester wanted to know the difference between in-home pickup and door to door. Camille responded that it would be picking up and dropping off at the door rather than going inside.
2. Steve Williams questioned if the numbers provided included rides provided by Nashua Transit. Matt responded "Yes".
3. Bob Jeniski questioned whether the numbers included fixed passenger routes. Matt responded that it depended on how the survey was filled out by Nashua Transit.
4. Lori Lorman felt that based upon the numbers that Bus trips were probably not included in the results and would check the number of total individuals served.

Questions/Comments from Survey Summary #2:

1. Matt pointed out the major issue for future transportation services was the need for increased frequency of service within Nashua and service beyond Nashua.
2. Camille provided some information on a survey returned by SHARE of Milford. She explained that they felt there was a need to provide affordable monthly car payments, maintain a vehicle, and assist with purchasing one.

Camille went over the Summary of Findings (information provided at the last meeting [see handout]). She pointed out that one of the key issues was funding. She proceeded to summarize "what we do well" and "what we could do better" from the findings summary highlighting common themes. Lance felt was important to clarify whether the "daycare" references include adults as well as children (see Survey #2). Marcia Nelson, representative from FISH, questioned whether surveys were returned from FISH. Matt believed both surveys were returned.

Camille moved on to #4 of the agenda. She was looking to get suggestions from the group on how to meet short-term goals that would be beneficial to their agency and clients. She felt working together and collaborating on key issues would be a first step. Steve Williams further asked the group to give suggestions on what needs to be done to accomplish this. Suggestions and comments are listed below:

- Bob Jeniski suggested trying to find a solution using existing resources to transport children from school to a medical or dental appointment.
- Mike LaChance, representing the YMCA spoke of how they purchase rides from Girls Inc. for transportation of children.
- Lori Lorman informed the group that children 6 years and older are permitted to ride the bus without an adult.
- Transportation of children to a medical or dental appointment is possible through Care Ride, but only if accompanied by an adult or caregiver. He also pointed out that Care Ride uses flexible time to coordinate on taking care of other needs (utilizing school busses during downtime).
- A member of the group brought up a service currently provided in California called “Dial a Ride”, which anybody could use with same day service and not just for disabled and elderly. In cases with elderly or disabled, companions or caregivers accompanying the elderly or disabled would not have to pay for the ride.
- Terry Crotty from Granite State Independent Living suggested collaborating with insurance companies to help in addressing or meeting the requirements. He added how the insurance companies have a lot of influence on what transportation service providers can and can't do.
- Steve Williams suggested coming together as one big group or government model to face the insurance companies head on. Easter Seals was used as an example.
- Legislation current or upcoming in VT and NH was referred to regarding liability with volunteer drivers.
- Pat Murphy from Merrimack Welfare relayed the need for increased service to elderly and disabled stating that most people need to get to Nashua.
- Lance informed the group of the calls he gets from New Ipswich, Brookline and other surrounding towns for transportation service. He added that there are sometimes issues with insurance when service is beyond “door-to-door” and sometimes service is refused due to unreasonable access (goes beyond door-to-door).
- A member of the group questioned whether there are groups with access to funds for elderly in reference to the “Older Americans Act” and suggested a workshop or educational series to look at funding issues and needs for the towns.
- Another group member asked for clarification between towns and outlying areas.
- Bob Jeniski responded to Bob Mack regarding NTS's feasibility for service to the outlying areas saying give us the money and we will go anywhere. Pat responded that money is the issue and felt there should be a coordinated transportation effort.
- On the short-term, many felt there was a need to find an alternate source of funding.
- Steve Williams suggested building awareness through public perception and political issues to see an increase in funding from local governments.
- A member of the group spoke of creating a brokerage where several agencies come together to provide rides to any type client on an as needed basis.
- Terry Crotty felt the brokerage idea was good or establishing a Regional Transportation Coordinator. Bob Mack questioned how a brokerage would impact the distribution of rides amongst providers. Terry concluded by saying there were inherent inefficiencies in NH when it came to providing transportation to elderly, disabled and younger clients.

Camille concluded the discussion and asked the group to pick out 3 or 4 issues from the short-term list shown on the easel that the group felt needed to be addressed in the near future. Upon deciding this, the group then identified an Action plan for each of the three immediate goals.

IMMEDIATE GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

Public Outreach and Education

Who: All Communities/Public Officials/Town Meetings/Clients/Businesses/Chambers of Commerce/Municipal Conferences
What: Cost Benefit of Services
Where: Regional (12 Towns)
When: 2007/January - Committee could be set up prior to or now
Why: Access to Transportation/Support

Funding

Who: State/Federal/Local/Agencies (Transportation Services and Local Services)
What: Identify Funding Opportunity and How to Leverage it (some issue if all inter-related)
Where: Region/State/Federal/Private
When: Start After Christmas (January 2007)
Why: What It Is and How to Use It More Effectively

Brokerage/State Coordinated Planning Effort

Who: Local Providers and Agencies/Coordinate with State Plan
What: Pool Resources/Coordinate with State
Where: Greater Nashua (Regional)
When: Spring 2007
Why: Effective Efficient Transportation Services in Region and Beyond

SHORT TERM GOALS

- Identify duplication of services and underused assets.
- Identify transportation needs of various target populations.
- Develop a better system of transporting children to medical and dental appointments without parents.
- Utilize school buses during off peak times.
- Develop a dial-a-ride transportation program.
- Research insurance requirements and determine if more purchase power would be achieved through a group purchase.
- Pursue a statewide volunteer driver insurance policy, similar to what is implemented in Vermont.
- Expand existing transportation services outside of Nashua to provide service throughout the region.
- Increase transportation services for the elderly and disabled, including access to adult day programs.
- Provide direct connections between towns outside of Nashua.
- Educate towns, community members and elected officials on all funding opportunities (such as TANF).
- Address opportunities for coordination between providers.
- Increase the frequency of existing transportation services.
- Increased destinations within the region and beyond.
- Increased demand response service.
- Increased access to medical appointments.
- Provide expanded home to home service (frail clients and those who need a little extra assistance) and access to adult day service programs.



LONG TERM GOALS

- Service beyond the existing 12 member region with destinations to Manchester, Keene, Lowell and Boston.
- Increase headways to reduce wait times between fixed route transit runs.
- Increase service to meet the specific needs of the youth population.
- Increase overall transportation services throughout the region.
- Provide expanded home to home service.

This concluded the meeting and Camille thanked everyone for a very productive meeting. She let the group know she would have a Locally Coordinated Transportation Draft to the group before the next meeting for their review through a link on the NRPC website. **The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 14th, 2006 at Noon in the NRPC Conference Room.**

Meeting adjourned at 1:39pm

CP/kmb
#410-27