



**Regional Coordinating Council (RCC)
Meeting Minutes
02-12-2016**

Attendees:

Beth Todgham, Southern NH Services
Patrick Herlihy, NHDOT
Pat Murphy, Merrimack Town Welfare
Janet Langdell, SVTC
Tom Young, Town of Litchfield
Carol Brooks, SVTC
Chris Clow, NTS

Louise Woodworth, NTS
Rebecca Crowther, SVTC
Maria Boren, SJCS
Dawn Griska, SVTC
Matt Waitkins, NRPC
Tim Roache, NRPC
Karen Baker, NRPC

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Waitkins opened the meeting at 10:08 am, reviewing the agenda, followed by introductions.

STATEWIDE COORDINATING COUNCIL (SCC) UPDATE

Waitkins introduced Patrick Herlihy with the NHDOT who would provide an update on what the SCC has been up to. Waitkins commented on Herlihy's/NHDOT loyalty to coordinated transportation and passed the floor to him for the SCC update. Herlihy summarized how the SCC was formed in 2008 to address coordinated transportation through an Regional Transportation Coordinator (RTC) with the RCC's taking the lead. He summarized further saying the original statewide coordination model envisioned that Medicaid funding (through NH DHHS) would be utilized to provide rides for non-emergency medical for elderly & disabled. He noted that NH DHHS instead decided to provide transportation through a brokerage system. This new reality is very different from assumptions that were made when the statewide coordinated plan was originally developed. The RCC's are therefore unsure of how to proceed and are looking to the SCC for guidance. The SCC is therefor in the process of developing a new Statewide coordinated plan for community transportation.

The new model will explore what types of services are needed and get the RCC's back up and running. Part of the process will be to find out what the SCC should be to the RCC's. Currently, they are in the process of a RFP with scope of services focused on business process experience and capability to develop a model. The goal is to have a new statewide plan in place by the end of the 2016 calendar year. The new plan and the continued availability of to use 5310 funding, should result in stronger regional groups. He noted examples of what is currently being done with 5310 funding:

- Making rides happen via volunteer driver programs and demand response.
- Engagement with towns through discussions on the needs of transportation services for their towns, through the efforts of a mobility manager.

Herlihy noted that when the study is complete, they will refocus funding to achieve the goal. The consultant that is chosen to do the study will review old plans, assess needs and the reality and look to see what the role of the SCC and RCC should be.

Herlihy stated that along with planning, there is a movement at the federal level and DHHS on coordinated transportation through the FAST ACT program. The DHHS has to be a piece of this and the SCC was contacted to get the system back to where it should be. Herlihy noted that he was contacted by DHHS and Health & Family Services regarding TANF.

Langdell asked if there was more than one broker through Medicaid. Herlihy said there is currently only 1 transportation broker.

Waitkins asked when SCC's Transit plan rewrite would be available. Herlihy said it would be by the end of the calendar year for funding reasons.

Waitkins commented on the results of the volunteer driver forum survey, adding that participants were happy with the forum and would attend another. Others suggested having a strictly networking event as another type of forum. Langdell asked if the results of the survey were available. Waitkins said that a copy of a presentation about the survey was available but the actual survey results had not been released. He said he could provide a copy of the presentation slides now and then a final report about the survey when it becomes available.

Langdell asked if the FAST ACT program would bring more money for community transportation. Herlihy said yes, but with that, there will be more match requirements. He added that for transit in general there will be money coming.

LOCALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Waitkins informed the group that the LCTP Update is federally required so that projects can be eligible for 5310 funding. He noted that the update meets all FTA requirements. He added that the Executive Committee held a hearing at their January meeting and adopted the updated plan.

Roache added that there was a minimal effort to the update due to the new statewide approach and that basically the document was cleaned up to meet the federal requirements and keep us in line for funding. He noted that there will be another update done after further guidance is provided by the SCC. Langdell referred to the NTS Regional Plan that NRPC was working with them on and that this would be a piece for the next update. Waitkins informed the group that update is available on the NRPC website.

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2017 – 5310 FORMULA FUNDING

Waitkins informed the group that the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is seeking Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 Formula funds that will allow the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative (SVTC) to continue to engage an independent contractor, on a

part-time basis, to assist the SVTC Board of Directors with mobility management and strategic planning activities. The overall objective of this project is to enhance the local community transportation network by strengthening SVTC's core services and organizational capacity.

Langdell referred to the summary sheets included in the agenda packet. Langdell noted there have been 20,496 rides provided as of the end of January. She added that since 2011 when the purchase of service became available, ridership has been very consistent, providing service 5 days a week meeting the needs according to requirements of 5310 funding for seniors and those with disabilities. Langdell

Langdell pointed to the charts included in the packet and explained the data. She noted that two subgroups of riders buried in the data are the cognitively disabled as well as a substance abuse population. These two groups are neither elderly nor physically disabled. She noted that SVTC provides trips within 5 towns for those who can't drive, should not drive, or had license taken away. Langdell noted that the free bus pass that SVTC provides is from money raised by SVTC and has gone up by about 50%.

Langdell explained that the 5310 funds will be used for a part time independent contractor. In the last round, SVTC received 4 or 5 applications. Janet added that she was one of the applicants and got the job. The role is soup to nuts; work with NTS, individual passenger issues to help manage their transportation needs and refer alternative service if it fits better. Other roles include engage with FISH on rides that SVTC can't provide and volunteer driver engagement as well as informal coordination. Langdell touched on a few other projects and endeavors that SVTC was working on mentioning a new provider that provides rides to individuals recently released from the Hillsborough Correctional Facility.

