

**Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council  
For Community Transportation**

**Minutes**

April 16, 2024

Present: Charlie Pratt, Vice-Chair, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Jennifer Robinson, Treasurer, *Cheshire County*; Ellen Avery, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC)*; Kathy Baird, *Monadnock RSVP*, (remote); Alberta Bronson, *The Lukas Community*; Mary Jensen, *Keene Senior Center (KSC)*; David Meader, *Citizen Member*; Daniel Smith, *Keene Family YMCA*; Lisa Steadman, *Able NH*.

SWRPC Staff Present: Terry Johnson, *Senior Project Manager*; Rich Clough, *Office Support Specialist*.

Guest: Teri Palmer, *NH Statewide Mobility Manager*.

**I. Welcome**

Vice-Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and introductions were made.

**II. Approval of March 19, 2024 Minutes**

**Motion: To approve the minutes of March 19, 2024.**

Motion by Ellen Avery, seconded by Lisa Steadman. Approved by unanimous roll call vote with Vice-Chair Pratt, Kathy Baird, Alberta Bronson, Sally Malay, and Lisa Steadman abstaining.

**III. Treasurer's Report/FY25 5310 Budget**

Terry Johnson shared financial reports indicating expenditures for March 2024, projected expenditures for April and May 2024, and a preliminary estimate for the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Enhanced Mobility Budget for FY25. Jennifer Robinson reported that she arrived at the April and May estimates by averaging expenditures from previous months. Terry Johnson noted that the MRCC will need to vote on the FY25 budget in June. Discussion ensued concerning what projects and items are eligible for funding under 5310 criteria. Terry Johnson explained that trips for older adults and people with disabilities are eligible for 5310 funding. Teri Palmer said that a disability can be temporary, and that the disability needs to be documented with a physician's note. Ellen Avery noted that grocery shopping and essential services qualify for CVTC rides. Charlie Pratt reported that HCS experiences a \$100,000 annual deficit with the Friendly Bus service which is subsidized by other HCS programs. Terry Johnson said that Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) will be required to complete new 5310 applications for the two-year funding cycle beginning FY26. Teri Palmer reported that a 5310 operations Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released in the Fall of 2024.

**IV. Transit System Design Project**

Terry Johnson reported that SWRPC is currently conducting a Transit Design Planning Project which aims to identify a transit operations and governance model for the Region. Project objectives include identifying and helping to prepare a lead organization to manage or sponsor expanding transit services and building partnerships that result in commitments that support a sustainable expansion of transit services. The ideal

operating model will be designed to implement the recommendations from the 2022 Microtransit Feasibility and Fixed Route Transit Service Plan Design Assistance Study which provides a regional transit framework that phases in zones and corridors where transit is most likely to succeed. Projected results from implementing the first phase of expansion in the greater Keene area are expanded transit access geographically to 70% more people and 46% more jobs.

Terry Johnson described the current community transportation barriers that exist in the Region as well as current operating model challenges. He said that the transit project's objectives and work scope activities align with MRCC priorities. Activities completed to date include preliminary research on potential operating models, convening of an Advisory Task Force to guide the project, and identification of a consultant to provide expert assistance to the project. Terry Johnson gave an overview of the project work scope, scheduled to be completed in June 2025. He said a key aspect of the project is to identify and engage a champion(s) that would have a say in the model's development and manage it.

Using a slide deck, Terry Johnson provided a high-level overview of different transit operating models that may be evaluated during the project. Preliminary research conducted by SWRPC revealed the structure and pros and cons of various transit agency types. The five transit agency types include: Municipal, County, Non-profit, Regional Transit District, and Joint Powers Agreement. Terry Johnson said that a transit agency could elect to manage the system itself or serve as sponsor and hire an outside partner to manage the system. There are pros and cons to each.

During discussion, Ellen Avery asked what the estimated cost would be to implement Phase I of the expansion. Terry Johnson responded that, based on analysis conducted during the transit study, the operating cost would be \$1.2 to \$2.3 million annually depending on the alternative selected and ridership. Vice-Chair Pratt said the cost to implement the microtransit-only alternative would be higher than the cost to implement HCS' current transit service. Ellen Avery noted the challenge that would be involved in funding a more costly system, especially since the current system is operating at a deficit. Terry Johnson said that the goal would be for the system to be self-sustaining. Teri Palmer said that a creative approach utilizing multiple funding sources will be required to start up and sustain the system.

## **V. Keep NH Moving Website Preview**

Terry Johnson provided an online tour of the new [Keep NH Moving](#) website which is scheduled to go live at the beginning of May. He said the website is designed to serve multiple users with the primary audience being transportation service consumers. Consumers can conduct an online search for transportation based on the origin of their trips. The site also integrates with the Agile Mile platform which enables consumers to map their routes. Teri Palmer said Agile Mile allows consumers to select from multiple transportation types including biking, walking and carpooling. Terry Johnson noted that all Monadnock Region transportation providers have been populated to the website except private providers, which he will be adding next. Terry Johnson said that Keep NH Moving also provides host pages for each of the State's RCCs. He displayed the MRCC pages which include information about the MRCC and links to regional transportation providers. He said these pages will supplant the current MRCC Weebly once the Keep NH Moving site is up and running smoothly.

## **VI. Partner Updates**

Mary Jensen reported that the Keene Senior Center did not include indirect costs in its latest invoice and asked if that expense should be itemized. Terry Johnson said it is not required. Mary Jensen noted that KSC's latest fundraising event, a 5K race, was a success, attracting 240 people. Ellen Avery invited MRCC members to attend CVTC fundraising events at Woodbound Inn in Rindge. The events are scheduled on April 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Teri Palmer encouraged people to attend a mental health

discussion on Thursday, April 18th at the Claremont Opera House. Ellen Avery announced that May is National Volunteer month. Teri Palmer noted that CommuteSmart NH is also happening during May. Sally Malay reported that KHKC is considering eliminating the requirement that adult riders accompany youth for transportation trips provided by Thomas Transportation.

## **VII. Mobility Manager Update**

Updates were deferred to the next meeting.

## **VIII. Next Meeting**

The next MRCC meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

## **IX. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Clough  
Office Support Specialist