

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

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2024

SOUTHERN NH PLANNING COMMISSION/ZOOM

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Mike Whitten, Chair – MTA

Scott Bogle – RPC

Trish Caruso – Hooksett*

Tim Diaz – RNMOW

Ben Herbert – R8 Mobility Manager

Jack Hutchinson – Deerfield

Lisa Ludwigsen – Easterseals NH

Nate Miller – SNHPC

Teri Palmer – Statewide Mobility Manager

Angelique Pandolph – Easterseals NH

George Sioras – Derry

John Wilson – Citizen Member (Londonderry)

Noriko Yoshida-Travers – Atkinson*

Sylvia von Aulock – SNHPC

Adam Hlasny – SNHPC

**attended virtually*

1. Call to Order

Chair Whitten called the meeting to order at 12:32 PM.

2. Action on Minutes of May 21, 2024

Motion by George to approve minutes, seconded by Tim. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of New RCC Member: Jack Hutchinson of Deerfield

Motion by Tim to approve Jack Hutchinson as a new RCC member, seconded by Angelique. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Updates

Nate noted that SNHPC has received all subrecipient invoices for the final quarter of FY 2024. After processing, he will provide a complete summary of FY24 activities. Nate has also updated the MOU for R8 RCC agencies. As there were no substantive changes, *George made a motion to adopt the language of the updated MOU, seconded by Angelique. Motion carried unanimously.*

Ben shared a brief mobility management update, noting that referrals increased considerably between FY23 and FY24. Other upcoming MM activities include creating a “How to Start a VDP” guide, continuing work with the Victory Women of Vision group in Manchester, and producing an annual report for the R8 RCC. Finally, Ben will be reaching out to RCC members for input on the coming year’s MM Workplan.

There was some discussion of the effectiveness of “new rider” metrics, and whether there might be a more accurate indicator of the work Mobility Managers are doing statewide. Sylvia suggested reporting on total riders rather than just “new” riders, which are counted as such when they take their first ride after the beginning of the new fiscal year (July 1).

5. Confirmation of Projects for Supplemental FY25 Funding

Nate presented a spreadsheet showing the additional 10% (\$52,800) available for allocation to R8 RCC activities in FY2025.

Activity	Total	Federal	Local	Scope
Goffstown Shuttle Expansion	\$ 13,312	\$ 10,650	\$ 2,662	Funding for an additional 64 hours per quarter of service for the MTA Goffstown Shuttle, contingent upon match availability from the Town of Goffstown.
Deerfield Volunteer Driver Program	\$ 12,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 2,500	Funding to support volunteer driver program services in the Town of Deerfield via Ready Rides, contingent upon a funding transfer/oversight agreement with Region 10.
New Boston Demand Response Expansion	\$ 6,480	\$ 5,184	\$ 1,296	Funding to increase the number of rides per month for the New Boston Shuttle from 15 to 25 rides per month in FY 2025, contingent upon match availability from the Town of New Boston.
Easter Seals Demand Response Expansion	\$ 31,250	\$ 25,000	\$ 6,250	Funding to support approx. 550 additional hours of Easter Seals demand response service in FY 2025.
SNHPC Administration	\$ 2,458	\$ 1,966	\$ 492	Funding to support additional administration/oversight activities by SNHPC.
Total	\$66,000	\$52,800	\$13,200	

Nate noted that while the additional funds are subject to ultimate approval by NH Governor and Council, NHDOT has authorized the RCC to proceed, as there is no reason to believe there will be issues with final approvals.

Nate added that since Region 10 RCC already oversees ReadyRides (potential provider for new Deerfield service), SNHPC is working with NHDOT to figure out the most efficient way to administer that \$10,000 of federal dollars – likely through transferring that funding to R10. Jack said that currently, ReadyRides provides match with volunteer hours, but that \$2,500 in match funding could be raised if necessary. He added that ReadyRides is waiting to choose a new chair before moving forward, which could happen at its August meeting. This project will come into clearer focus over the coming weeks.

Scott pointed out that 87% of FY2025 5310 funding is projected to go to SNHPC communities, and only 13% to RPC communities. He acknowledged the reasons for this but would like to discuss prioritization criteria/regional distribution for future funding rounds.

As a broader question, Chair Whitten asked if 5310 should be used more as seed funding to get projects going rather than sustaining the same projects year after year. He added that MTA has approached it as the former, increasing shopper shuttle ridership enough to be able to incorporate those routes (i.e. Goffstown, Hooksett) into their fixed route network. He said there should be some type of mechanism to recognize that if existing projects aren't removed, there won't be capacity for new projects.

Motion by Tim to adopt the FY2025 projects using the additional 10% of FTA 5310 funding, seconded by George and carried unanimously.

6. Project Prioritization Discussion – FY 2026

There was a discussion about the importance of ensuring wide geographical coverage of the region vs. targeting improved access/ridership in select areas, and how the RCC defines success.

- Tim said that one approach could be going through a list of the region's communities and determining which towns are willing/ready to provide matching funds, followed by which service models may need to be updated.
- Chair Whitten said it would be worth evaluating how the Mobility Management Network defines success (i.e. ridership), which could work against the geographical coverage argument.
- Scott said that a performance measure in the MM blueprint is # of towns covered by VDPs. He added that it may be easier to move the needle on this than on other metrics.
- Jack said that medical trips for all seniors and persons with disabilities would seem to be a priority. Teri said that towns must be involved in these conversations, and town welfare officers could speak at the RCC on behalf of their respective towns.
- John proposed soliciting "business plans" from each agency to help gauge what the RCC could accomplish with varying amounts of funding. This bottom-up approach would collect useful information from all organizations and would put everyone on an even playing field.
- Angelique said that the percentage of the population served should be considered.
- Scott pointed out that when RPC puts forward Ten-Year Plan priorities, there are three baskets: local, regional, and interregional (based on when I-93 expansion was consuming significant funding ~15 years ago). For 5310 funding, there could be a certain % of the overall pool dedicated to ensuring basic coverage, and another % for expanding coverage.
- Scott also brought up the broader question about what agencies have capacity to manage federal funds, and whether they should be taken on as 5310 recipients. He suggested that perhaps municipal contributions should increase over time to free up federal funds for new projects in the region.
- Nate said that many VDPs do wonderful work but don't realistically have the capability to manage federal dollars. SNHPC takes a risk every time federal funding is passed through to subrecipients and must be confident the subrecipients are deploying funds according to federal regulations.
- Sylvia suggested that perhaps existing subrecipients could be asked about the possibility of expanding their own VDPs.
- Chair Whitten said the RCC should think medium- and long-term about the future of these programs; sometimes by focusing on the upcoming fiscal year, opportunities for longer-term planning are missed.
- Nate and Scott suggested the potential of looking beyond 5310 funding for long-term regional transportation solutions. The goal is full coverage, but some of it must be locally generated (i.e. \$5 municipal option fee). The possibility of setting up a regional VDP or assisting towns join an existing one was discussed briefly.

7. Next Meeting

The next RCC meeting will be held on **September 17, 2024, at 12:30pm.**

Motion by George to adjourn, seconded by Angelique and carried unanimously at 2:12 PM.