

Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT)

Working to expand affordable and efficient community transportation in southeastern New Hampshire

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2023

9 – 10:30AM

McCONNELL CENTER, 61 LOCUST ST, ROOM 305 DOVER, NH

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81606207641?pwd=NIJJYUxDYTRkdS9XeWRtV2dwbGtZZz09>



AGENDA

1) Welcome & Introductions

Members: Tim Diaz (Rockingham Nutrition Meals on Wheels), Emilia Poehlman (NH Disability and Health Program), Kate Sullivan (Community Partners), Cheryl Robicheau (Community Action Partnership of Strafford County), Scott Bogle (Rockingham Planning Commission), Colin Lentz (Strafford Regional Planning Commission), Rad Nichols (COAST), Betty Smith (Ready Rides)

Staff: Jeff Donald

Others: Teri Palmer (Statewide Mobility Manager), Tori Jennison (Strafford County)

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes **{VOTE}**

S. Bogle made a motion to accept the minutes as written; seconded by K. Sullivan

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

3) Election of Chair and Secretary **{VOTE}**

J. Donald explained that Rad Nichols and Colin Lentz had volunteered to remain as Secretary, respectively.

T. Diaz made a motion to approve the slate of candidates; seconded by S. Bogle.

Vote: unanimous in favor (R. Nichols and C. Lentz abstaining)

4) SFY23 POS Funds Shift **{VOTE}**

In mid-March the Executive Committee approved and notified the general membership of the decision to reallocate \$15,814 in POS funds from Ready Rides to CAPSC because Ready Rides was well under budget. NHDOT has approved our request to reallocate any unspent funds from one service to another service when the June invoice is submitted. May invoices may also be resubmitted, if appropriate.

J. Donald estimates that \$4,000 - \$5,000 in Ready Rides funds will be available to reallocate to Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels. This will cover about half of one month's trips. CAPSC also has \$71.93 in unspent funds.

BARRINGTON
BRENTWOOD
BROOKFIELD
DOVER
DURHAM
EAST KINGSTON
EPPING
EXETER
FARMINGTON
FREMONT
GREENLAND
HAMPTON
HAMPTON FALLS
KENSINGTON
KINGSTON
LEE
MADBURY
MIDDLETON
MILTON
NEW CASTLE
NEW DURHAM
NEWFIELDS
NEWINGTON
NEWMARKET
NEWTON
NORTH HAMPTON
NORTHWOOD
NOTTINGHAM
PORTSMOUTH
ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
RYE
SEABROOK
SOMERSWORTH
SOUTH HAMPTON
STRAFFORD
STRATHAM
WAKEFIELD

R. Nichols requested a motion to affirm the shift of \$15,814 in POS funds from Ready Rides to CAPSC and approve an additional shift of any unspent POS funds from Ready Rides and CAPSC to RNMOV. S. Bogle so moved; seconded by C. Lentz.
Vote: unanimous in favor (C. Robicheau and T. Diaz abstaining)

5) Monthly Updates & Statistics

J. Donald explained that the June ridership and financial data were not ready yet. Most services are trending up overall. J. Donald described recent data from TripLink and said he was looking at opportunities to improve ride scheduling efficiency (e.g. number of calls required before client completes a trip). He highlighted changes in ridership over the last four years and showed FY19 as a baseline for pre-Covid ridership. R. Nichols noted that ridership is climbing fast year over year. Portsmouth Senior Transportation has surpassed pre-pandemic ridership.

T. Jennison noted that they have seen increased out-migration of low income and some seniors from the region. Ridership is increasing, but eligible demographics are decreasing.

J. Donald explained that the Common Application dashboard shows a dip in applications in June compared to April and May – the cause is unclear. He noted that there is usually delay in approval after initial application depending on clients' eligibility and interest in services so that is why the Dashboard only tracks applications on a monthly basis.

Members discussed service options for various groups.

Income Statement

J. Donald explained that all STBG funds had been spent down in May and will soon spend down federal Mobility Management funds. The budget is designed to spend federal funds early, then local funds later to make sure all federal funds are spent down for grant management. J. Donald noted that COAST recently raised staff wages which increased overhead costs for ACT as well. The mobility management budget is only over 2% at end of June.

