



Greater Nashua Regional Coordination Council (RCC7)

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 23rd, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Attendees:

In Person:

Mike Apfelberg, Greater Nashua United Way

*Carol Brooks, SVTC

Sara Cesar, Greater Nashua United Way

Katie Dunfey, SNHS

Janet Langdell, SVTC Mobility & Planning Manager

*Kerry Miller, Nashua Transit System

*Pat Murphy, Town of Merrimack

*Angelique Pandolph, Easter Seals

*Deborah Ritchey, GSIL

Dawn Schneider, ServiceLink

Marina Vaz, Conservation Law Foundation

James Wilkie, Caregivers

Mary Brundage, NRPC Transportation Planner

*Matt Waitkins, NRPC MPO Coordinator

Remote:

Nonyem Egbuonu, Emmaus Institute

*Represents a voting member organization

1. Call to Order and introductions

Janet Langdell (SVTC) opened the meeting at 10:05 a.m. and introduced herself and her organization. The remaining attendees introduced themselves

2. Review/Approve/Edit the January 2024, February 2024, and April 2024 meeting minutes (Action Item).

January & February meeting minutes: Mike Apfelberg (Greater Nashua United Way) noted that the January and February meetings did not have a quorum, were therefore not official meetings, and therefore did not have official meeting minutes. There was therefore no need to approve the January and February meeting minutes.

April meeting minutes: Langdell asked if there were any corrections/edits. Langdell said that she had non-substantive edits and would send them to Kathy Kirby at NRPC. There were no additional corrections/edits.

Angelique Pandolph (Easter Seals) motioned; with a second from Murphy, to accept the April 2024 minutes with edits. Deb Ritchey (GSIL) abstained. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Stakeholder MOU's (Action Item)

The Opportunity Networks MOU was considered for approval.

Ritchey motioned; with a second by Pat Murphy (Town of Merrimack) to accept Opportunity Networks MOU. Motion passed.

4. Reallocation of FTA 5310 RCC contracted services funding (Action Item)

Langdell continued the conversation from the April RCC meeting. She reminded the group that the Town of Merrimack voters did not approve the proposed fiscal year 2024-2025 Town Budget in April; the Town was then required to adopt a default budget; and this resulted in a \$1.3 million deficit. The Town needs to streamline. One of the areas under scrutiny is their funding for community transportation. Since the early 1990's Merrimack has provided funding for NTS to supply paratransit, demand response service to their residents. The Town had fully intended to continue with the transportation service but with the budget deficit they don't have sufficient funds available to continue with a reasonably similar level of service.

Each quarter, NRPC and SVTC review the RCC's fiscal year (FY) spending to date. As previously mentioned, it has been anticipated that some *5310 RCC contracted services funds* would be carried over from FY24 into FY 2025 (not including mobility management activity funds allocated to Caregivers and NRPC). Because there are carryover funds, the RCC is being asked to reallocate some of those funds to help fill the funding gap in Merrimack. Langdell explained that the concept was introduced to the Merrimack Town Council with favorable interest. Subsequently, she, Camille Correa (NTS), and Matt Waitkins (NRPC), met with Pat Murphy (Welfare Officer) and Paul Micali (Town Manager) from the Town of Merrimack to discuss. The proposal discussed allows Merrimack to use up to \$20,000 of the RCC7's federal 5310 funding under the condition that the Town would provide the required 20% local match (80% paid by the Federal government) and a share of the required 20% match for NRPC's contract management services. The Town is aware that the RCC7 must approve the reallocation proposal and that it will need to be reviewed by NHDOT. They also realize that this is for FY25 only; any subsequent FY requests would need to follow the RCC7's established request and allocation process.

Murphy explained that Town staff planned to continue funding the service and had proposed a budget of \$73,212. The default budget only provides approximately \$38,000, which leaves a \$34,000 shortfall. The RCC has proposed offering the Town \$20,000 in FTA 5310 funds and the Town will provide \$5,000 local match. This arrangement will close all but \$9,000 of the budget shortfall. The Town is hopeful that the voters will be more generous when next year's budget is voted on.

