



**DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Thursday, 8/24/2023**

Attendees:

In Person:

Mike Apfelberg, United Way of Greater Nashua
Kelly Bruce, Bridges
Representative Sherry Dutzy, Nashua Ward 3
Hillsborough County
Janet Langdell, SVTC
Carol Brooks, SVTC
Teri Palmer, Statewide Mobility Manager
Camille Correa, NTS
James Wilkie, Caregivers
Don Pare, Gate City Bike Coop, Nashua

Remote:

Ellen Sears, International Institute of New England
Sara Ceaser, United Way of Greater Nashua
Iraida Munoz, DPHCS Public Health Equity Officer
Julian Long, City of Nashua Urban Programs

NRPC Staff:

Ned Connell, Senior Regional Planner
Donna Marceau, Mobility Manager
Vince Noga, Transportation/Planning Analyst
Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Donna Marceau opened the meeting at 10:00 am.

2. Introductions

Introductions were done with in-person and remote participants.

3. Review June 22, 2023 meeting minutes (July 27, 2023 meeting was cancelled)

Marceau asked for any corrections to the June 22, 2023, meeting minutes.

***Dutzy motioned, with a second from Pare, to accept the June 22, 2023 minutes with no changes.
Motion passed by consensus.***

4. Regional Provider Updates

NTS

Correa gave the update:

- Kerry Miller is away temporarily and inquiries should be directed to Lori Lorman at extension 2031
- NTS brought back routes 3 & 5 which allows interconnection to other routes

- Most routes are back in place except for Central and on-demand services
- Van service is running 5 vans per day

Pare asked about a voucher system for Manchester Transportation Authority

- Correa will look into it

SVTC

Langdell gave the update:

- Rides are steady
- Anticipated uptick as winter approaches
- 3 new applications processed in July, with some more that have already come in for August so numbers are going up
- Side reference about a Meals on Wheels event in Amherst attended by Langdell and Marceau. Langdell pointed out that a majority of people were from Merrimack and Nashua during the second seating.

Caregivers

Wilkie gave the update:

- 37 new clients since the beginning of the year
- Rides fairly steady with slight drop in June, but July picked back up

Apfelberg asked a question about qualification criteria for clients and nature of the rides offered:

- Must be 62 or over for Caregivers rides and at 130% of the poverty level, which is about \$1600-\$2000
- Doctor verified disability with Doctor's letterhead and number ID
- Financial limitations
- 10 day lead time requirement
- Email scheduling updates sent to volunteers 3 times per week and shows appointments scheduled for 4 months in advance

Palmer asked if rides are provided for folks with temporary disabilities or substance abuse appointments:

- If they qualify financially, yes

Palmer asked about recruitment

- After high involvement during COVID things have slowed with recruitment despite aggressive advertisement efforts

Langdell added:

- SVTC eligibility is primarily based on residency
- Help folks that are homeless
- Priority due to funding is given to seniors
- Do not require medically certified disability information
- Trying to keep services as accessible as possible at \$2.00 each way for fares with a voucher program and work through town welfare program
- Majority of rides are for health care appointments
- 48 hour lead time on business days

Gate City Bike Co-op (GCBC)

Pare gave the update:

- Busy as ever
- 40+ volunteers throughout the week doing a terrific job
- 20+ bikes available per week to donate along with lights, locks, and helmets
- Clientele has shifted from homeless/poor to immigrants and those lacking a license or vehicle for transportation
- Conway, Claremont, and Keene have been helped by GCBC to start their own similar program with around 25 bikes donated to each from GCBC to get started. Conway is doing terrific
- Helped with a donation of 2 bikes in Concord
- Bike thefts more prevalent in Concord
- No age restrictions for clients requesting bikes
- Bike is tagged for ID and photo taken of client with their bike for ID and theft reporting purposes

Apfelberg started a new topic of conversation asking if there is a program to assist for folks who need help with auto repairs:

- Marceau gave information about the Axuda loan and will email details to the group
- Palmer working with DHHS to help facilitate car repairs for those in need. Gene Patenaude is also a contact for this

Langdell started a new conversation asking Apfelberg and Ceaser about the status of a Microsoft planning grant

- Apfelberg stated that they will work with Microsoft as a funder to pilot a volunteer driver program in the community. Much research is needed first to avoid redundancy.

Palmer: Interested in offline conversation with Apfelberg regarding this pilot program

Update from Dutzy:

- Working to become eligible for ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to build a website to bring siloed information together for residents who need transportation. Should include software package, integration, marketing, etc. to meet clients' needs
- Encouraging RCC members to pursue county dollars

Discussion ensues

Langdell asked if funding can be used for transportation

- Dutzy stated that she doesn't see why not

5. SCC Update

Marceau provided the following update:

- They're following the blueprint for mobility management
- Focus on performance measures
- Concrete deliverables
- How to increase capacity and close gaps
- Looking at data points, including negative data to improve on
- Resources from GSIL

Palmer added:

- Focus on performance indicators, except #13, which they're asking to be removed
- DOT has asked that Palmer to express to all RCC members that if you are reporting on performance indicators #1 and #2, new ridership, applications, and referrals, needs to show that

there's a need for more funding in NH. There's a need to show a need for more funding, through referrals

- Indicator #3, "no-shows", may change to "denials"
- A lot of the mobility managers are awesome because they give all the information about referrals

6. Volunteer Driver Feasibility Study Discussion

Connell provided the update:

- Key factors identified in the study:
 - Host organization
 - Vehicle ownership
 - Insurance and liability
 - Program cost
 - Sources of funding
 - Recruiting volunteers
 - Mileage reimbursement
 - Program marketing
 - Scheduling rides
- Conclusion: Not enough money

Apfelberg: Please expand on bullets 2 and 4

- Volunteer driver service will never replace NTS. Apfelberg recommends re-wording this bullet in the document
- Clarification on the wording and details about not guaranteeing rides

7. Statewide Mobility Manager/RCC update

Palmer gave the following update:

- State Coordinating Council Committee Bylaw Committee is working on bylaws update.
- Mobility Manager belongs to the RCC, not the lead agency (NRPC). RCC should be providing work plan for Mobility Managers
- October Celebration: Commute Smart NH and Commute Smart Seacoast discussion and rundown

8. Adjourn

Camille makes a motion to adjourn and Waitkins seconds at 11:59 am

The meeting adjourned by consensus.

From Zoom chat:

00:51:13 Bruce: Where do people go to sign up for the ride program in Nashua
01:58:50 Munoz: Thank you all. I have to go to another meeting

Next Meeting:

Thursday, September 28, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Vincent Noga, Transportation/Planning Analyst.