Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation (MRCC)
Minutes from Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC)
37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH

Members Present: Charlie Pratt, Chair, *Home Healthcare, Hospice & Community Services (HCS);* Erika Alusic-Bingham, Secretary, *Community Action Partnership of Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties;* Martha Doherty, *Monadnock Family Services (alternate);* Annie Fernandez, *Keene Senior Center (alternate)*; Sandra McDonald, *Citizen Member;* David Meader, *Citizen Member;* Scott Symonds, *SMART Ride LLC;* Jim Yannizze, *Cedarcrest Center.*

Members Present Online: Jamilla Pucciarello, Treasurer, *Cheshire County;* Beth Daniels, *Southwestern Community Services (SCS);* Allan Gillis, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC).*

Members Absent: Michael (Mick) Blume, *Keene Family YMCA;* Alice Cable, *Fall Mountain Regional School District;* Sally Malay, *Kids Collaborative;* Jolymn Paulsen, *Monadnock Family Services (MFS);* Kim Rumrill, *Keene Senior Center;* Charles Weed, *Citizen Member;* Alison Welsh, *Cheshire County Recovery Court.*

Guests: Suzanne Bansley, *Cheshire County (alternate, online);* Teri Palmer, *Manchester Transit Authority (online);* Angelique Pandolph, *Easter Seals (online);* Candy Reed, *Sullivan County Mobility Manager (online).*

SWRPC Staff Present: Lisa Steadman, *Mobility Manager;* Chloe Gross, *Planner.*

I. Welcome and Introductions

C. Pratt called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and facilitated a round of introductions. Members participating online were asked to state their reason for attending remotely and other individuals present in the room with them.

A. Gillis explained that he joined online because a Rotary meeting ran late and he was unable to arrive on time. J. Pucciarello explained that she was unable to attend in person due to the number of reports she is currently working on. B. Daniels explained that she is recovering from an illness and did not want to expose anyone to germs. Among guests, S. Bansley was expected to join later in the meeting, and C. Reed noted that she was participating from her office because of the travel distance to Keene.

II. MRCC Housekeeping

a. Member Resignation

The Council was informed that Monadnock Peer Support (MPS) had submitted a letter of resignation, which was included in the meeting packet. MPS indicated that MRCC participation is 'not the best fit for where our time and involvement are most needed right now', but they want to continue being a community partner.

b. Officer Election and Nomination

L. Steadman explained that nominations for Chair were taken at the August meeting, that C. Pratt was the only nominee, and that the Council would hold the vote at this meeting.

MOTION: To vote Charles Pratt as Chair of MRCC made by E. Alusic-Bingham, 2nd D. Meader. There was no discussion. **The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

C. Pratt then called for nominations for Vice Chair for the remainder of the current term. It was reported that S. Malay had declined a nomination for Vice Chair and had nominated S. Symonds by email. S. Symonds said he would be interested but wanted to make sure that serving as Vice Chair would not create a conflict with the current procurement process. L. Steadman responded that it would not, and that he would only need to abstain from votes in which his company has a financial interest. S. Symonds accepted the nomination and explained that, as a representative of a private entity, he believes he should be held to a higher standard of transparency.

MOTION: To nominate Scott Symonds for Vice Chair made by D. Meader, 2nd S. McDonald. It was noted that, in accordance with MRCC bylaws, the vote on the nomination will take place at the next meeting.

c. New Member Introduction and/or Nomination

L. Steadman noted that B. Daniels of Southwestern Community Services (SCS) had completed her conflict of interest and Memorandum of Understanding forms digitally. B. Daniels confirmed that she had submitted her membership forms. L. Steadman noted that B. Daniels had attended and introduced herself at the previous meeting and was eligible to be voted in at this meeting.

The Council proceeded directly to a roll call vote to approve B. Daniels as a voting member without a formal motion. **All members present voted in favor by roll call vote.** B. Daniels was welcomed to vote on all items going forward.

