

# **General Membership Meeting**

## **Minutes – March 7, 2018 - 9:00am,**

### **McConnell Center, Dover**

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**Members Present:** Scott Bogle (RPC), Pamela Becker (Community Partners), David Bourget (Homemakers Health Service), Tory Jennison (Region 6 Integrated Delivery Network), Helen Kostrzynski (RNMoW), Colin Lentz (SRPC), Margie Longus (Ready Rides), Rad Nichols (COAST), Miriam Pereira (COAST), Sharon Reynolds (citizen member), Meri Schmalz (Ready Rides), Betty Smith (Ready Rides),

**Guests Present:** Jeff Donald (COAST),

#### **1) Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting began at 9:06

#### **2) Review of the Working Agreement**

J. Donald provided a final copy of the ACT membership working agreement that was discussed at the previous meeting.

#### **3) Approval of Meeting Minutes (1-10-18 meeting) {VOTE}**

M. Schmalz made a motion to accept the minutes from January 2018; Seconded by P. Becker

Vote: unanimous in favor

#### **4) Update to Service Standards {VOTE}**

J. Donald reminded members that the provider service standards had been updated to include specific provisions related to abuse, molestation, and sexual assault. He explained that legal counsel and insurance agents for COAST and RPC said both agencies were very exposed without the specific non-exclusion language in the general service standards:

“there shall be no exclusion on the commercial liability insurance policy for any abuse, molestation or sexual assault by employees of the contractor”

S. Bogle made a motion to approve the updated service standards; Seconded by M. Schmalz

Vote: unanimous in favor

J. Donald explained that the requirements for criminal background checks for drivers were variable. He noted that ACT providers looked back 10 years for each background check, which was beyond the average standard of 7 years. J. Donald said he was researching industry standards for background checks to ensure that they were in compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

M. Schmalz asked if Ready Rides should go ahead with scheduled checks that were coming up for some drivers. J. Donald said if they have scheduled checks coming up, Ready Rides should go ahead with those. R. Nichols acknowledged the variability in background checks and said that in the future ACT provisions could include blanket language such as “background checks will be conducted to the fullest extent required”. He said the goal was to ensure full compliance while avoiding unnecessary costs for providers.

T. Jennison asked if there had been any discussion about using a single service for conducting background checks for ACT providers as a group (to save time and cost). R. Nichols said a shared service for background checks could be possible but providers would still have to pay for individual checks.

## 5) Reallocating SFY18 & 19 POS Funds {VOTE}

J. Donald explained that \$42,821 of POS funding needed to be relocated to providers (RNMoW, Ready Rides, and Community Rides) for the remainder of the 2018-2019 POS contract. This is because TASC decided to end their participation with TripLink and POS funding. He said he had reviewed the funding options with the ACT Executive Committee and needed approval from the general membership to submit the amendment to NH DOT.

J. Donald proposed three options for distributing POS funds. The proposals included impacts to cash and non-cash match from providers, and included funding for the development for a Tri-City volunteer driver program (VDP) in the Dover-Rochester-Somersworth area, and services Central Rockingham County.

S. Reynolds asked if the Central Rockingham VDP was looking as positive as the Tri-City VDP. J. Donald responded that the Central Rockingham would not necessarily be a VDP program, but it could be. He said the Central Rockingham area had been identified as a general gap in transportation services. S. Bogle said he had asked that some of TASC's POS funds be set aside for development of improved transportation services in Central Rockingham. This could be used to support expansion of an existing program (such as Ready Rides, Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels, or Lamprey Health Care) or starting a new program in the area.

M Schmalz asked if it would be possible to dedicate more of the funds set aside for Central Rockingham development to existing providers and review the funding needs for Central Rockingham development efforts later in the 2019 fiscal year. She noted that it can take time to set up a new program and funding could be used now. J. Donald responded that setting up a new program would take time, but the funds could also support expansion of an existing program that would require very little lead time.

Members discussed the benefits of setting aside the funds for service improvement in the Central Rockingham region. They agreed that setting aside funding and "advertising" it could encourage conversation among the existing providers that could lead to better service in the end.

S. Reynolds asked J. Donald which one of the three reallocation options he would choose. J. Donald said option #1 was not the best because it was really just the status quo with some small shifts in funding. He said options #2 and #3 were better and took better advantage of the unspent funds. He said he felt #2 was the best option at this point given individual needs and capacities of providers. T. Jennison noted that #2 seemed to make slightly less funding available to existing providers [than option #3], but allowed for development of the Tri-City and Central Rockingham programs without having an impact on existing providers.

In option #2

- \$37,653 is left unspent in SFY18 to be forwarded to SFY19
- Individual provider/program funding for SFY2019
  - \$60,000 for Ready Rides
  - \$0.00 for TASC
  - \$38,000 for RNMoW
  - \$32,000 for Community Rides
  - \$33,911 for Central Rockingham development
  - \$50,000 for Tri-city VDP development
- Community Rides uses cash match in SFY18 in order to spend down Wentworth-Douglass Hospital grant; then uses noncash in SFY19
- RNMoW uses cash match for the first half of SFY18 and switches to noncash for the rest of the contract
- RPC admin always uses cash match
- VDPs always use non-cash

T. Jennison made a motion to approve POS funding reallocation option #2 as proposed  
Seconded by S. Reynolds  
Vote: Unanimous in favor.

