

General Membership Meeting

Minutes – September 19, 2018 - 9:00am,

McConnell Center, Dover

Members Present: Scott Bogle (RPC), Tory Jennison (Reg. 6 Integrated Delivery Network), Colin Lentz (SRPC), Margie Longus (Ready Rides), Rad Nichols (COAST) Deborah Perou (RNMOW), Sharon Reynolds (citizen member), Cheryl Robicheau (Strafford CAP), Meri Schmalz (Ready Rides), Betty Smith (Ready Rides), Nicholas Toumpas (Reg. 6 Integrated Delivery Network).

Guests Present: Jeff Donald (COAST), Jennifer Decker (Granite State Independent Living Council), Marcia Golembeski (Statewide Independent Living Council), Shellie Lemelin, Jordan McCormick (American Cancer Society), Sarah Melasecca (Granite State Independent Living)

1) Welcome & Introductions

The meeting began at 9:05

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes (3-7-18 meeting) [VOTE]

R. Nichols explained that quorums had not been present for two recent meetings so the minutes from the March meeting still needed to be approved.

S. Reynolds made a motion to accept the minutes from March 7th 2018. Seconded by B. Smith.

Vote: Unanimous in Favor

3) Updates & Statistics

J. Donald provided handouts with budget numbers for ACT. He explained that ACT is on budget even though a new part-time staff person had been hired for TripLink. He noted that it looked like there was a jump in trips booked through TripLink, but that was mostly a result of how the new scheduling software reports subscription trips. J. Donald added that COAST's Route 7 had recently been converted to be on-demand (Route 7 On Demand) so TripLink was now handling calls for the service.

J. Donald presented data for trip counts from a majority of ACT transportation providers.

4) Service Standards

R. Nichols reminded members about the updates to the service standards for ACT transportation providers. He noted that COAST's attorney had made suggestions for updating language related to driving records and criminal checks. J. Donald said the language updates were really to improve clarity for readers. R. Nichols noted that the changes had been reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.

S. Reynolds made a motion to accept the updated service standards. Seconded by S. Bogle.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

5) FY19 Budgets for Purchase of Service and Formula Funds

J. Donald provided hand-outs for a proposed budget for POS funds (FTA 5310). He noted that the proposed budget was very similar to previous budgets. There is a place holder of \$20,000 for service improvements in central and eastern Rockingham County. J. Donald noted that the budget only had $\frac{3}{4}$ of the usual admin fee because ACT would be shifting back to having COAST as the lead agency so Rockingham Planning Commission wouldn't need funds to cover the lead agency cost. This means more funds are available for POS since COAST doesn't need to cover admin costs.

J. Donald described the proposed budget for formula funds (through FTA 5307). He noted that the budget contained state funds from the previous fiscal year and additional 5307 funds coming from COAST to support ACT services. This is partially due to a lack of local matching funds. J. Donald noted budgeted amounts for several ACT providers. S. Reynolds asked if there was any indication that TASC would be rejoining ACT. J. Donald said nothing was certain - they just had to wait and see. He explained that Strafford CAP was considering joining TripLink.

S. Reynolds made a motion to approve the draft budget. Seconded by B. Smith

Vote: Unanimous in favor

6) Draft FY19 Work Plan

S. Reynolds made a motion to accept the draft work plan. Seconded by B. Smith

J. Donald reviewed major points in the draft work plan. He noted that COAST was in the process of implementing a senior transportation program in Portsmouth. M. Schmalz asked how many volunteers they had received for drivers for the new program. J. Donald said they had a handful of volunteers. He noted that he was working on the possibility of sharing drivers between providers. He said he was working on updating the ACT website to be more inclusive of the range of services – including a universal application for potential clients that registers them for all applicable services.

J. Donald is looking into a way for agencies to share back-up drivers. T. Jennison suggested that it might be easier for providers to share equipment rather than drivers. J. Donald said they were considering this but it seemed like sharing drivers would be more cost effective than vehicles because of the variability in costs. Members discussed various challenges with sharing drivers and vehicles between providers.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

7) Meeting Schedule

J. Donald handed out the proposed meeting schedule for meetings on the first Wednesday of each month for 2019 and asked if members wanted to shift any of the dates. Members requested shifting the July and January dates because they conflicted with national holidays (shift January 2nd to January 9th, and July 2nd to July 10th). J. Donald said he would update the list and send it out to members. Barring unforeseen conflicts, the meetings will be at the McConnell Center in Dover; either in room 305 or 323.

8) Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Roundtable

J. Donald said ACT and the NH Alliance for Healthy Aging would be hosting a workshop on October 30th from 1-4 at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital. He said he was inviting hospital schedulers and administrators/decision-makers to have a detailed discussion with transportation providers about shared challenges and opportunities for improving medical transportation services to people with mobility challenges. One goal would be to develop a better shared understanding of the logistical challenges of coordinating medical appointments and transportation.

D. Perou asked if dialysis centers would be in attendance. J. Donald said he was working on finding the best contact at regional dialysis centers.

9) Vice Chair Nominations

R. Nichols asked for nominations the Vice Chair position and said the nominations would be voted on at the annual meeting (in November). He noted that S. Bogle had volunteered to continue as Vice Chair.

S. Reynolds nominated S. Bogle. Seconded by B. Smith.

10) SCC Report

J. Donald noted that the August SCC meeting was expanded to have an open afternoon “un-conference” with all RCC stakeholders. They had a facilitated discussion around general RCC operations and challenges.

11) Guest Speaker – Shellie Lemelin

S. Lemelin described a recent frustrating experience trying to schedule x-rays at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital. She said she was unable to schedule the appointment or get demand-response transportation. She noted that Community Rides needs a week’s notice for non-emergency medical rides, the WDH care van only does trips for appointments at the hospital, and though she is wheelchair-bound she is not old enough to qualify for other senior-focused services like Strafford CAP. She ended having to take UNH Wildcat transit to the emergency room for what should have been a straight-forward procedure. This means needlessly higher costs reimbursed from Medicaid and Medicare.

She noted that CTS (Coordinated Transportation Solutions) needs 48 hours’ notice to schedule a ride. She added that they always ask questions prior to scheduling a trip for clients (e.g. Do you have a friend or relative who can drive you? Are you near a fixed route bus stop?). She summarized, saying she was trying to be proactive with her personal health and was unable to because of service gaps.

This is a painful example of a gap in service that ultimately cost more (in dollars and logistics) for Shelly, the hospital, and Medicaid/Medicare.

R. Nichols explained some of the logistical challenges with COAST. He acknowledged the barriers saying that the ride Shellie was trying to schedule would have fallen under Community Rides, and she was unfortunately outside the ADA service area. R. Nichols asked for clarification about the fixed route bus question from CTS. S. Reynolds said she had called CTS on a Sunday because fixed route buses weren’t running. She added that she was able to take a taxi, which Shellie wouldn’t have been able to. Shellie noted that she lives on UNH Wildcat route but it isn’t an option for her on weekends or during the summer.

J. Donald noted that the major challenge was providing demand-response service on short-notice.

S. Melasecca said Granite State Independent Living was working on expanding their service area with accessible vans, but they were very limited by budgets and driver availability. She explained the various options and opportunities for potential clients of GSIL services. She encouraged people to call CTS even if it was on short notice, because providers genuinely try to accommodate short-notice rides as much as possible. S. Melasecca provided her contact information and encouraged people to reach out to her.

S. Reynolds noted that she lived on a COAST and UNH Wildcat route. She said it was worth paying more in rent to benefit from nearby public transportation. R. Nichols noted that Shelly had been living on a COAST route that operated on temporary funding, so her options were severely limited when the service had to end.

Members discussed existing regional service gaps in general.

12) Information Exchange

J. Donald provided an addition to the transportation directory that grouped providers in a way that made sense for specific client needs.

C. Robicheau said Strafford CAP was now in their new offices in Dover, which had a large meeting room and capacity for catering.

R. Nichols said the Portsmouth Senior transportation service had officially started on October 1st. He added that COAST was starting the initial public outreach process for their comprehensive operations analysis.

13) Clients in Need

M. Schmalz asked if there had been any volunteers for the potential Tri-City VDP. J. Donald said he hadn't received any volunteers yet but was still working on developing the Tri-City VDP.

J. Donald noted several regional meetings of interest to ACT members and stakeholders: Portsmouth Senior Healthy Living Expo on October 9th; Rochester Community Health and Wellness Expo on November 2nd; and the NH non-profits leadership summit that coming Friday.

S. Bogle noted the NH Endowment for Health was touring the state conducting listening sessions. There would be sessions in the region on November 14th at the McConnell Center and Goodwin Community Health Center.

S. Reynolds reminded members that the Dover Library would be holding their annual book sale that coming weekend.

14) Public Comment

15) Adjournment

B. Smith made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by S. Reynolds

Vote: Unanimous in favor