Roache commented on the effectiveness of having someone in the region to handle mobility management which is much more effective than a transportation person from an RPC. Langdell commented on the work of Kristi Gillette who is the mobility manager for NTS. Brooks elaborated on SVTC being out there in the communities. Griska commented on the green area of the pie chart referring to individuals who can't get to work or around and how that number will only increase. Langdell added that another item on the SVTC agenda for the coming year is to have conversations with the group among disabled individuals, post school and investigate the need in their area and other funding services. Griska talked about meeting the needs of the lower income individuals who are not currently eligible.

Waitkins noted that this is for year 2 and the grant application is for t for \$15,443. He was looking for consensus from the RCC to continue Langdell's work. Langdell added that the matching funds are non-municipal and come from donations. Brooks praised Langdell's work adding that 3 or 4 people could not do what Langdell does. Langdell commented that she wears a lot of hats. After review of the application, Todgham motioned, seconded by Murphy that the RCC unanimously support the application for FTA 5310 Formula Funds for a mobility manager position. All were in favor".

OTHER BUSINESS:

Grant Opportunity – TransitPlanning4All: Waitkins explained that this grant opportunity is to Strengthen Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Partnerships to Promote Community Living. The mission of this project is to demonstrate the value that inclusive processes can bring to transportation efforts by testing and demonstrating ways to empower people with disabilities and older adults to be actively involved in designing and implementing coordinated transportation systems.

Todgham found this intriguing; bringing seniors in, as she felt these are the populations that would be involved and could come to the table. She questioned if this group should be invited to the RCC table. She also commented that she felt it was a lot of work very little money. There was further discussion on ideas on how to go about doing the work outlined in the application/grant. Herlihy added that the SCC had discussed this grant and decided that it would be more appropriate at the regional level than statewide. He added that this is the 3rd round of funding for this type grant, adding that he felt implementation is the goal, but a lot of work for not much money.

Langdell stated it was good information and validates what the RCC tried to do regionally and the effort made to bring seniors or passengers onto the board. She also felt drawing best practices was a good piece, but it would have been better if it came out next year as it would fit into NRPC's prospectus to transportation. She also noted that a best practices Tool Kit would be available on the grant website in the future and the RCC could possibly make use of that tool kit. Waitkins felt it could have also been used to inform on the SCC rewrite and to move the RCC forward.

Legislative Update – Pending Legislation That Impacts Community Transportation: Waitkins informed the group on 2 pieces of pending legislation:

- HB1119 - AN ACT relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities when collecting motor vehicle registration fees. Currently, the maximum fee charged under this paragraph is \$5. Legislation is for a required fee, up to the maximum amount allowable of \$10, based on anticipated funding needs for transportation improvements.

Langdell commented on Rep. Belanger being a champion of MVR in Hollis and that currently Hollis charges only \$1. Another member commented that this is seen as just another tax. Langdell felt it was a local decision and felt it was a no-brainer.

- HB1156 AN ACT relative to interference with traffic devices for Public Transit Bus Operators on fixed route bus service while in service and shall only apply to such personnel when they are operating licensed ambulances, licensed fire apparatus, or government-owned vehicles.

Clow commented that emergency only should be the main priority and questioned if it was worthy of interrupting traffic for fixed bus routes. He added that a well-timed corridor should be able to fix that without needing to interrupt traffic signals. There was further discussion on HB1156 amongst the group.

Nashua Transit System Comprehensive Plan: Waitkins informed the group that this Comprehensive Transit Plan is being done to gauge the condition and effectiveness of existing transit services and facilities and prioritize future service expansions and the corresponding capital requirements over the next decade. The Comprehensive Transit Plan will investigate the feasibility of service expansions and include the detailed analysis necessary to implement such measures.

Waitkins noted the heavy outreach push for input in Nashua and across the region via a transit survey. He added that the NRPC GIS was also working on a predication model of ridership using demographics. Langdell stated that she has shared this link and also provided paper copies to agencies in the Milford area for input. She asked Clow & Woodworth if there was anything to share on the results of the surveys so far. Woodworth said that they were still in the very early preliminary stages of the plan.

Langdell asked the group if they had heard anything about the Red Cross was dropping their volunteer driver program. She recently found out that CVTC in Peterborough has absorbed the volunteer driver program through the Red Cross in Keene and wondered if this was a national trend and if it had happen in Nashua. There was discussion on whether Nashua even had a volunteer driver program. Waitkins confirmed that the Red Cross was giving up their volunteer driver program.

Transportation Directory: Waitkins informed the group of the transportation directory that was updated over the summer by an NRPC intern with the assistance from Langdell. Langdell also commented on the difficulty of getting information related to community transportation list of transportation organizations and said if there was a webpage for the future to direct individuals to. Waitkins said that it would be possible to set up a home for the RCC on the NRPC Website. Langdell said she had ideas for content on the website and agreed to provide those ideas at a later date.

Final Thoughts: Langdell asked if the RCC should wait for direction from the SCC before proceeding as a group. Herlihy asked the group to continue to proceed as he will be looking to the RCC for ideas. He added there will be some flexibility for the region to do other things. Waitkins suggested that the group meet back every 2 months or quarterly and that he would come up with a date.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 11:23am.