

DRAFT
Regional Coordinating Council (RCC)
Meeting Minutes
10/30/18

Attendees:

Camille Pattison, NTS
John Savage, NTS
Sarah (NTS)
Janet Langdell, SVTC-MIL
Carolyn Mitchell, SVTC-AMH
Susan Pendleton, SVTC
Eloise Carlton, SVTC
Rebecca Crowther, SVTC

Dennie Townsend, SVTC
Carol Brooks, STVC
Stephen Genest, SNHS
Matt Waitkins, NRPC
Meredith King, NRPC
Mason Twombly, NRCP

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Waitkins opened the meeting at 1:05 noting that there may be late arrivals. Matt began with a brief overview of the agenda and introduced Mason Twombly as someone who will be attending RCC meetings in the future. Janet Langdell had questions about if it will be a gradual change over to Twombly. Twombly and Waitkins said that it will be gradual and it will be a cooperation between both of them. Waitkins then asked for introductions.

REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM MAY 3, 2018

Waitkins referred to the minutes of May 3, 2018 included in the agenda packet and asked if there were any comments, corrections or changes. It was noticed that Page 3 “low-no” needs to be edited in the last paragraph. “Token Transit” not “Token for Transit”. Minor typos need to be corrected. Page 4 under Nashua Region 7; - edit wording. Langdell asked “if” Pattison. “Rides to the moving wall” needs to be updated due to Langdell’s concern that it sounds like they were doing an outing that is not permissible.

Camille motioned to approve the minutes as amended with a second from Eloise Carlton. All were in favor.

UPDATES**SCC Update:**

Waitkins provided a brief update on the SCC activities, referring to a memo (attachment 2) that had been included in the agenda packet.

- NRPC staff continues to attend SCC meetings. Staff is active as backup secretary and working on annual report for them.
- Staff attended SCC/RCC ‘Unconference’. An unconference means the agenda is broadly defined in advance and only becomes specific on the day of the conference. The purpose of this conference was to bring to bring RCCs together with SCC to discuss relevant topics. Topics discussed were: Volunteer Driver Program, Taxi Vouchers, Rural Demand-Response and Mobility Manager 101. Conference was a success and led to discussions at October meeting about joint RCC/SCC ventures. Specific topics that were discussed included:

Volunteer driver recruitment/retention training: New Hampshire Transit Association (NHTA) will provide funding to sponsor a training by Caryn Sousa of Community

Transportation Association of America (CTAA). It was suggested this training take place in Spring 2019. The SCC is in favor of pursuing this opportunity.

Mobility Management Training: Discussion about how a national Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) training would be beneficial in advance of the application deadline for FFY20-21 FTA 5310 Purchase of Service and Mobility Management funding. It was noted the solicitation for these funds will be in December and the application deadline will be in February (2019). The SCC is in favor of communicating with Judy Shanly of NCMM to set this training up for this December, which will help inform the development of applications for MM funding.

Lead Agency Risk Management: Lead agencies distribute Federal funds to subrecipients and it is not clear the level to which lead agencies are responsible for tracking those funds. This would be a cooperative effort to identify/develop best practices for lead agency oversight of subrecipients.

Celebrating Success: This would be a gathering where one or more success stories could be told.

Vehicle Fleet Experiences: This would be a peer-to-peer gathering where transit providers would talk about the types of vehicles they use and how they use those vehicles.

The RCC discussed: Mobility Management training and how it could be helpful in informing the upcoming FY20-21 5310 POS and Formula funding application process. Langdell asks if a date for the Mobility Management training has been set. Waitkins said no date set yet, but he will follow up after SCC meeting on Thursday (11/1).

RE: Lead Agency Risk Management – discussion about tracking funds and the oversight needed.

RE: Celebrating Success – SVTC could present at this session; it would be a great opportunity for SVTC to tell others around the state about SVTC.

NHDOT Update:

FY20-21 5310 Purchase of Service (POS) and Mobility Management (MM) funding.

Waitkins explained the next NHDOT solicitation for 5310 POS & MM funding will be in early December with applications due 2 months later (late February 2019).