III. State-Level Updates

a. SCC Annual Report Submission

L. Steadman explained that since the last meeting, the State Coordinating Council (SCC) asked all Regional Coordinating Council (RCCs) to contribute two to three successes and one challenge for its annual report, covering July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Because there was not time to consult the full Council, staff prepared the submission in consultation with the MRCC Executive Committee. The submission was included in the meeting packet, and L. Steadman displayed it on screen and invited input from members, as there is still time to submit modifications.

L. Steadman reviewed the three successes: progress on the Next Generation (NextGen) Transit Project, which was in the midst of working with the Greater Keene Steering Committee as of June 30, 2026; an intentional effort to grow and diversify membership, revitalize MRCC's culture, and focus on including lived-experience representatives; and members taking an active role in identifying alternative funding sources by creating a Grant Writing Subcommittee, which reviewed several grants and ultimately applied for two of them.

She then reviewed the challenge: youth transportation remains a focus, and MRCC wants to support youth organizations in its region but has experienced failed attempts to arrange a sustainable solution. Member organizations have encountered complexities including parental consent, behavioral demands, adult ride-along supervision, real or perceived insurance restrictions, company policy restrictions, adult-only funding, background checks, separation of rider and financially responsible parties, and seatbelt and booster laws. No changes were suggested.

b. Update on RCC Boundary Realignment

L. Steadman reported that after the August meeting she compiled member feedback on the proposed RCC boundary realignment into a letter of approximately two pages to the SCC, which was included in the meeting packet. She attended the September 3, 2026 SCC meeting in person and gave copies to the secretary and the Regional Planning Commission representative, but there was very little opportunity for members of the public to speak. The topic was discussed at the end of the meeting, and SCC voting members were given priority in the discussion. She asked members to provide feedback on the letter by September 30th, so that she can compile MRCC's feedback into one submission for the SCC's October 2 deadline for written feedback.

C. Pratt said the letter was thorough, reflected the history of MRCC and the people involved from the beginning, including when the two regions were combined, and made a good argument for Region 5. It was proposed that the Council vote on the letter because it is an official document being submitted on behalf of MRCC.

MOTION: To approve the letter and send it to the SCC made by S. Symonds, 2nd C. Pratt. There was no discussion. **The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

IV. Old Business

a. Greater Keene Service Update

In J. Mack's absence, L. Steadman reported that since MRCC selected SCS partner on the transition of fixed route and potentially microtransit service in the Greater Keene area, there have not yet been follow-up meetings. L. Steadman

said SWRPC will make sure SCS has access to SWRPC's transit consultant and marketing specialist, and that SWRPC is working to keep HCS, SWRPC, and SCS on the same page and communicating openly.

B. Daniels added that HCS has prepared a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) so that HCS and SCS can begin sharing program information and financials. She said a kickoff meeting is planned for September 30, with the hope of including SWRPC, HCS, SCS, and possibly a representative from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT).

b. CARS Steering Committee Update

L. Steadman reported that the Crucial Appointment Ride Service (CARS) Steering Committee held its kickoff meeting, where members reviewed the Request for Qualifications (RfQ), the goals and scope of work of the committee, and the history and background of the CARS program. Shortly after the kickoff, two responses to the RfQ were received, and both applicants were selected for interviews, which were expected to take place at the end of the following week. L. Steadman said she expects the Steering Committee's recommendation and next steps will be presented at the October MRCC meeting.

c. Mobility Manager Work Plan

L. Steadman displayed the draft Mobility Manager Work Plan on screen and reviewed the proposed changes, noting that she wanted to make sure the plan reflects what the Council feels is most important.

Under Objective 1 (regional service delivery), L. Steadman reviewed wording changes, including ensuring monthly trip data is collected, engaging MRCC's input on strategies to improve service delivery, attending trainings relevant to customer service, mobility management, and transportation options, submitting monthly and quarterly Mobility Manager performance indicators, and a new activity of periodic one-to-one check-ins with MRCC members. A new activity also called for delivering the MRCC orientation to new members within one quarter of joining. S. Symonds asked whether orientations need to be scheduled quarterly or could be offered as needed. L. Steadman responded that they can be offered as needed, and that she hopes to orient at least two new members at a time because it is helpful when people ask questions in front of one another.

