

**Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council
For Community Transportation**

Minutes

June 17, 2025

Present: Frank Dobisky, Chair, *Thomas Transportation*; Charles Pratt, Vice Chair, *Home Healthcare, Hospice & Community Services (HCS)*; Jennifer Robinson, Treasurer, *Cheshire County*; Erika Alusic-Bingham, *Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (CAPHR)*; Melissa Callender, *Monadnock Peer Support (MPS)*; Allan Gillis, *Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC)*; Sally Malay, *Keene Housing Kids Collaborative (KHKC)*; David Meader, *Citizen Member*; Kim Rumrill, *Keene Senior Center (KSC)*.

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

Guests: Teri Palmer, *Statewide Mobility Manager*.

I. Welcome

Chair Dobisky called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Approval of May 20, 2025 Minutes

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

Chair Dobisky asked for a motion to approve the May 20, 2025 meeting minutes.

Motion: To approve the minutes of May 20, 2025.

Motion by David Meader, seconded by Erika Alusic-Bingham. Approved by unanimous vote.

III. Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Robinson estimated that the MRCC will be about \$2,500 over budget by the end of the current fiscal year and that budget adjustments would help to address line item shortfalls. Terry Johnson shared that SWRPC expects to have some surplus mobility management funds which could be allocated to cover transportation provider shortfalls. He said this is possible because SWRPC has utilized other funding sources to support mobility management expenses. Since any adjustments would require input of final provider invoices, Terry Johnson requested providers to submit their June invoices by July 7th. This would provide sufficient time for SWRPC to account for a final adjustment to the mobility management line item.

Motion: To approve Cheshire County, in consultation with Southwest Region Planning Commission, to make the following end of fiscal year line item adjustments to the SFY 2025 Enhanced Mobility budget: Reallocate unspent funds associated with the SWRPC Regional Mobility Management and CVTC SmartRide projects to address shortfalls that are projected to occur to the HCS 5310, CVTC Volunteer Driver and KSC Volunteer Driver projects.

Motion by David Meader, seconded by Chair Dobisky. Approved by unanimous vote.

Jennifer Robinson reported that the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) requested the MRCC to approve the mileage reimbursement rates for CVTC and KSC, and the HCS hourly rates for FY25 and FY26. Two approvals were needed. The first is to retroactively approve the rates for FY 2025. She clarified that Section 5310 funds cover 90% of HCS' hourly billing rate. Jennifer further said that the federal mileage reimbursement rate was revised from \$0.67/mile to \$0.70/mile effective January 1, 2025. Both CVTC and KSC elected to remain at the \$0.67 rate through the end of FY25. A second motion is needed for approval of provider rates for FY26.

Motion: To retroactively approve the following reimbursement rates for Fiscal Year 2025: \$94.50/hour for HCS , and the mileage reimbursement rate for CVTC and KSC of \$0.67/mile.

Motion by Jennifer Robinson, second by Kim Rumrill. Approved by unanimous vote with Vice Chair Pratt, Allan Gillis and Kim Rumrill abstaining.

Motion: To approve the following reimbursement rates for Fiscal Year 2026: \$96.60/hour for HCS and the mileage reimbursement rate of \$0.56/mile for CVTC and KSC.

Motion by David Meader, second by Melissa Callendar. Approved by unanimous with Vice Chair Pratt, Allan Gillis and Kim Rumrill abstaining

IV. FY26 Mobility Management Work Plan

Terry Johnson distributed a draft FY26 mobility management work plan with the MRCC June meeting packet, along with a list of questions intended to generate input from the MRCC. He explained that SWRPC serves as mobility manager on behalf of the MRCC and that input from the MRCC is critical to developing a work plan that addresses MRCC priorities. He explained that since SWRPC will experience a reduction in funding from \$120,000 during FY25 to \$85,000 during FY26, the draft work plan reflects a corresponding reduction in capacity for SWRPC to carry out mobility management activities. Chair Dobisky asked if there are likely to be impacts to the MRCC because of this funding reduction. Terry responded that the core functions SWRPC provides to support the MRCC will likely remain unchanged, however, capacity to manage projects and initiatives will be more limited. He further commented that funding SWRPC received for the "Next Generation" Transit Project will help to offset the decrease in Section 5310 funding and that related activities are integrated into the draft mobility management work plan.