NHDOT will now be conducting a single solicitation for RCC funding. In the past, they have solicited separately for POS and FF funding. The consolidated funding program will now simply be known as the “5310 RCC” grant program.

NHDOT prefers that regions nominate transportation providers to serve as lead agencies for this upcoming contract period. However, they will allow the regions to use their discretion for the FY20-21 contract period and will revisit the lead agency issue in the future.

NRPC has traditionally acted as the Lead Agency for the Nashua RCC and has agreed to continue to do.

The RCC discussed:

Langdell asked why NHDOT will now allow transit providers to be lead agency and why they would prefer transit providers be lead agencies (instead of RPCs). Waitkins read Fred Butlers explanation:

- In the past, NH DOT had two solicitations: One for the RCC Formula program and one for the Purchase of Service program. NHDOT finally received confirmation from FTA that NHDOT can be considered as being the purchasers of service from each region. The POS program, which was only instituted due to its giving the more favorable 80%/20% funding split for contracted operating services as opposed to the 50%/50% split for direct operating, was therefore rendered moot. The regions' lead agencies can now provide operating services for the 80%/20% levels. So, rather than needing to have two separate solicitations, NHDOT can now simplify it into one solicitation per region.
- The NHDOT would prefer transit providers be Lead agencies instead of RPC because back when the RCCs came into existence then non-transit provider lead agencies (most of which ended up being RPCs) were only put in place to obtain that 80/20 funding scenario. Otherwise, the original intent of the SCC/RCC system was meant to have these regional transportation providers. The transportation providers should by nature have a sense for how to best provide transportation services as they're the ones in business to do so. They should work with the other RPCs, volunteer driver networks, senior centers, and others to best fill in the regional gaps. That's where the RCC would come in. Additionally, having the providers as lead agencies just eliminates an intermediary that often simply serves as a proxy for billing purposes.

Langdell mentioned she recalled that federal law said lead agency couldn't provide service and pay themselves. Waitkins said that was the original interpretation by FTA of the legislation but that has now changed.

Pattison said that NTS can't serve as a fiscal agent so it is a moot point. Waitkins said NRPC Executive Director is fine with NRPC continuing as lead agency. Camille and Langdell agree NRPC is in the correct role regarding this.

FTA grant solicitations

- Access and Mobility grants – Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is soliciting applications for the Access & Mobility Partnership Grants, which are two opportunities to apply for funding under two competitive grant programs. The Access and Mobility Partnership Grants are two separate and distinct funding opportunities that seek to improve access to public transportation through building partnerships among health, transportation, and other service providers. Waitkins noted that Fred Butler had asked at recent SCC meeting if there were any ideas for statewide projects and that DOT would be willing to assist.

NHDOT's 5310 set-aside for small vehicles

Langdell referenced a recent NH DOT memo/update that discussed 5310 set aside for small vehicles. The memo, paraphrased, said: There has been much discussion in the past year or so regarding requests by regions for smaller ADA-accessible minivans for their regional fleet. (While 4WD/AWD vehicles were desired as well, there are no such viable ADA-equipped options). Given the funding constraints within NHDOT's FTA Section 5310 Capital program the proposed plan is to set aside funding for the following regions this year (**FFY 2018??**) for ADA accessible minivans:

- 1 Rural region
- 1 Small Urban Area region
- 1 Boston Urban Area region

There was a discussion about issues with the manufacturer of smaller NTS ADA vans. Additionally, Camille noted that NH DOT has 2 open contracts for smaller vans.

Langdell notes that purchasing a small vehicle for the region is food for thought for the future. There was dialogue about rural vs urban and what the van will be used for.

Camille will get more information about this at upcoming NHTA meeting. She will keep the RCC informed about the various funding possibilities.

NASHUA TRANSIT SYSTEM (NTS) ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Camille provided update.