Under Objective 2 (relationships with transit-dependent and vulnerable populations), L. Steadman reviewed activities including actively engaging with the ABLE NH Transportation Equity Task Force, providing opportunities for representatives of vulnerable populations to participate in transportation-related activities, and attending passenger advisory committees of MRCC-affiliated providers. She explained that she added an activity to cultivate relationships with human services organizations by attending networking groups such as the Community Network Team, Monadnock Interagency Alliance, Healthy Monadnock Alliance, and potentially Leadership Monadnock, because she finds these groups valuable and the current work plan does not account for her attendance. Other activities in this objective included promoting Transportation Security Index surveys, attending and facilitating community transportation needs-gathering activities, and supporting efforts to improve pedestrian, bicycle, e-mobility, and shared mobility options in the Monadnock Region.

E. Alusic-Bingham asked whether Activity 2.3 had been removed because it was considered redundant, noting that the specific groups it listed did not appear elsewhere. L. Steadman clarified that Activity 2.3 was removed because it related to gathering responses for the statewide Community Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA), which is complete. E. Alusic-Bingham said she likes having populations such as individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with lower incomes spelled out, because many people do not think of low-income families as vulnerable. She also explained that current practice is to use person-first language, such as "families experiencing homelessness" or "individuals with disabilities," rather than using a descriptor as an adjective in front of the person. Members discussed how to revise the remaining language in that activity.

E. Alusic-Bingham noted that the Mobility Manager update showed L. Steadman attended 51 meetings and asked whether all of those meetings are a good use of her time. L. Steadman said she has cut back her attendance at a Keene bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee but continues to stay in contact with that group, and that she attends the Healthy Monadnock Alliance, Community Network Team, Monadnock Interagency Alliance, and interfaith meetings when there is no higher priority. E. Alusic-Bingham suggested that Executive Committee members who already

attend some of these meetings, such as the Healthy Monadnock Alliance, could share MRCC information on L. Steadman's behalf to reduce the number of meetings she attends.

Under Objective 3 (outreach), L. Steadman noted that an activity related to maintaining the transportation provider inventory on the KeepNHMoving website was removed because it duplicated another activity. She added examples of outreach campaigns to Activity 3.4, including Community Transportation Month, Rural Transit Day, the CommuteSmart fall challenge, and Transit Employee Appreciation Day. She also broadened the activity supporting volunteer driver program outreach beyond CVTC and added an activity to collaborate with community service providers to develop a travel training toolkit.

Under Objective 4 (new opportunities for coordination), L. Steadman noted that some activities are already out of date because the NextGen Transit Project is well underway. She proposed changing "facilitate selection of a new Greater Keene transit service operator" to language reflecting facilitation of, or participation in, the transition, and she will update the draft accordingly. She also reviewed an activity to facilitate selection of CARS vendors and an activity to maintain a running list of coordination project ideas for prioritization by MRCC. She said she has a list of project ideas that she would like to bring to the Council so members can advise her on which to pursue. C. Pratt agreed that the Council should review the list.

A. Gillis asked whether L. Steadman's position is full-time, and L. Steadman responded that it is not. A. Gillis said the work plan looks like a full-time position, that L. Steadman is doing a tremendous job, and that it is not realistic to expect the work to be done in 20 hours per week. He said he believes she is working beyond her hours and that MRCC should find a way to compensate her for the work she is providing. L. Steadman responded that she has become more efficient over time after a steep learning curve at the beginning, and she is less concerned than before about exceeding her hours. A. Gillis clarified that he was not suggesting she had asked, but that she deserves it, and that the Council should consider options such as increasing the position to three-quarter time and finding the funding to do so.

