

**Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council
For Community Transportation**

Minutes

April 15, 2025

Present: Frank Dobisky, Chair, *Thomas Transportation*; Jennifer Robinson, Treasurer, *Cheshire County*; Erika Alusic-Bingham, *Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (CAPHR)*; Allan Gillis, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC)*; David Meader, *Citizen Member*; Kim Rumrill; *Keene Senior Center*; Lisa Steadman, *ABLE NH*.

SWRPC Staff Present: Terry Johnson, *Senior Project Manager*; Jason Cooper, *Planner*.

Guests: Teri Palmer, *Statewide Mobility Manager*; Creighton Ward (remote), *ABLE NH*.

I. Welcome

Chair Dobisky called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Approval of March 18, 2025 Minutes

Chair Dobisky asked if those in attendance had an opportunity to review the March 2025 meeting minutes and if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Chair Dobisky asked for a motion to approve the March 18, 2025 meeting minutes.

Motion: To approve the minutes of March 18, 2025.

Motion by Jennifer Robinson, seconded by Erika Alusic-Bingham. Approved by unanimous vote.

III. Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Robinson presented the March MRCC financial report and shared that the budget amendments proposed during the last meeting have been implemented successfully. Currently the MRCC is trending to have a \$958 budget shortfall which is a significant improvement following the amendment. Teri Palmer asked whether the group anticipates asking NHDOT about covering this shortfall. Terry Johnson replied that SWRPC may have surplus funds for the Mobility Management line item that could be used to fill this gap.

Kim Rumrill asked for clarification on the 34 total trips that KSC reported for work-related purposes for KSC. She noted that no trips appeared in the monthly columns of the March financial report. Jennifer Robinson explained that the March financial report shows monthly trip reporting only for the period January through March 2025. The 34 total trips reported by KSC occurred during the period July through December 2024, the first six months of the fiscal year.

IV. Featured Presentation: ABLE NH Transportation Equity Task Force

Lisa Steadman shared that ABLE NH has a Transportation Equity Task Force. She explained that ABLE NH was founded in 2009 to advocate for individuals with disabilities. The organization conducts advocacy

on behalf of state entities which are federally funded and have limited outreach budgets. ABLE NH's Transportation Equity Task Force was established as a result of goals identified at their 2023 Annual Meeting. The Task Force began meeting in 2024. Goals for the Task Force include: 1) ensuring there is necessary accessibility in transportation systems and their communications, 2) ensuring that people with disabilities (PwD) are represented in transportation conversations across the state, 3) monitoring trends that could impact transportation needs for PwD, and 4) connecting more PwD with existing transportation systems across the state.

The Transportation Equity Task Force works to network with organizations to solve issues in a variety of areas. That way they can leverage their platform to call attention to issues being experienced by individuals as well as larger populations within the state. Developing relationships with a wide variety of organizations in the state helps spread the word about the Task Force and their important work. The Task Force meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. They are hosting "Lunch & Learn" sessions each month from April through October of 2025. The first "Lunch & Learn" session is Friday, April 18th, from 12:30-1:30 p.m. with James Ziegra, a Senior Staff Attorney from the Disability Rights Center – NH. Mr. Ziegra will discuss passenger rights and responsibilities for ground transportation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Terry Johnson asked Lisa Steadman how RCCs can best interface with ABLE NH and she expressed that one helpful action could be for member organizations to designate a liaison to join the Transportation Equity Task Force. She explained that participation at all events and meetings is not necessary but that staying in the loop helps spread their mission across the state. Kim Rumrill asked whether ABLE NH works with Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Lisa Steadman shared that they are not currently working together. Teri Palmer asked whether the local DAV chapter has ever worked with the MRCC and Terry Johnson replied that Gary Welch, formerly the lead for the American Red Cross volunteer driver program, was representing DAV on the MRCC.

Creighton Ward shared that anyone interested in joining the organization can reach out to her at Creighton@ABLENH.org and that she can share information accordingly. She additionally shared that the organization's Community Appreciation Gala is coming up in May and that she hopes to see folks there. Terry Johnson asked Teri Palmer whether she had any state-level perspectives on the Transportation Equity Task Force and she expressed that many of the conversations related to PwD held by the MRCC are common across the state. She explained that she hopes more RCCs will participate in the Transportation Equity Task Force because it is an important forum for dialogue. Chair Dobisky asked whether ABLE NH is affected by federal funding freezes or cuts and Lisa Steadman explained that none of their funding is federal. She shared that ABLE NH is continuing to look for funding to help provide more accessible transportation services within the region. Erika Alusic-Bingham shared that Grappone Auto Group has sponsored adaptive skiing events at Pat's Peak and they might be worth reaching out to with respect to assistance for outfitting accessible vehicles. She also suggested reaching out to the Turtle Ridge Foundation, which is run by Bode Miller, a ski racer from Franconia.

V. MRCC Officer Candidates

Terry Johnson explained that, according to the MRCC's bylaws, officers are elected every two years, and that the current terms for all existing officers end in June of 2025. He explained that there are no term limits for officers. Chair Dobisky indicated that he would be willing to step away from the Chair position if someone else is interested in serving. No members present during the meeting indicated interest in serving as Chair. Terry Johnson said that he will reach out to Vice Chair Pratt to see if he is interested in serving a second term, or if he is interested in the Chair position. Jennifer Robinson will continue to serve as Treasurer

as a representative of Lead Agency, Cheshire County. Lisa Steadman volunteered to fill the secretary position which has been vacant since former KSC Executive Director, Mary Jensen, resigned from KSC. Terry Johnson said that he will prepare a slate of officers for the May or June meeting.

VI. Partner Updates

Teri Palmer shared that the Statewide Needs Assessment is progressing well. They are working on a survey targeting 2,000 responses according to the identified scope of work. In the summer they will be conducting focus groups and Teri will share more information when it is available. She said the New Hampshire Transit Association and Statewide Coordinating Council will be hosting their annual meeting on June 13. Signups will open on May 1.

Erika Alusic-Bingham continues to look for an assistant and appreciates the MRCC spreading the word. She said the work is very rewarding.

Allan Gillis shared that CVTC only had 30 unfulfilled rides during the month of March due to lack of drivers. He also reported that CVTC had 13 volunteer driver applicants to serve the towns of New Boston and Weare. CVTC will officially expand its service area to these two towns effective July 2025. Allan shared that he attended an informational meeting for the purpose of promoting CVTC in these new towns. 30 participants expressed interest in either becoming volunteer drivers or in utilizing the service. Kim Rumrill shared that two new volunteer drivers signed up for KSC during March.

VII. Mobility Manager Update

Terry Johnson provided a progress update on the “Next Generation” Transit Project. He noted that SWPRC has been conducting meetings with potential transit system sponsors and financial contributors. He explained that the goal is to select a transit service governance and operating model by the end of the current fiscal year or early the next fiscal year. Additionally, Southwestern Community Services (SCS) expressed interest in operating the system and is interested in the possibility of establishing a cross-region transit service. Terry shared that SWRPC presented to the Swanzey Selectboard last week and that they are meeting with the Marlborough Selectboard this week.

Terry explained that SWRPC is working to better understand how human service agencies in the region are providing transportation services and whether they would be interested in coordinating their services with MRCC and “Next Generation” service providers. He shared that municipalities and institutions have been surveyed as part of the “Next Generation” project which indicated some interest in supporting expanded transit services. Erika Alusic-Bingham advocated for continuing to meet with communities and organizations outside the Greater Keene Region to ensure that unmet needs are fulfilled.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next MRCC meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Cooper, Planner