

Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2021 at 10:00 am

Present:

Jeanne Kern (CVCOA), Peter Johnke (VCIL), Donna Gallagher (GMT), Jordan Posner (GMT), Zoe Neaderland (VTrans), Christian Meyer (CVRPC), Elena Juodisius (CVRPC)

Introductions

Hellos and introductions were shared for CVRPC new Senior Transportation Planner Christian Meyer.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Minutes

The Committee made no changes to the minutes.

Program Review and Updates

MyRide: GMT shared and the committee discussed changes to MyRide

- MyRide scheduling can now accommodate 15 minute or less pickup times.
- Currently extending service to cover part of Berlin (Hospital Hill, Airport Road) and Barre (Route 302).
- Created virtual bus stops on Main and State Street area of Montpelier to accommodate pick-ups in high traffic area, requires some people to walk within a ¾ mile area. Accommodations to avoid excessive walking can be made by calling the call center.
- Accommodations for trips shorter than 1/10th mile (as crow flies), or for curbside pickup in downtown Montpelier can be arranged through the call center.
- Call center is appreciated as many people don't like using app. Capacity for buses is currently held at 75%.

E&D Transportation: GMT updated the committee:

Regional Elders and Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee

- Will be high need for volunteer drivers – have lost several drivers who will not come back since COVID. Over the summer, Seven Days will profile stories of rural volunteer drivers. This could help in an effort to recruit more.
- COVID Policy changes: GMT is now allowing more than 1 rider in vehicle, all are still required to wear masks.
- Jordan reported that 30% of the budget has been spent, typically would have been 65%, and he has no concerns about overspending. While generally trips per rider are capped, low spending this year has allowed individuals with greater demand to get the rides they need.
- GMT submitted grant to VTrans, will notify once funding is secured. VTrans agreed to cover 100%, not subject to typical 20% local match [volunteer hours + Medicaid + ~5% from CVCOA]

General Public Transit Updates from GMT

- Barre City currently has on-demand My Ride on top of fixed route, very uncommon. Discussion of moving to only MyRide, Paratransit, some other option.
- No fares will be charged for the coming year.

Senior Centers and Adult Day: Jeanne said Senior Centers are considering plans to reopen for congregate meals once vaccination efforts are completed and re-opening plans are deemed safe. This may impact E&D demand. Project Independence, adult day center, closed permanently and there is currently no adult day program in Central Vermont (2 other communities in the state have permanently lost adult day programs).

Free Wheelin': Christian shared that he had spoken to Michael Bransfield of Free Wheelin' and they are not interested in E&D Funding for FY22, as they have funding lined up.

REDPAC Workplan Review

Elena walked through the draft workplan prepared for the Central Vermont E&D Committee, using guidance from VTrans.

The committee reviewed the mission and purpose and agreed it well represented the communities served, efforts to coordinate mobility in general beyond E&D services, and with the goal of engaging older adults and people with disabilities in the community.

Regional Elders and Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee

Partner roles were discussed including ensuring all understood. Jeanne clarified that CVCOA and VCIL are partners as they represent user groups across the region, and are not place-specific. CVCOA contributes funding, and VCIL is not required to.

GMT will continue to submit grant as lead, but will keep committee updated and informed on timeline. GMT will also share reporting required of VTrans with committee.

Annual Projects discussed included follow-up from E&D rider survey with participants who offered contact information for follow up, methods to be determined at a later date. Brief discussion had on assessing unmet need, both of current and potential riders, and creating ongoing procedures for assessing and responding to community needs.

Optional workplan activities were reviewed. The ongoing need for volunteers, not just in response to COVID, was discussed. Jeanne suggested volunteer recruitment could be a statewide effort from VTrans, and Zoe offered to post on VTrans social media. Donna shared that most volunteers are recruited through Front Porch Forum, one from newsletter. As many drivers are older, senior center newsletters may be venue to reach. Suggestion was made to offer incentives for time spent volunteering, such as free class at community college, coupons for Ben and Jerry's. Donna mentioned one driver is volunteering in order to complete required hours, may be others.

Next Steps and Meeting Date

The REDPAC scheduled its next meeting for Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 2 pm. The agenda will be to discuss and approve with adjustments the FY21 Workplan, Ride guide brochure, and Quick Guide to REDPAC document. These documents will be shared with the committee prior to the meeting.

Meetings will be held via zoom. Remote meetings will continue for the REDPAC committee due to COVID and commute challenges for several members.