C. Pratt said that SWRPC would need to be part of that conversation because L. Steadman is employed by SWRPC, which receives the portion of the grant that funds her position. A. Gillis said he would be happy to serve on a group to meet with SWRPC, noting that the value MRCC receives is more than that of a 20-hour-per-week position. C. Pratt suggested setting up a meeting that involves J. Pucciarello and J. Mack and T. Horner and then reporting back to the Council. A. Gillis, D. Meader, and C. Pratt said they would be willing to participate in that discussion.

When asked how many hours she actually works, L. Steadman said she works 25 hours per week, and noted that much of her current work overlaps with what she previously did for free as a volunteer in the transportation equity space. S. McDonald responded that the discussion is about fair compensation for the work L. Steadman is doing now. C. Pratt agreed that the role has grown tremendously since it was first created and that the position should be re-examined to determine how MRCC compensates the work and how much time the organization needs.

L. Steadman said that the conversation should involve S. Bansley and J. Pucciarello. She explained that in New Hampshire, mobility management is funded through Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 funds, and every dollar paid to a mobility manager is a dollar that is not paid to a provider such as CVTC, HCS, or Keene Senior Center. She noted that MRCC had a rollover of $24,828.23 from last year that has not yet been directed toward a purpose and could potentially be reallocated, which would require a conversation with Cheshire County. E. Alusic-Bingham suggested that the topic could be an agenda item during which L. Steadman steps out of the room, and that it would be helpful for L. Steadman to track her hours in detail for a couple of weeks. A. Gillis responded that he would not want L. Steadman to do that accounting because it could appear that she is advocating for the change when she has been trying to talk the Council out of it. He said the group could meet with S. Bansley and J. Pucciarello using the information it already has, and he noted that he feels more connected to and informed about MRCC since L. Steadman joined because of how much she communicates.

T. Palmer agreed that L. Steadman has been exceptional and said the Council might also consider whether the Mobility Manager position could be housed with the future NextGen Transit Project operator, which would require a discussion with SCS and SWRPC. She noted that funding for mobility managers has been insufficient across all regions for years and asked to hear from S. Bansley.

S. Bansley, who had joined the meeting partway through the discussion, asked how she could best help. B. Daniels asked whether the rollover of more than $20,000 resulted from minor overages and underages across funded programs or was truly unobligated, noting that if the amount varies from year to year it may be difficult to rely on. A. Gillis said a large portion came from CVTC, which lowered its driver reimbursement rate out of concern that it would run out of funds before the end of the year.

S. Bansley explained that the carry forward funds exist because some line items were fully spent while others had funds remaining. She said that MRCC has made two kinds of votes annually: first, at the end of the fiscal year, to make every agency whole by drawing proportionately from lines with a surplus, with any remaining surplus carried over line for line to those agencies in the following year; and second, to renew agencies' budgets at the same level as the prior fiscal year, with any carry forward remaining in their lines. She explained that mobility management was first funded during early COVID through federal stimulus funds directed to the state for healthcare access, initially through the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). That funding ended a couple of years ago, and the state has since allowed 5310 funds to be used for mobility management. She said it is up to MRCC to make the hard decisions about how to allocate scarce resources.

S. Bansley said there is $24,828.23 left over this year because MRCC has a two-year contract and the state allows a carry forward, but because the contract ends next year, any funds remaining after June 30 will not carry forward. She cautioned that a carry forward is not a financial strategy that MRCC can rely on year over year. She said the total two-year amount is $312,000, that MRCC can vote to re-budget these funds up to twice a year, and that adding funds to one line means reducing another. MRCC could choose to use the carry forward funds for this purpose now, but the most recent vote left those funds with the providers that had a surplus.

C. Pratt said the Council should table the discussion and continue it at the next meeting with J. Mack and S. Bansley involved, and that it should be placed on the agenda.