6) Annual Review

J. Donald explained that ridership is getting back to pre-pandemic levels and ACT is still gaining members. The two newest members are Indonesian Community Connect and the NH Disability and Health Program. While pleased with adding two new members, Donald noted that's also important to think about who isn't in the room and whose needs aren't currently being advocated for or considered currently.

J. Donald noted that in his experience, small projects can get bogged down because people try to resolve any related issues all at once. He recommended continuing with ACT's incremental approach. TripLink might not have become what it is if ACT had tried to have all the agencies, branding, software, and Common Application ready to go at the same time.

Rad noted how amazing the COAST and TripLink staff are in serving clients' needs and making personal connections.

7) Partner Update: Tim Diaz, Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels

Tim Diaz gave on presentation updating ACT on Rockingham Nutrition Meals on Wheels' work and his first few months at the agency, transitioning from for-profit companies to a non-profit

agency. He noted how impressive the cooperation and collaboration in ACT organization is. In his experience, decisions among partners in the for-profit world about how to distribute unspent funds were not cooperative in thinking about the big picture of service to clients.

Meals are the largest part of what MOW does, transportation is part of that but not the biggest thing.

T. Diaz said he was surprised by the depth of the bond between meal delivery drivers and clients.

For what it costs a hospital to serve meals to one person for a single day, MOW can serve that person meals for an entire year. Demand for meals (cost) is growing at about 6% per year. At that rate, the demand for meals will double within 10 years. Congregate meal attendance is still down (likely due to residual covid concerns). MOW is trying to combat loneliness of clients who are home-bound by circumstance or choice.

MOW provided 360 meals over the past year. Meal trays lined end to end would stretch from Brentwood to Boston.

8) Statewide Updates

R. Nichols noted that the recently signed state budget includes \$1.8 million for fixed route transit operations. This means \$289,000 for COAST in the next biennium. The Public Transportation Coalition was instrumental in this change and will be advocating for future legislation and increased funding.

He added that at the recent NHTA annual meeting he was elected chair of NHTA, which also means that he is now a member of the Statewide Coordinating Council.

J. Donald said there are ongoing volunteer driver recruitment efforts.

Google maps has a transit option for trip navigation (“GTFS”). They’re now developing “GTFS Flex” which is designed to accomplish the same thing but for demand-response services.

T. Palmer said that on August 1st, mobility manager staff will be meeting with TANF staff to enable people to use TANF funds for vehicle repairs and personal transportation costs. There’s also a program in-development for a voucher and credit program for transportation support for inmates who will be released soon (“returning citizens”).

9) Information Exchange

J. Donald described a new recovery group in Portsmouth that is building housing and transportation programs to get recoverees back into the workforce.

T. Jennison asked if there is data on how many people are made ineligible for transportation services. R. Nichols said COAST does. There has been an increase in verbal and physical abuse of drivers by riders. There are about 30 COAST passengers with various bans from a month to a lifetime ban. The increase started with COVID. R. Nichols explained that COAST currently can’t record audio on buses (school buses can) but they’re advocating changes to NH wiretap laws to enable audio recording on COAST buses. Audio recordings provide important details on incidents on buses.

10) Miscellaneous

J. Donald said UNH Wildcat Transit has discontinued Newmarket services at the end of the Spring semester.

C. Lentz announced that Rockingham and Strafford RPCs were starting an analysis of transit fixed route accessibility that will include COAST and UNH Wildcat routes

11) Adjournment

B. Smith made a motion to adjourn; seconded by C. Robicheau.

Vote: unanimous in favor.

**The next Executive Committee meeting is currently scheduled for
July 18, 2023, 3:30 - 5 PM**

The next regular ACT Meeting is September 6, 2023, 9 – 10:30 AM.

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available upon request. Include a description of the accommodation you will need, including as much detail as possible. Please make your request as soon as possible, but allow at least 5 days advance notice to ACT; later requests will be honored, if possible, but cannot be guaranteed. Please contact ACT as noted below:

Comments regarding this notice may be directed to:

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Info@CommunityRides.org

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