Langdell noted that Merrimack has been working with NTS to creatively modify the service to be more conservative with the funding. The Merrimack model may have lessons for community transportation region wide.

Murphy said the proposed reallocation of 5310 RCC funding will help fill the budget gap and Langdell noted that the funding is sufficient to provide a reasonable level of service.

Langdell explained the financial plan that uses the carryover funding from FY24 and a small amount from FY25 to arrive at the \$20,000 budget. Merrimack will provide the 20% match. Merrimack will also provide a portion for the matching funds that cover the 5310 funds that NRPC uses for administration.

Pandolph asked if the proposal would mean less transportation service somewhere else in the region. Langdell said no because SVTC is under budget with its service.

Kerry Miller (NTS) explained how busy NTS is with providing service. She hadn't been able to speak with Camille Correa about voting for this proposal. It was explained that Camille has been participating in these meetings and supports the proposal. Camille is drafting a separate service agreement that will codify the service that will be provided with the 5310 funding. The result will be two separate contracts: one for the 5307 funding and one for the 5310 funding.

James Wilkie (Caregivers) asked for clarification about the matching funds for the NRPC administrative portion of the 5310 funding. It was explained that the match would now be shared proportionally between SVTC, Caregivers, and Merrimack, instead of just by SVTC and Caregivers.

Apfelberg asked what happens next year if the voters in Merrimack don't support the budget again. Murphy explained that she hopes that doesn't happen. The Town Manager is supportive of the transportation budget. The plan is that this reallocation of funds is a one-time thing. Langdell said that it has been made clear to the town that this proposal only applies to FY25. The current contract with NHDOT for the 5310 funding only goes through FY25 and there will be a new round of funding for FY26-27.

Apfelberg asked what this carryover funding would have been otherwise used for. Langdell explained that the discussion about what to do with this funding began this past December. There were discussions about using the funding for volunteer driving and for the Merrimack service. The Merrimack service came to the top as an immediate need.

Langdell noted that the NTS hourly rate for providing service has dropped from \$74.59/hour to \$73.88/hour.

Langdell asked if there was any additional clarification needed.

Langdell proposed language for the motion that is shown below and asked for further discussion.

Ritchey suggested that the table which lays out the funding amounts should be included in the documentation for the proposal. The group agreed.

As of 5/14/24 estimated carry-over = \$16,530.00 (rounded)

Total estimated FY25 contracted services = \$184,030.00

[Final numbers pending SFY24 Q4 billing]

Proposed for FY2025 - 5310 RCC Funding

Category	Federal	Local	Total	Hourly Rate
Contracted Services				
NTS Souhegan Valley Service	\$164,030.00	\$41,007.50	\$205,037.50	\$73.88
NTS Merrimack Service	\$20,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$73.88
Mobility Management				
Caregivers NH	\$10,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$12,500.00	n/a
NRPC - MM/CM*	\$4,800.00	\$1,200.00	\$6,000.00	n/a
Regional Mobility Management	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	n/a

* SVTC, Caregivers and Town of Merrimack proportionally would share the \$1200 local match for NRPC MM/CM funding. SVTC (84.54%) Caregivers (5.15%) and Merrimack (10.31%).

Pandolph motioned, with a second by Carol Brooks (SVTC) that the Greater Nashua Regional Coordination Council (RCC7) approves the revised allocation of 5310 RCC funding for FY25 to include purchase of services from NTS to benefit Merrimack residents and approves the revised hourly rate proposed by NTS for contracted services. The Motion passed with all in favor. Murphy abstained.

Murphy thanked the group for its support of community transportation in Merrimack.

Next steps:

- NTS/Camille Correa will finalize the draft contract between NTS, Town of Merrimack and NRPC for services funded under the RCC7's 5310 federal funding.
- NRPC, as lead agency, will finalize and submit the proposed contract adjustments to New Hampshire DOT for approval, aiming to have this done by the Merrimack Town Council's June meeting. Waitkins asked Langdell to assist.
- NRPC will coordinate with Camille to secure the necessary signed contract from NTS for the RCC's FY25 contract.

