

8/19/25 Sullivan County RCC Region 4 Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Elyse Crossman * (GCC), Jim Contois* (citizen); Keith Thibault (SCT)*; Taralyn Bielaski* (Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network, Dartmouth Health); Teri Palmer (statewide mobility manager); Candy Reed (Region 4 Mobility Manager); John Haffner* (UVLSRPC); Miranda Dupre*; Bryanna Michitson* (city of Claremont)

Online: James Berquist (SCT)

*voting member

Meeting was called to order at 1:06pm

Introductions all around, quorum is present.

Meeting Minutes: Approve meeting minutes of June 17th 2025.

Correct Taralyn's name (Bielaski). Give Keith an asterisk. Check on video link...for mobility manager update.

Motion to approve by Jim. Seconded by Elyse. All approve.

Mobility Manager Update:

Candy Provided Performance Indicator Survey results. Candy has results from the last few months in a spreadsheet that she will send out to the group. It will help provide information about what Mobility Managers are doing. Teri collates into a spreadsheet. Information is also on KeepNHmoving.com. Also provide quarterly reports with a little bit more information.

Kieth: We hope that people share this information with the community as well. Share Candy's contact details and keepnhmoving.com resources.

Candy: Reporting now for FY2026 (began July 1st). Still working on map that is going to show Sullivan County and the bus stops, grocery stores, public services, etc. Will be a big overview of where things are in the city. It will be shared with everyone. Also sent out "transportation needs assessment survey". They have received approximately 1200 so far. Looking to receive at least 2400. Focus is on elderly, disabled, and veterans community. Connected with 4 organizations in Sullivan County to hand out surveys to their constituents. Touched base with Brenda Burns – Newport Senior Center Executive Director; Gave to Meals on Wheels and everyone that is on the RCC committee.

Miranda: Is this just for Sullivan County?

Teri: Nope. For the whole state, and for anybody who travels or works here.

Keith: Where we see the trends going for these programs is “demand response” in these rural communities. Fixed routes are harder.

Teri: Volunteer driver programs fill in the gaps. Another thing with this Needs Assessment at the state level has been connecting with DHS (department of human services) who offers some transportation services. That department has a lot of money and transportation does not have as much.

Taralyn: If I have a grant and I have transportation written in the grant I should be connecting with mobility management network?

Teri: Yes! For example, Drug Court might offer a taxi voucher. We should be providing them with information on bus services.

Statewide Updates:

Teri: Still working with the alliance for healthy aging on annual retreat. Doodle poll went out to volunteer driver and transit providers. We are building a great agenda for this event. Have volunteer drivers reach out to me. Working on a grant Rural Health Transformation Plan. Governor needs to apply by November 1st – Tricia Tilly for DHHS and partners up in Coos Co are figuring out how to do a transportation pilot project. Need to spend large amounts of money quickly! For example, each region might need two vans to get to medical appointments. 5 billion over the next 5 years. SCC meeting will be September 11th. Tristate conference is in Portland, ME is on September 4th. SCC has also put out FY2026-27 workplan. Should have received the draft. Focused on building the foundation for coordination to come. Improve communication between SCC and RCC. Improve communication between mobility management network and mobility managers themselves.

Candy and Teri went to a travel training conference (Association of Travel Instructors) in Boston. Learned a lot of cool stuff. Met a lot of travel trainers. They focused on folks with disabilities. Really cool seeing that group of people learning that transit helps them become independent.

Still looking for mobility manager for the North Country Council – District 1. Also 2 applicants at Monadnock for Region 5 – parttime mobility manager and parttime planner.

Member and Partner Updates

Jim: I’m a volunteer train host. We have a special lift for people with disabilities to get on the train. Used it twice in the last two weeks. Just wanted you to know that thousands of people come into Claremont and we report all this data to Amtrak. It’s a well-used train station. Contact Charlene Lovitt if you would like that data.

James: three new buses on the road. New minivan is in service. Working out very well. New driver that runs the minivan first week of the month. Ridership is up 8% than the year before. Minivan is used as dial-a-ride – primary job is to get people from outskirts of town into town. Fully handicap accessible. First week of the month is always busy. Two new buses ordered as replacements for Lebanon route and Charlestown route. Will be available in July. Older buses will be used as a spare bus.

Candy on behalf of Beth: SCT update from Southwestern Community services. See packet for updates on bus ridership, new bus shelter, volunteer driver program (need more drivers!), staffing, transit facility project, new fleet vehicles, new bus stops, and other updates. NHDOT will be at the transit offices on Tues Oct 7th for the monitoring review process.

Kieth: We have to raise 300k/year in matching funds to operate transportation services. Any opportunities folks might have, please share.

James: we also have bus advertising that goes to the match. Share with businesses.

Fred Butler joined the meeting at 2:00pm

John and Teri shared information on 10-year plan. Recent GACIT hearing in Sunapee went over major cuts coming the State. Please come out to GACIT hearings when they are scheduled.

John: EV Technician training tentatively scheduled for Oct 17th. Share with networks

Taralyn: Center for Advancing Rural Equity is hosting an Unconference on October 1st.

Fred: By next meeting it will be time for 5310 and 5339 funding discussions. This group will vote on that funding request. Assuming, however, that this district will not be putting forward a grant proposal because this funding goes through SCS.

New Business

Food bank distribution is coming soon!

Elyse and Candy: employers are still struggling with employees that don't have access to transportation. Remember commute with Enterprise. Connected them with the Smokehouse. Looking into some industry-specific workforce needs.

Teri: Community Transportation Month: go to Commute Smart NH. Week without driving first week in October.

Elyse moves to adjourn, Miranda seconds. Meeting adjourned 2:21pm

Next meeting is 10/21/25 from 1-2pm