- FTA Low or No Emission Vehicle Program - 5339(c); NTS was successful in applying for a grant through this program. BAE played a roll in getting the grant through cooperation with U.S. Senator Schumer (NY). NTS will purchase a electric hybrid bus. The bus will probably be delivered in Fall 2019 and will replace 2 trolleys.
- Downtown connector – this is in cooperation with BAE, which has limited employee parking at its Canal Street location. This route connects BAE with downtown Nashua. The route connects downtown with BAE and makes numerous downtown stops along the way so it will serve the public as well as BAE employees. This is a one-year pilot project partially funded by BAE. This route could serve a future commuter rail stop near Taylor Falls Bridge.
- Polar Express – not public – Sarah (NTS) talked about this. Take the Trolley from NTS Transit Center and hosting a community event including families and kids riding the bus to the NTS headquarters. Trying to partner with Fright Kingdom for funding this and provides staff and set building, snow and lighting. This should not be public until funding is 100%. Meeting attendees are excited about this and the future of this event as serving other areas. Pat Murphy asks if they are targeting low-income. Sarah wants this to be accessible by those who can't afford the Boston or Portland Polar Express. Langdell suggests underwriting some tickets to offer them free to agencies like Front Door. Camille thinks this year is a pilot year and they will have to “see how it goes”.

SOUHEGAN VALLEY TRANSPORTATION COLLABORATIVE (SVTC) ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Langdell provided update:

- SVC is celebrating 10-year anniversary
- 29,501 rides have been provided
- rides down this year but last 2 months publicity has increased ridership. Short term low ridership they can handle, but long term requires fund raising which is a challenge. Nashua rides are up this year, 66% of rides are used by seniors (meeting the requirement) 16% is being used by disabled, 31% rides are free bus pass.
- rides are funded by grants or fundraising
- 106 unique stops in Nashua. Barnes and Noble is a hot spot for this transit.
- Langdell noted that SVTC is doing great, its working, still getting a lot of calls.

SVTC will be applying again for 5310 POS and MM funding and is hoping the RCC will support the application

There was further discussion about NRPC continuing as lead agency. the group thought it would be prudent to officially acknowledge NRPC as the lead agency for the Nashua (Region 7) RCC. The following motion was proposed:

Nashua (Region 7) Regional Coordinating Council members support Nashua Regional Planning Commission as the Lead Agency for the Nashua (Region 7) Regional Coordinating Council.

Motion by SVTC (Langdell)
Second; Pat Murphy
Unanimous affirmative vote

NRPC TRANSIT EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY UPDATE

Waitkins gave update.

The study is funded by FTA Section 5305(e) Statewide Planning & Research (SPR) funds. Purpose of study is to explore feasibility of expanding NTS service along various corridors that are outside of the Nashua City limits.

The project is in the public input stage

- On board surveys were conducted in May/June to measure perception of current transit riders (520 responses).
- On line surveys to measure general public perception of transit began in August. 130 responses so far. Survey continues.
- Hard copy surveys were distributed to various locations in Nashua, Amherst, Hudson, Merrimack, Milford. Approximately 30 surveys were returned.
- The group was asked for suggestion regarding how to get additional feedback.

FUTURE PROJECTS/AGENDA ITEMS

REVIEW RCC BYLAWS IN 2019

Waitkins notes that bylaws have not been updated since 2007 and should be reviewed during 2019. Langdell suggests that NRPC staff provide the group (via email) electronic copies of bylaws in advance of next meeting. She additionally suggests the original MOUs that were signed by original RCC members be sent along with the bylaws. This will be a good starting point.

Langdell asks, when is the ?? due? Every 4 years the ? is due. Waitkins and Langdell– it was slightly updated in 2016 and thinks we can update with the Transit Plan next year. How does the NRPC want to go about this update asks Langdell. Is it rewrite? Update? How robust do we want to get for the next update?

Waitkins - Region 8 and 9 doing a mobility management study and using their portion of 5310 - included in their scope of work is a summit that we want to attend.

LOCALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LCTP) UPDATE

Waitkins notes that Locally Coordinated Transportation Plan (LCTP) should be updated every 4 years and should be completed in 2020. The update could be worked on concurrently with the regional transit expansion feasibility study during 2019.

Langdell noted the most recent update in 2016 was “minor’ in nature and it is time for a more robust update. She suggested that NRPC figure out how it wants to go about doing the update; how robust, who to reach out to, etc.

NRPC will discuss these issues and decide

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

John Savage motioned to adjourn with a second from Carolyn Mitchell. The meeting ended at 2:34PM