5. Discussion of nominations for RCC officers – (Action Item)

Langell said that the RCC Bylaws require the appointment of officers including a designated Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary. The bylaws state that RCC members should nominate the officers in advance of the June annual meeting and vote on the slate of officers at the annual meeting.

Langdell asked if anyone at the meeting had been mulling over serving as chair, vice-chair, or secretary. Miller said that she is the SCC secretary and that suggested it could make sense for her to be the RCC secretary. There was discussion about the duties of the Secretary. Langdell noted that it is challenging to fully participate in a meeting and also

take minutes and that the RCC secretary would not be expected to take minutes – that could be “outsourced” to NRPC staff (for example). Ritchey noted that the bylaws allow for that. Langdell suggested that Miller would be a good vice-chair. Miller asked about the duties of the vice-chair. Langdell said it was basically to fill in for the chair when the chair is unavailable and to serve on the Executive Committee. Ritchey asked if there was an expectation that the vice-chair eventually moves up to chair. Langdell said that is typical, but it isn’t required. Miller agreed to be the vice-chair.

Murphy asked if someone from NRPC could be an officer. Langdell said that the Regional Mobility Manager is the only member of the RCC that can’t hold an office or vote. Waitkins said it makes sense for NRPC to take minutes

Waitkins read aloud the job descriptions of the chair, vice-chair, and secretary from the RCC Bylaws.

Waitkins volunteered to be secretary, as long as someone else from NRPC takes minutes (currently Kathy Kirby). Waitkins asked if Langdell would consider being chair. She said she would defer to anyone else in the room if they really wanted to be chair. Wilkie said he would do it if Langdell didn’t want to. Langdell said she would be willing to be chair for the coming year.

The slate of nominees is:

- Chair - Janet Langdell (SVTC)
- Vice-chair- Kerry Miller (NTS)
- Secretary - Matt Waitkins (NRPC)

Langdell encouraged the organizations represented at the table to become voting members by completing and submitting MOUs to the secretary. The completed MOUs can then be voted on at the June RCC meeting.

6. Locally Coordinated Transportation Plan Update (LCTP)

Waitkins reminded the group that the LCTP is a federally required document that is updated every 5 years, and that any RCC project that seeks FTA 5310 funding must be listed in the plan.

Waitkins and Mary Brundage (NRPC) presented information about the public outreach component of the LCTP planning process and asked the group for help identifying additional stakeholders and ways to get information from those stakeholders.

- There are several surveys being used to inform the LCTP.
 - General transportation survey, welfare officers survey, social service agency/health care provider survey.
 - The distribution of the surveys was discussed.
- The public outreach schedule was discussed
- The outreach that has been completed to date was summarized
- Future events were discussed.

Langdell asked if NRPC staff had received information from the Bike City Coop about new stakeholders that they are aware of. Brundage said no and would reach out to the Coop for that information.

Langdell said that she has heard from some older people (who still drive) that the general survey doesn't really apply to them, and she wondered if the survey was capturing the information we need for the LCTP and near-future needs. It was suggested that some follow-up may be needed to better inform the planning process.

Marina Vaz (Conservation Law Foundation) asked if the survey was going to be in language other than English. Yes, the survey is available in Spanish and Portuguese. NRPC is willing to translate into other languages also.

Nonyem Egbuonu (Emmaus Institute) asked if the survey could be translated into Swahili because there are a number of people in Nashua who speak Swahili. Waitkins said that NRPC would give it a try. Langdell suggested that it would be helpful to do the online version of the survey in other languages. Yes, NRPC will provide a link to a Spanish survey.

Langdell also noted that there may be value in getting a group of Swahili speakers together (for example) with a translator who could assist with completing the survey. Miller said that when the City of Nashua did the Livable Nashua Sustainability Plan, they did a Latino-oriented meeting that had 40 attendees and several translators participating to help out. It was a good way to target specific groups. The Nashua Public Health Department guided this process and is a good local connection for helping with outreach in underserved communities.

