



Board Meeting

**Minutes – January 8, 2020 - 9:00am,
McCConnell Center room 323
Dover, NH**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10

1) Introductions

Members Present: Colin Lentz (SRPC), Rad Nichols (COAST), Debbie Perou (Rockingham Nutrition MoW), Fred Roberge (Easter Seals and State Coordinating Council), Pam Becker (Community Partners), Tahia Fulwider (Ready Rides), Scott Bogle (Rockingham RPC), Betty Smith (Ready Rides), Cheryl Robicheau (Strafford CAP)

Others Present: Jeff Donald (COAST), Calvin Smith (NH Veterans Services)

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes {VOTE}

B. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as written.
Seconded by C. Robicheau
Vote: unanimous in favor

3) FY19 Year-End Review

J. Donald said he would send a set of charts on the FY19 year in review immediately after the meeting. He noted that Ready Rides had gained a couple of clients needing accessible trips. That has gone well since COAST is providing the transportation (Ready Rides volunteer drivers are in their personal vehicles which are only accessible to ambulatory clients). J. Donald noted that he added a chart that shows recent improvements in ride scheduling efficiency due to TripLink.

4) Updates & Statistics

J. Donald provided an updated TripLink Dashboard that showed flat ridership for COAST. Rockingham NMOW was also flat but that may be because of weather related cancellations. He noted there has been a steady rise in bookings in TripLink overall.

J. Donald said the effort to hire a contractor to update the ACT website was moving forward. A contractor had been selected and he was expecting to get a contract signed soon.

5) SFY21 5310 RCC Grant Application

J. Donald explained that NHDOT had issued the notice for the SFY2021 FTA 5310 RCC grant application. The deadline is March 5th so he will have a draft application ready for review at the March 4th ACT meeting. J. Donald said he expected that the application for the ACT region would be essentially an extension of the current grant and any unspent funds would be rolled into the next grant. He noted that some providers are over-budget but others are underspent so the whole budget evens out in the end. Unspent funds will need to be allocated amongst providers based on their ridership demand. This is difficult since it's not clear what causes the spikes in ridership between various providers.

J. Donald handed out three different draft budgets for discussion (“A”, “B”, and “C”):

- Draft budget “A” – this shows wages are up compared to previous because admin wages had to be moved. This budget includes a maintenance fee for the new website. Rent costs are down but office operations costs are increased. Purchased transportation is increased. This budget isn’t really an option, but it demonstrates a concept budget if COAST was able to flex 5307 funds to cover the entire 20% matching funds. Matching funds are well-covered because of the Tufts grant and other foundation support.
- Draft budget “B” – This budget shows spending down all local match, assumes full \$10,000 from regional hospitals and Tufts. It shows a 75%/25% match ratio; this is an alternative way to conceptualize the budget to reduce financial burden on COAST.
- Draft budget “C” – This budget assumes ACT will spend all \$82,000 from COAST plus all local match available. It provides level funding for Ready Rides and Community Rides, increases the request for RNMOV. This leaves \$10,512 that could be used for discretionary spending or reduce the amount COAST would have to contribution from FTA5307.

J. Donald said he was looking for input from ACT providers on the way funds were allocated in the budget for various providers. He asked if there was still potential for Strafford CAP as a member of TripLink. C. Robicheau said she would talk with CAP staff. She said they would want to show that the budget is effectively balanced and coordinates client needs between providers.

J. Donald asked if members think it would be beneficial to send out broad communication to other providers to join ACT through the remaining \$10,512 in draft budget “C”. D. Perou suggested that they stay with the providers currently in the budget, or ones who are active members but not using funding (such as Strafford CAP). F. Roberge suggested that putting out a broad solicitation could show that ACT is using state and fed funding in a coordinated effort. He asked if this should be discussed at a future SCC meeting. This should be examined at a statewide level. R. Nichols noted that the SE region has additional resources compared to other RCC regions, this has made flexible planning more possible.

5820 – J. Donald invited all ACT members to the next two Executive Committee meetings to discuss the draft application and budget before the next general board meeting in March.

D. Perou asked R. Nichols if COAST was comfortable with draft budget “C”. R. Nichols said they had budgeted the full \$82,000 for that possibility because of the importance of ACT services.

P. Becker mentioned that she had seen more vans that say “transit” on them but don’t have a clear role in the existing provider group in the region. R. Nichols confirmed that those vans are actually operated by private Medicaid services. J. Donald noted that he had gotten recent calls from Medicaid clients who were upset about their service, but he eventually found out those clients had nothing to do with ACT providers and they were actually working with such private providers. J. Donald noted that the clients were primarily upset with long wait times and this may be due to a recent case involving Frank’s Taxi (in Rochester) which had been accused of Medicaid fraud for charging clients for trips that were not provided. Members discussed various examples of conflicts with private companies that are from outside the region but provide service in the region. They also discussed the apparent lack of ridership and trip scheduling data from private Medicaid transportation providers. J. Donald suggested having a conversation with DHHS staff at the next SCC meeting about these issues.

6) Information Exchange

F. Roberge notified members that the SCC was holding a technical session on January 9th on Transportation Network Companies. The focus would be on mobility on demand issues; there would be presentations about Lyft/Uber type companies and senior-specific operations (one example is called

“Silver Rides”). D. Perou noted that she had met with Exeter municipal staff about a recent survey of seniors in town that had shown Uber and Lyft were very commonly used. This was surprising given that Exeter has invested a lot of money in transportation support. She said she would get more information about the results and methodology.

J. Donald said he occasionally gets calls from clients in other regions and it’s not clear how to redirect them to the appropriate regional service. He had been discussing this with other transportation coordinators around the state. He had put together a list of town-by-town or county contacts for specific requests that don’t fit with ACT provider services. Members discussed other issues around transportation service referrals.

R. Nichols said COAST’s system redesign had been approved at the December 18th Board of Directors meeting. COAST is getting ready to fully launch the new system at the end of June 2020. He briefly described the new fare structure, new holidays (Christmas and Martin Luther King/Civil Rights Day) that won’t have service, and some local routing changes that will affect a small number of current ADA riders who will no longer be in the service area. He said those riders have been notified and COAST will continue providing ADA service to them through the end of 2020.

C. Robicheau said Strafford CAP will be offering free tax prep help for senior and disabled clients during tax season. Clients can drop off information, CAP staff will plug in their information, and clients can then pick up documents.

7) Public Comment

No public comments were brought forward at the meeting.

8) Adjournment

B. Smith made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by S. Bogle

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40