

**Alliance for Community Transportation
General Membership Meeting
Minutes – September 13, 2016, 9:00am
McConnell Center, Dover**

Members Present: Debbie Bartley (Lamprey Health Care), Scott Bogle (RPC), Donna Fanny (NH Association for the Blind), Carol Gulla (TASC), Tory Jennison (Seacoast Public Health Network), Colin Lentz (SRPC), Margie Longus (Ready Rides), Rad Nichols (COAST), Rich Niemczyk (TASC), Christopher Muns (One Sky), Debra Perou (RNMoW), Sharon Reynolds (citizen), Cheryl Robicheau (Strafford CAP), Meri Schmalz (Ready Rides), Pamela Thyng (Community Partners)

Others Present: Jeff Donald (COAST), Doug Cummings (Wentworth-Douglass Hospital)

1) Welcome and Introductions

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes (7-13-16 meeting) {VOTE}

C. Gulla made a motion to approve the minutes from July, seconded by M. Schmalz.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

3) Transportation Services Update from Doug Cummings at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital

D. Cummings introduced himself and described his role at Wentworth Douglas Hospital as the Transportation Manager. He said the hospital has a fleet of vehicles 6 that provides approximately 9,000 trips last year.

J. Donald asked how the hospital determines eligibility for patients to use transportation services.

D. Cummings said if patients can access any other means of transportation they cannot utilize hospital transportation services. He said the hospital uses certain criteria to determine if patients cannot provide transportation for themselves or access it through other means. He noted that they are trying to reduce abuse of the system that has been observed.

C. Gulla asked what communities the Hospital serves and if they coordinate with other hospitals for patient transfer between hospitals. D. Cummings responded that they serve Dover, Madbury, Lee, Barrington, South Berwick, Eliot, and Rochester. He said they have coordinated on patient transportation in the past, but individual's insurance may restrict which hospitals they can use for specific procedures and treatments.

M. Schmalz asked if Wentworth-Douglass Hospital only serves the hospital. D. Cummings said they provide some specific transportation services outside the hospital, but they are researching their ability to expand service to seniors and other needy populations.

P. Thyng said in previous jobs hospitals would pick up patients for surgery, but wouldn't take them home after surgery and anesthesia; she asked if Wentworth-Douglass had a similar policy. D. Cummings said those policy-level decisions are made by administrative and medical staff. He noted that taking post-op patients home is a significant liability for the hospital because drivers wouldn't be able to respond to a medical emergency.

J. Donald asked if they provide curb-to-curb or door-to-door service. D. Cummings said it is door-to-door, but staff are not allowed to go into the patients' residences.

R. Nichols thanked D. Cummings for talking about his role and said it would be great to have him be part of the transportation coordination conversation more often. He said Wentworth-Douglass's perspective and input would be valuable to ACT, and that there are likely opportunities for ACT to assist Wentworth-Douglass with specific transportation coordination challenges.

D. Cumming noted that hospital transportation services are funded exclusively through donations to the Wentworth-Douglass Foundation, and are possible expanding to serve facilities for associated services (such as behavioral therapy). D. Cummings said the hospital is looking to improve its ride scheduling software; they currently use Microsoft Outlook.

P. Thyng asked if hospital drivers are paid through the Wentworth Douglas foundation. D. Cummings said their pay comes out of the budget, but he's not sure how it gets reimbursed.

D. Perou asked if D. Cummings has talked to other hospitals about the challenges of starting and sustaining transportation services. D. Cummings said he has only been working as the transportation director for about a year and hasn't had a chance to reach out to colleagues at other hospitals. S. Bogle asked C. Gulla what the transportation services are like at Exeter Hospital. C. Gulla said Exeter is currently not able to provide much transportation assistance. She said the hospital will cover some rides for physical therapy, but not for other medical appointments.

4) Membership Update and Vice Chair nominations

J. Donald explained that he spoke with Great Bay Services and expects them to start coming to ACT meetings again, and Grace Limousine was interested in joining as well.

R. Nichols reminded members that the ACT annual meeting would be in November and there would be a vote on committee officers. He said S. Bogle was prepared to continue in his role as Vice Chair, but opened the floor for additional nominations which would be voted on at the November meeting. C. Gulla nominated S. Bogle for Vice Chair, seconded by S. Reynolds.

