



**DRAFT**  
**Regional Coordinating Council (RCC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**2/10/2020**

**Attendees:**

Janet Langdell, SVTC-MIL  
Nell Trainor, SVTC  
Pat Murphy, Merrimack  
Dennie Townsend, SVTC  
Carol Brooks, SVTC  
Camille Pattison, NTS  
Michael Reinke, NSKS  
Donna Marceau, NSKS

James Wilke, The Caregivers  
Bob Mack, Nashua  
Beth Gray, the Radiation Center of  
Greater Nashua  
Stephen Genest, SNHS  
Matt Waitkins, NRPC  
Jay Minkarah, NRPC  
John Goeman, NRPC  
Mason Twombly, NRPC

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Waitkins opened the meeting at 10:04AM asking for a round of introductions.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM MAY 23, 2019**

Waitkins referred to the minutes of May 23, 2019 included in the agenda packet and asked if there were any comments, corrections or changes. Langdell mentioned she did not recall the conversation regarding "Ultra Beauty" on page 2. She asked that mention be removed. Langdell mentioned that Lori was misspelled as "Laurie" on page 2. Murphy asked for clarification about the statement regarding "possibly at HR" on page 2.

**Motion to approve the minutes as amended.**

**First:** Pat Murphy

**Second:** Camille Pattison

**Motion was supported unanimously.**

**FTA Section 5310 Purchase of Service Mobility Management Funding**

Waitkins gave a brief explanation of how the 5310 and Mobility Management Funding Works. He alluded to the chart in the agenda packet illustrating that there is a certain amount of money that is allocated to each region. Explaining that the RCC usually supports NRPC's application for financial support of the SVTC Program. Waitkins turned it over to Langdell to give a description of services that SVTC provides.

Langdell discussed the SVTC service and budget. She said that there has not been an increase in the amount of funding for any RCC region in this current application for funding. She continued by explaining SVTC service, covering 6 towns and highlighting over 35,000 rides given since day one, and a record high 4,600 rides given in 2019. Langdell then stated that SVTC and other services are facing challenges as costs rise and funding stays the same or declines. Langdell explained that costs are rising in the contract with NTS because of the distance between SVTC towns and Nashua and she is unsure of how much more municipalities will be willing to

contribute. She expressed interest in discussions about how to best leverage funding for the region in the next grant cycle.

Waitkins explained that the RCC is being asked to support the SVTC application for 5310 funding.

**Motion: *The Nashua (Region 7) RCC resolves to support the Nashua Regional Planning Commission's application for SFY21 FTA Section 5310 funding***

**First:** Pat Murphy

**Second:** Mike Reinke

**Motion was supported unanimously.**

#### **LEAD AGENCY**

Waitkins explained that each RCC region needs to have a designated Lead Agency. As NRPC has already been acting as the Lead Agency for our region the RCC needs to formally vote to appoint NRPC.

Langdell explained further that NHDOT is under increased scrutiny from the Federal DOT to monitor program compliance.

**Motion: *The Nashua (Region 7) RCC resolves to support the Nashua Regional Planning Commission continuing as the Lead Agency for Nashua (Region 7) RCC.***

**First:** Dennie Townsend

**Second:** Pat Murphy

**Motion was supported unanimously.**

#### **LOCALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LCTP)**

Waitkins began by giving a brief overview of the LCTP process and why it is being updated. He explained it is a federally required document. Goeman gave a brief explanation of the expected outcomes from the LCTP plan updates and gave an overview of the current survey results. Goeman led the group into the workshop portion of the meeting.

#### Workshop Discussion

##### *Gaps in Service:*

Murphy stated that many elderly clients find it difficult to use community transit to go grocery shopping or to the post office in Merrimack. She mentioned the possibility of a weekly grocery or errand run.

Langdell mentioned the possibility of a Merrimack errand shuttle. Pattison stated that NTS is open to exploring possible solutions to these challenges. Pat mentioned that she chaired a committee about seniors helping other seniors to get their basic needs and that transportation to important destinations is always an issue.

Langdell said an additional group in the region is mental health patients that need transportation to services in Nashua. Some of these individuals are capable of riding busses while others are not. For those that are not able to handle public transit she sometimes steer's them toward the volunteer driver program (VDP). Waitkins noted that in key informant

interviews during the LCTP planning process the lack of a VDP in the city of Nashua has been identified as an issue, and that a VDP would be valuable. Challenges surrounding VDP's are driver recruitment and training. Wilke says Caregivers uses volunteer drivers to provide rides. They successfully recruit drivers by advertising on Facebook, TV, radio, and in the NH Business Weekly. He said that Facebook and TV are the most effective.