Terry Johnson explained that one of the major goals for the upcoming work plan focuses on customer service and linking individuals with services that are both available now and those being developed through the "Next Generation" Transit Project. He emphasized that if the new transit system takes root, a significant outreach campaign will be conducted to help existing riders adapt to the new service and attract new riders. Chair Dobisky mentioned that he attended a travel training session at the NHTA-SCC Annual Conference, which he believes will be key for the MRCC network to remove stigma towards transit services and to help new riders navigate the offered services.

Erika Alusic-Bingham suggested a public campaign to inform the community regarding the lackluster NH investment in public transit compared to other states. She referenced that this could be an activity for Teri Palmer or for the MRCC mobility manager and doing more public outreach and advocacy could be important. Terry Johnson explained that these activities are included in the plan. Erika Alusic-Bingham further suggested having language in the plan that is more explicit regarding data collection and dissemination. Terry agreed and added that this is a major focus of SWRPC's overall work program, which emphasizes bridging gaps between subject matters such as housing, economic development, and transit.

Terry Johnson encouraged the MRCC to provide input offline throughout the summer in preparation for adoption of the work plan at the August MRCC meeting.

V. Partner Updates

Kim Rumrill shared that she has been having trouble finding a ride to the VA Medical Center in White River Junction for a KSC member and that she had a very difficult conversation with Disabled American Veterans (DAV) when she called to request their help. Teri Palmer shared that she would like to hear about this experience so that she can follow up appropriately.

Terry Johnson shared that he attended last week's NHTA-SCC Annual Conference and that there was good representation by Region 5, including Chair Dobisky and Allan Gillis. He said that Ellen Avery, former Executive Director of CVTC, was honored with the Fred Roberge Award, which recognizes an advocate in the state for their service to improving community transportation. Terry shared that there was a morning panel discussion with representatives from several private sector industries. The topic was, "Connecting our Workforce & Growing our Economy". Much of the conversation focused on the challenges that employers are facing with recruiting and retaining employees due to lack of public transportation and housing. Terry had an individual conversation with panelist, Greg Norman, after the panel discussion. Greg is the Director of Community Health at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) and has been a key leader collaborating with community partners to improve public transportation and housing in the Upper Valley. Greg offered helpful suggestions on how to gain financial support from employers and institutions for the "Next Generation" Transit System. Teri Palmer shared that she participated in a session regarding services for individuals with disabilities and that more services need to become available in the state to meet the demand. She also suggested that more companies should implement policies such as Hypertherm, which offers incentives to employees for using transit services and carpooling.

Kim Rumrill shared that KSC has recruited several new drivers, which is timely as several previous drivers are no longer participating.

Teri Palmer shared that the Community Transportation Needs Assessment has launched and that Terry Johnson will soon be sharing information regarding a survey to gather information on the public's transportation needs. Chair Dobisky said that he took the survey and encouraged MRCC members to take it.

VI. Mobility Manager Update

Terry Johnson shared that SWRPC is continuing to move forward with the "Next Generation" Transit Project. This week there are meetings between the possible operating entities, MOOver and SCS, with HCS, to explore transfer of services and to discuss related priorities for each organization. Terry Johnson shared that last week SWRPC had a conversation with SmartRide and that he was very impressed by their business and their commitment to community service. He explained that in just a couple of years, the company has grown from a husband-and-wife duo to 23 staff, including several employees dedicated to care management for riders. Terry said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss SmartRide's potential interest in operating the "Next Generation" Transit System regionwide critical care rides service. Chair Dobisky asked whether they would be willing to join the MRCC and Terry Johnson explained that the owner is very busy but that he will continue to try to get them at the table. Teri Palmer shared that there is a new company in Springfield, Vermont which can hopefully begin providing Medicare rides in the northern portion of Region 5 in the future.

VII. Next Meeting

The next MRCC meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Cooper, Planner