#### **6) Budget Shortfall**

J. Donald presented members with letters requesting short-term funding assistance to fill the gap in matching funds for ACT and TripLink due to not being awarded foundation grants and TASC's not participating in TripLink. He said as TripLink membership grows, those dues could cover the required match, but not currently. He asked members to consider making small, short-term donations to support ACT services. COAST is able to cover the local match, but ACT doesn't want to set the precedent that it is the lead agency's responsibility to cover any match short falls for a regional council.

#### **7) SFY 19 Formula Funding**

J. Donald notified members that he had submitted the application for SFY 2019 formula funds. The application had been provided to members prior to the meeting. J. Donald said the application was for the same funding amounts that were made available the previous year (\$132,808) to support his admin position and the operation of TripLink, with matching funds provided by Ready Rides, RNMO, COAST, and an additional \$5,000 from Exeter Hospital. J. Donald reminded members that even with additional generosity from multiple partners, and mini grants from hospitals, there was still a gap in matching funds. He said COAST was able to fill that gap for the time being with FTA5307 funds, but this was not ideal, and unsustainable in the long-term.

#### **8) Updates & Statistics**

J. Donald gave an update on efforts to improve customer experience for TripLink. He explained that groups of customers tend to call to reserve trips all at the same time. When a call taker is on the phone with a customer and they get another call, that caller is asked to leave a message. Customers sometimes worry that their trip will actually get reserved if they can't speak to a real person, so they call multiple times. J. Donald said he was working with their phone provider to implement an Automated Call Distribution system so that callers could remain on hold until they were able to speak with a person, rather than leaving a message.

J. Donald said the January financial information was not able to be compiled into a report yet. He referred members to a chart of trips booked from February 2018, back to July 2015. J. Donald noted that there was a slight drop in trips booked between January and February, and said this is fairly consistent from year to year.

#### **9) SCC Report**

J. Donald said the SCC had not discussed the rules regarding minimum accessible vehicle sizes for small providers because NHDOT had not attended the meeting.

J. Donald explained that NH DOT is requiring that in the next round of grant applications (winter of 2018), each RCC have only one lead agency for grant funding. J. Donald and R. Nichols explained that COAST used to be the sole lead agency, but that in 2015 ACT enabled Rockingham RPC to be the lead agency for POS funds so that COAST could participate in the Community Rides. Otherwise COAST would essentially be hiring itself to operate Community Rides trips, which was thought to not be allowed. NH DOT recently received guidance from FTA that said it was acceptable for the POS lead agency to receive POS funds. J. Donald said ACT would have to switch back to having a single lead agency for the next grant application. He said it doesn't have to be RPC or COAST specifically, but that will have to be dealt with in the future.

J. Donald said he had been surprised at a recent SCC meeting when members suggested they were not sure whether the SCC should continue. He noted that the SCC and the RCCs are required by RSA, but state legislators have proposed a bill to review all the State's committees and commissions. J. Donald said he was concerned by the implication that the SCC could dissolve. Could NHTA or Transport NH take over the SCC's role? Would the RCCs still exist if the SCC were dissolved? He noted that NH Dept. of Health and Human Services used to participate on the SCC but stopped when Medicaid funding was taken out of RCC transportation services.

T. Jennison asked if the SCC had discussed participating in the Medicaid re-procurement process and the related transportation benefits. J. Donald said he didn't think so.

### **10) Information Exchange**

J. Donald reported that development of the Tri-City VDP is moving forward. He said it is not 100% committed to yet, but the municipalities and stakeholders are all enthusiastic about implementing a VDP for the Dover, Rochester, and Somersworth area.

R. Nichols explained that progress was also being made for improving senior transportation in Portsmouth. He said the Portsmouth City Council had recently voted 8-1 in favor of allowing an optional \$5.00 vehicle registration fee to support a local senior transportation program. J. Donald added that state law enables any town to implement an optional vehicle registration fee up to \$5.00; those funds are usually dedicated to local roads and bridges, but can also support other transportation services.

M. Schmalz asked when the Portsmouth decision would be implemented. R. Nichols said the potential local timelines were in development (and not yet public), but it would likely be sooner rather than later.

R. Nichols noted that ride-hailing services (such as Uber and Lyft) are trying to get into the non-emergency DR transportation market. He said the ride hailing model was proving difficult to sustain in general, but those companies are attempting to provide demand-response service.

This led to a general discussion of future service and funding issues at the regional, state, and national level. S. Reynolds asked if regional Integrated Delivery Networks could be part of remand-response transportation in the future. T. Jennison said it was possible, but it would be challenging to integrate the different funding and operating models.

S. Bogle asked if the SCC was in-tune with what the Integrated Delivery Networks were doing in their regions. J. Donald said that it wasn't, but it would be great to integrate the two efforts more.

There were discussions about hosting a regional transportation forum that would bring in the health care providers. The group also discussed whether a statewide meeting could be put together for the SCC, RCC's, and IDN's.

### **11) Clients in Need**

No one presented clients in need.

### **12) Public Comment**

No public comments were brought forward.

### **13) Adjournment**

S. Bogle made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by S. Reynolds

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31