Wilke explained that Caregiver's Rides program has caught up with their waitlist.

Trainor speculated that in the future there will be lots of additional senior housing in Amherst and Mont Vernon which in turn will increase the need for transportation services.

Camille shared that a complaint she hears from NTS riders is the length of time they spend on the bus. NTS is exploring options for creating mini-hubs around Nashua that busses will circulate around which would result in shorter trips.

Additionally, NTS is developing a pilot program that will provide on demand mobility service that will use two small low-floor cutaway buses to provide trips originating at the passenger's location. Depending on the passenger's destination and scheduling constraints, the trip will either connect to NTS fixed route service at a hub or bus stop along a route or transport the passenger directly to their destination. The door to door nature of the service will overcome first and last mile challenges encountered by many elective and transit dependent passengers.

Brooks provided the following information regarding wait times between requesting and receiving a ride for several providers in the region:

- SVTC – 48 hours
- FISH – 4 days
- Caregivers – 2 weeks.

Minkarah asked about other known gaps that exist.

Langdell said that an existing gap is connection between far western points in the region and the Peterborough area. She stated she also was not familiar with any programs in the eastern portion of the region (Hudson, Litchfield, Pelham).

Goeman mentioned hearing through public outreach that volunteer driver recruitment and retention is an issue.

Wilke explained how ride scheduling works for his organization. Goeman asked what they told clients to do when they do not meet Caregiver eligibility requirements. Wilke explained that that there is a wait list for the grocery trips provided by their service because there is so much demand for the primary service.

Murphy said that one of these biggest issues is when people are suddenly without transportation. If they suddenly cannot drive themselves, it becomes an issue with the amount of time it can take to become enrolled in a volunteer driver service or process an application for transport. Gray said this is also a critical issue for healthcare. Patients find out suddenly that they need multiple days of radiation or treatments and do not have many transportation options. If they aren't already approved for NTS paratransit service, they have to navigate a registration process that takes several weeks, but they need the treatments immediately. The Radiation Center has had to cover the costs of cabs so that people can make their appointments. Gray said their budget for providing transportation is very limited.

Townsend asked whether Radiation Center had resources that they could point their clients to. Gray said they have some material but it would be good if we could get additional materials to hand out to people who are having a problem getting to appointments.

Murphy mentioned that many organizations have been forced to take on the issue of transportation themselves and they often do not have the resources to do so.

*What we are doing well:*

Gray said she was able to collaborate with Camille/NTS to get a bus stop at the Radiation Center of Greater Nashua. Additionally, the NTS bus drivers are helpful and courteous.

*What we could do better:*

Gray said the NTS process for determining eligibility for paratransit service is challenging. The forms that need to be filled out are a barrier for clients. Pattison agreed and stated that having electronic forms moving into the future is important. Murphy mentioned that she has had the problem of people without computers or a printer.

Marceau said Sunday bus service to retail employment is needed. Pattison said that no there is no plan to expand service to Sundays. She explained there simply is no funding to make it happen and there is not a dispatcher for Sundays.

Langdell said requests for rides to employment are increasing, and more funding for community transportation is needed.

Scheduled weekly trips in Merrimack and Hudson to destinations within each town, in addition to trips to Nashua.

Updated Transportation Resource Directory.

Improved volunteer driver recruitment and retention (FISH)

Develop a regional Volunteer Driver Program.

Boost RCC membership, identify an improved forum for meeting (maybe with the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care)

Survey results

Waitkins explained the different surveys that are being collected for the LCTP Process.

Minkarah suggested that it may be best to wait to go over the survey results at the next meeting after there has been time to analyze the responses.

**NTS**

Pattison explained that NTS would be pursuing two grants. One grant would be focused electric bus and charging equipment. The second focused on the transit center and technology upgrades. Pattison requested that NRPC be enabled to draft a letter of support for those applications on behalf of the RCC.

**Motion: *The Nashua (Region 7) RCC resolves that the Nashua Regional Planning Commission provide a letter of support for NTS grant applications.***

**First:** Pat Murphy

**Second:** Carol Brooks

**Motion was supported unanimously.**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

The next meeting date was set for March 12, 2020 at 9AM.

**ADJOURN**

**Motion to adjourn.**

**First:** Janet Langdell

**Second:** from Townsend.

***Motion was supported unanimously.***

The meeting ended at 11:45AM