

CONSOLIDATED MANCHESTER/ DERRY-SALEM [R8] REGIONAL COORDINATION COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2024

SOUTHERN NH PLANNING COMMISSION/ZOOM

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Mike Whitten, Chair – MTA

Fred Butler – NHDOT*

Ken Grant – Atkinson*

Ben Herbert – R8 Mobility Manager

Ted Houlihan – Atkinson*

Lisa Ludwigsen – Easterseals NH

Angelique Pandolph – Easterseals NH

George Sioras – Derry

Matt Waitkins – Nashua RPC*

Tracey Whitehead – CART

John Wilson – Citizen Member (Londonderry)

Noriko Yoshida-Travers – Atkinson*

Connie Young – Gr. Salem Caregivers*

Scott Bogle – RPC

Nate Miller – SNHPC

Sylvia von Aulock – SNHPC

Adam Hlasny – SNHPC

**attended virtually*

1. Call to Order

Chair Mike Whitten called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

2. Action on Minutes of January 16, 2024

Motion by George to approve minutes, seconded by John and carried unanimously.

3. FTA 5310 Capital Discussion (Atkinson)

Nate introduced the 5310 Capital program, noting the requirements and referencing recommendation #13 in the 2022 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. It is essential that applicants for this funding have shown a willingness to participate in RCC activities. In response to a question from Scott, Fred said that 5310 Capital has not been fully subscribed over the last couple rounds.

Ted Houlihan of Atkinson Senior Services reviewed the history and status of Atkinson's Senior Transportation Program:

- In the early 90s, the Atkinson Police Chief began driving seniors to medical appointments; this slowly evolved into a formal program that was financed by the Town
- The current operating budget is \$112,000 per year, funded by the tax base
- The program has 5 vehicles, 9 drivers, and a 20 hour-per-week receptionist
- Drivers are paid an hourly wage of approximately \$15
- Rides are provided to individuals aged 60+, with medical appointments receiving highest priority
- Rides are scheduled five days per week between 6am and 4pm
- Destinations include Boston, Concord, Manchester, and Portsmouth
- 2,229 round trips (4,458 one-ways) were provided over the last year
- The intent of this application would be to replace a 2015 Toyota Venza (115,804 miles) with an FTA-funded minivan

In response to a question from Nate, Ted replied that Atkinson has never received federal funding to support this service before. Nate and Fred added that there are many “strings attached” to FTA funding, including a Title VI Plan, Vehicle Maintenance Plan, periodic in-person reviews, and quarterly reports related to vehicle usage.

There was discussion about the nature of Atkinson’s participation in RCC activities. In the past, Ted was unsure of what Atkinson could bring to the RCC table but would have no objection to becoming a member going forward. He added that the coordination process is important, and that Atkinson’s program could help others, as well as learning from other RCC member organizations.

Scott said that it is a priority to get more agencies to the RCC table. Despite Atkinson’s lack of participation up to this point, the RCC’s supporting of its application would not adversely affect any organization in the region. This may lead to other coordination opportunities (i.e. with Plaistow) as well. Nate added that if the RCC supports Atkinson’s application, language in the letter of support should be as strong as possible re: the town’s commitment to participate in coordination at the RCC level.

In response to a question from Chair Whitten, Fred said that if NHDOT deemed that Atkinson did not have the technical capacity to administer the project, they would seek to deploy the asset elsewhere. However, he was not aware of this happening before.

John said that Ted can contribute a lot to the RCC, as he has set up a unique program in Atkinson over time. Sylvia added that she’s glad Atkinson has knocked on the RCC’s door; it’s an opportunity for the RCC to turn this into something good.

Nate said that it is time to dust off the coordination MOU; if the RCC endorses Atkinson’s application, it should be contingent upon their signing the MOU.

Motion by Scott that the RCC agree to submit a letter of support contingent upon Atkinson signing the MOU, participating actively in the RCC, and working with the Mobility Manager to prepare all necessary paperwork. Motion seconded by John, and carried unanimously.

Adam agreed to draft a support letter and share with RCC leadership.

4. Next Meeting

The next RCC meeting will be held on **March 19, 2024, at 12:30pm.**

Motion to adjourn by George, seconded by Lisa. Meeting stood adjourned at 2:49 PM.