5) Approve FY17 Budget {VOTE}

R. Nichols presented the draft FY2017 budget and asked for a motion to open discussion.

S. Reynolds made a motion to review and approve the draft budget, seconded by C. Gulla

J. Donald explained that the budget covers October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017, but is built around the State Fiscal Year (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017) grant that has been submitted to the State and approved, and is already in place. He said POS services are funded through FTA Section 5310 POS funds: Section 5310 Formula Funds support overhead costs such as the call center salaries, his salary, utilities, outreach etc. He noted blank spots in the budget for "partner support" and said it is unclear what will be available for partner support because it depends on partners using TripLink for their call taking. Additionally, since we don't yet know what the SFY 18 Formula Fund grant announcement will look like, we don't know for sure how much funding will be available for July 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017 which is the 1st quarter of SFY 18, but the last quarter of FY 17. He explained that formula funding for the call center requires a 20% match, half of which is covered by local match received by ACT from foundations, and the other half is provided by agencies that use the call center to schedule trips for clients. He said the proposed budget is very similar to last year's budget.

R. Nichols asked for a vote on the motion that was previously made.

Vote: unanimous in favor

6) Purchased Transportation Update (July - August)

J. Donald reviewed POS ridership data for the first two months of the first quarter. He said ridership was up overall and continued to improve. He noted that ridership for Community Rides slumped after Community Partners left as a member but is picking back up.

C. Gulla noted that TASC had provided eight trips during the first quarter which were not listed on the ridership spreadsheet. J. Donald thanked her for the correction and said he would update the list.

D. Cummings asked if the North Bus had a fee system. J. Donald said the North Bus has a fee, but all other services provided by ACT partners are free.

J. Donald explained that the North Bus had been officially canceled after a public comment period and that the service would be terminated at the end of September. He said he had been communicating with other providers, such as Strafford CAP, who could potentially provide transportation services for the few riders who were using the North Bus.

S. Reynolds asked if there was potential for a volunteer driver program to start in the North Bus service area. J. Donald said he had been discussing the possibility with municipal staff in northern communities.

7) TripLink Update

J. Donald explained that the COAST call center would now be called "TripLink". He said nothing about the serviced had changed, but that it now had a direct phone number and email address to reduce confusion for clients trying to schedule trips.

P. Thyng asked if there was an advertisement for TripLink that she could distribute at her office. J. Donald said he would work on an advertisement that could be added to a flyer or newsletter.

8) SCC Report

J. Donald explained that the SCC would be holding a Volunteer Driver Program Forum on September 30th.

NHDOT has hired RLS Associates to update the statewide Coordinated Plan and they would be reaching out the various agencies for input. J. Donald noted that the state had just been awarded a grant through the *Rides to Wellness* program to pilot new software to integrate HBSS's RydeLog software with the software used by CTS, the State's Medicaid Transportation Broker.

D. Perou noted that NH Dept. of Health and Human Services put out a Request For Applications for transportation funding to support a reimbursement model based on individual trips-per-day rather than people-per-day. She asked if the SCC had been talking about this issue. J. Donald said they had discussed it. S. Bogle suggested that D. Perou could reach out to state legislators that work on the DHHS budget and coordinated transportation issues.

9) Information Exchange

D. Fanny said she had nine sight-impaired clients who wanted to get to a monthly meeting in Portsmouth, and she was having trouble finding them transportation. S. Bogle asked if there were trip reimbursement funds available. D. Fanny said there weren't really any available. J. Donald mentioned that several North Bus volunteer drivers would be available soon, and could help get the clients to a bus stop. S. Bogle asked if any of the clients need wheelchair accessibility. D. Fanny said they don't.

C. Gulla asked for advice about how to respond positively to a Facebook post about a transportation agency that had to stop operations because they were unable to acquire adequate local match for service costs. S. Bogle noted that a neighboring agency had volunteered to cover the cost gap temporarily.

10) Clients in Need

No other clients in need were brought forward.

11) Other

J. Donald handed out and reviewed the meeting schedule for FY2017.

J. Donald explained that he was working with S. Bogle and C. Lentz to update the Coordinated Plan.

J. Donald said that he recently conducted a travel training presentation at the Dover senior center, had trainings scheduled for Portsmouth September 23rd, and was working on scheduling trainings for Newmarket and Rochester.

J. Donald said he had been working to improve the language in service standard contracts so that new service providers' insurance can be integrated more smoothly.

J. Donald reminded the members that the ACT annual meeting would be in November

12) Public Comment

13) Adjournment

S. Bogle made a motion to adjourn, seconded by S. Reynolds

Vote: unanimous in favor