S. Bansley then informed the Council that Cheshire County is undergoing a monitoring review by NHDOT that has required extensive work. The review began as a 73-page questionnaire that grew to 83 pages with her responses, resulted in a 10-page document list, and required her to submit 73 files. She has documented nearly 30 hours of work so far, not including a meeting that day about how to upload the documents. She said Cheshire County cannot sustain this level of effort, that she is asking NHDOT whether the review will occur annually and requesting that it be streamlined, since more than half of the requested materials had already been provided during contracting or application phases and more than three-quarters of the questionnaire did not apply to the County. She said Cheshire County may need to request an administrative budget revision. She added that the questions were focused on a single year, which suggests the review may become annual, and that NHDOT has requested a two-day on-site visit that would involve the County and several providers, while the County's indirect budget for this work has already been exceeded.

S. Bansley also advocated for L. Steadman, noting that NHDOT has suggested that the region designate an FTA compliance coordinator familiar with transit rules, including requirements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), language access plans, and Title VI plans. She explained that she is a grants specialist rather than a transit specialist, and asked that the Council consider whether some of this work could roll into an expanded Mobility Manager role as part of the budget discussion. The topic was added to the agenda for the next meeting. S. Bansley also offered to meet separately with the Executive Committee to discuss the budget if desired.

T. Palmer noted that F. Butler's handout to the SCC on county-based regional boundaries mentioned having a transit agency serve as the lead agency in each region, rather than a regional planning commission or a county. She said she recently attended an FTA financial management overview course and anticipates more annual audits, because FTA is finding issues with financials and procurement during triennial reviews. She said the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) has been advocating at the federal level about the oversight burden on smaller agencies, and that she will raise the issue with Ryan Daniel so that it can be discussed at the NH Transit Association (NHTA) meeting. S. Bansley said Cheshire County was also recently audited by the state Department of Safety and Department of Justice, and that by comparison the NHDOT review is excessive and makes it difficult for those who need funds most to afford to receive them. She added that if the grant and program were to rest with a transit agency in the future, it would be more manageable.

The Council returned to the Mobility Manager Work Plan.

MOTION: To accept the changes made to the Mobility Manager Work Plan made by E. Alusic-Bingham, 2nd S. Symonds. There was no further discussion. **The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

V. New Business

a. Community Transportation Month Planning

L. Steadman explained that Community Transportation Month in October is broken into four weeks. Week 1 is the CommuteSmart challenge, in which participants download the Agile Mile app to track trips taken without a personal car and can earn awards. Other RCCs promote the challenge. T. Palmer elaborated that the challenge tracks trips made by carpool, walking, public transportation, volunteer driver programs (VDPs), biking, and other modes, with the goal of promoting alternatives to driving alone. She noted that the spring challenge focuses on biking events, while the fall challenge aims to support VDPs and transit agencies. Week 2 is driver appreciation, Week 3 is rider appreciation, and Week 4 celebrates VDPs.

L. Steadman shared activities from past years, including providing cookies or treats in driver break rooms during Week 2, free rides during Week 3, and creative ways to appreciate volunteer drivers, such as verbal thanks or social media posts. She asked what MRCC would like to do this year.

C. Pratt noted that the timeline is short since it is already September 22. T. Palmer said a press release will be ready, and that marketing materials will go out to all mobility managers by the end of the week. She acknowledged that each year there is a goal to get materials out earlier. She said there will be a photo shoot at NHDOT, and that the marketing team will post provider events on the NHTA calendar, the KeepNHMoving calendar, and the transit calendar.

L. Steadman said she wants MRCC to commit to activities it can realistically carry out, especially for drivers, and noted that HCS rider appreciation is covered by free rides. She asked A. Gillis about CVTC's volunteer driver breakfasts in Peterborough, Keene, and possibly New Boston, and whether she could attend. A. Gillis said she is always welcome. E. Alusic-Bingham proposed standing with signs at hospitals or other common destinations to show appreciation for drivers and to help publicize volunteer driver programs.