Ritchey asked about when the surveys were last reviewed to be sure they were capturing the right information. Langdell said that the surveys are basically the same as were used for the previous LCTP survey and that NRPC staff made some updates after reaching out to some members of the RCC for feedback. Ritchey noted that if staff only asked transportation providers for feedback about the surveys and not potential consumers of transportation, we may be missing some data. Ritchey suggested that in the future the RCC could seek out a grant that would pay for a facilitator to work with stakeholders to help identify the right questions to ask. She said that Granite State Independent Living did that with a grant from the Endowment For Health and it was very helpful. The consensus was that this is a great idea, and it would probably have to be implemented in the future, possibly as part of a study in the next round of SPR 5305e funding.

Dawn Schneider (ServiceLink) asked where she could get paper copies of the survey. She said that Servicelink does a lot of outreach. NRPC staff said they would provide paper copies. Langdell suggested crafting an introductory statement for all presenters so that the initial explanation is consistent at presentations. Feedback has been that the explanation of why someone should take the time to do a survey has been lacking. . Brundage said that the survey does have a paragraph at the beginning that explains the survey's purpose. Langdell suggested that a separate sheet or "elevator speech" that describes the purpose of the survey would be helpful.

Langdell asked if United Way could promote the survey through its Constant Contact mailings. Apfelberg said yes.

There was discussion about the difficulty of using a phone app to access the NRPC LCTP project page.

It was suggested that the survey and QR code could be included on local public TV stations. It would just be a slide with the information. Many towns have cable access channels. Including information in the various newsletters (i.e., Great American Downtown (Nashua), Greater Merrimack Souhegan Valley Chamber Friday Flyer etc.) in the region was discussed. Langdell asked if staff have connected with senior centers and member organizations. Waitkins said that RMM Donna Marceau has visited senior housing locations and will continue to do so. Marceau attends the Continuum of Care meetings and that is a way to access 40 agencies at once.

There was a suggestion to update the explanation on the NRPC project page to be explicit about the actual ask and make it more easily seen and accessible from the homepage.

Brundage noted that the goal is to complete as much outreach as possible by the end of June. That said, we will continue to solicit input until early Fall.

Apfelberg suggested leaving a flyer with the QR code about the survey in doctors' offices.

Summary of Outreach Ideas:

Get list of service providers from Don at Gate City Bike Co-Op

A written paragraph (elevator speech) about purpose and need for consistency across presentations

Use interpreters at community meetings/forums

Latino community – Nashua Public Health, Arlington St. Community Center

Survey Monkey - Translation in other languages

Flyer w/QR code in Spanish

Poster with QR Code

Business card or ½ sheet of paper mini flyer with QR code

Newsletters:

- United Way
- Nashua Public Health
- Great American Downtown
- GMSV Chamber of Commerce
- Others?

Senior Clubs

Food pantries in Nashua and other member Towns

Transit centers

Nashua Health Fair May 30?

Milford Recreation Senior Health Fair May 29th

NTS Events

Business/postcards with QR code

7. Regional transportation provider updates *NTS, SVTC, Caregivers NH, Gate City Bike Coop*

In the interest of time there were no updates this month

8. Other Transportation Issues or Concerns/Updates

- Langdell encouraged people to review the KeepNHMoving.com website.
- Langdell provided a reminder that the annual SCC/NHTA joint meeting is on June 7th and she encouraged people to attend. She referenced the email sent by Kathy Kirby (NRPC) earlier in the week for more details.
- Ritchey encouraged people to attend SCC meetings.
- Miller said that she will be doing a lot of NTS outreach in the coming months.
- Langdell gave a brief summary of the Mobility Managers group including NTS and SVTC efforts for getting transportation for an older Brookline resident temporarily in a rehab facility in Bedford to get to Nashua for medical appointments. Hopefully, we'll have some outcome information for the June meeting.
- Langdell asked if there were any additional comments

Motion to adjourn by Ritchey, second by Murphy at 12:02 p.m.

The next meeting will be Thursday, June 27th, 2024