S. Symonds asked whether funds are available for these activities. C. Pratt said not really, because MRCC's funds are Section 5310 funds, unless MRCC pursues other funding or organizations make donations. E. Alusic-Bingham suggested items such as signs or cupcakes. It was noted that NHDOT funds may not be used for items such as cupcakes because such items are not included in the proposal scope. T. Palmer suggested asking local businesses for support. S. Bansley suggested C&S, the Walmart grant program, UNFI, or a potluck snack meeting. L. Steadman noted that she has stickers and buttons that can serve as reminders to wearers of how they would have traveled that day, and as marketing.

S. McDonald asked A. Gillis how many volunteer drivers CVTC has, and he responded that there are about 75. L. Steadman said these were good ideas and that she will try to promote the CommuteSmart challenge, especially among outdoor groups, even though it has not gained much traction in the region in the past.

VI. Minutes of August 25, 2026 Meeting

MOTION: To accept the August 25, 2026 meeting minutes made by D. Meader, 2nd E. Alusic-Bingham. There was no discussion. **The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

VII. Finances

J. Pucciarello reported that there were no significant updates since the last meeting. She described the carryover, the majority of which is from CVTC, reviewed the budget, and noted that some CVTC invoices are still being processed. She reported that there are executed agreements on file for all subrecipients and that more detail will be available at the end of the quarter next month. There were no questions.

VIII. Mobility Manager Update

L. Steadman clarified that she does not believe she attended 51 meetings in July. The total was for June and July. She said work on performance measures was set aside because SCC and CARS work took priority. Her August meetings included a meeting with Amtrak about its accessibility efforts.

L. Steadman reported that she has digitized the membership forms, and B. Daniels said the digital forms were very easy to use. L. Steadman reviewed the online Conflict of Interest (COI) form and explained that the only difference from the paper form is that it does not include a signature. For the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the online form cannot collect signatures from both the participant and the head of the participating organization, so participants will instead certify the form.

L. Steadman encouraged members to review the KeepNHMoving website and to let her know about additional organizations, events, or updates that should be added.

L. Steadman reported that she met with the Dartmouth Hitchcock Center for Advancing Rural Health Equity about surveys administered at appointments that include transportation questions. She is working to align those questions with the goals of the Transportation Security Index and noted that hospital systems could be a very good place to administer the survey.

L. Steadman also reported that she went to Peterborough and participated in a transportation strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) exercise for the town's master plan. She said there are exciting developments, particularly with SweenFleetz and a desire to bring in new services, and that Tricia Cheever-Wolfe would like to participate in MRCC meetings going forward.

IX. Partner Updates

C. Pratt shared that HCS is offering a fall special with free and half-off rides. During the first week of October, rides will be free for all riders on the Friendly Bus and City Express, and during the second week HCS will hold a dinner for all HCS transportation staff.

It was reported that Keene Senior Center is now known as The Hub 50+, and that Cheshire Village at Home has kept its name. The program has 12 volunteer drivers, six of whom are active, and is actively recruiting more. It was noted that Keene Senior Center does not appear on the KeepNHMoving website. The organization is planning an in-house appreciation for its volunteer drivers, likely gift cards to Dunkin' Donuts or Starbucks.

S. Symonds shared that SMART Ride now has a fully online form for requesting transportation, which allows riders to enter the date, time, and mode, and is available at smartridenh.com under "Request Transportation." He also announced that he is now a CTAA master instructor and can lead trainings for adaptive transportation.

X. Next Meeting: October 27, 2026

The next MRCC meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 27, 2026**, at 9:00 a.m. The Council is expected to vote on the nomination of S. Symonds for Vice Chair, receive the CARS Steering Committee's recommendation, and continue the discussion of Mobility Manager compensation and the budget. If members would like to add anything to next month's agenda, reach out to L. Steadman and C. Pratt.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

MOTION: To adjourn made by E. Alusic-Bingham, 2nd S. McDonald. **The motion was approved unanimously.**