

Committee and Others in Attendance:

Rebecca Wheat, Advocate BroMenn
Martin Glaze, Connect Transit
Shelly Snider, Connect Transit
Shannon Tarkowski, LIFE-CIL

Michael Predmore, Marcfirst
Laura Dick, SHOW BUS
Jennifer Sicks, MCRPC

The session was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Ms. Sicks advised that no requests for public comment were received.

Mr. Glaze offered a motion to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2018 meeting, and was seconded by Ms. Snider. The minutes were approved without objection.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

None.

URBAN AREA PROVIDER PROGRAM STATUS

Connect Transit

Mr. Glaze noted that data has been provided to MCRPC; the contract with MCRPC is in lieu of hiring an internal planner at Connect Transit. CT has collected about 1,300 usable responses, including demographic information, origin and destination data and other information. Ms. Sicks noted that MCRPC is developing a Short-Range Transit Plan, using and analyzing the survey data and other information.

Despite cuts during the last fiscal year, ridership is up, although revenue hours are down. The infrastructure plan is moving forward, and there are expectations to install a number of new shelters at stops in the coming fiscal year. The Walmart on Route 9 restricted the inclusion of some amenities, such as a bike rack. Work continues on the stop at the Normal Walmart.

An infrastructure survey is in place to document the installations at each stop, and determine priorities for ongoing installation. Ms. Wheat asked if priorities were being assessed for areas that have no infrastructure, such as sidewalks. Mr. Glaze noted that the Landmark Dr. location mentioned would require significant work and Town cooperation to install the needed base infrastructure. The Eastland stop is showing high ridership despite the slowdown at the mall.

Ms. Snider noted that she is setting up Medicaid billing, and determining rider interest in using Medicaid payment, for both Mobility and the fixed routes. The latter is under review to determine for what services Medicaid could be used. Connect Transit is currently just working with the state, and is not yet contracted with an MCO; Ms. Snider has

worked with SHOW BUS on the MCO billing questions that may be relevant. Ms. Wheat noted that Advocate is working with two MCOs, and would be happy to discuss the issues with Ms. Snider. She further noted that finding the right contact at the state and the MCOs is critical. Ms. Hightower provided a list of Medivan riders for Connect to review and contact as needed.

There will be changes on the fixed routes beginning August 19, including an hour's extension of service on some routes and mobility service, offset with some reductions on other routes. Growth on Mobility has been slow in recent years, and CT is awaiting delivery of new CVP granted vehicles.

A "free" no-show month for Mobility was carried out in June, with announcements about the real start of the program. No-shows have gone down 40% since beginning the program. The thirteen most serious offenders, are beginning to respond; Mr. Glaze noted that in many instances the riders have subscriptions and are forgetting to call and cancel specific reservations.

Marcfirst

Mr. Predmore noted that Marcfirst sold four vehicles that were beyond safe service. They are attempting to get proper titles for those vehicles. Vehicles are being used to get people out into the community, including for wellness activities. A home was temporarily closed in March, and the census went from 57 to 51, but the population is generally stable.

Mr. Glaze asked how Marcfirst selected locations for houses; Mr. Predmore noted that it was dependent on available land and some state regulations. There is an emphasis on locating in safe neighborhoods. Marcfirst is very aware of the transportation issues created by far-flung locations. Ms. Wheat noted that there is renewed pressure on creating community engagement for residents, and Mr. Predmore noted the requirements for the houses themselves.

Advocate BroMenn

Ms. Wheat noted that there have been structural changes affecting the Adult Day program. She also thanked SHOW BUS for accommodating drivers in recent training. Ms. Wheat asked about protection against false injury claims and liability concerns. Mr. Glaze noted that CT is now using both interior and exterior cameras on the vehicles. CT receives about one contact a month claiming some sort of issue. On the fixed routes, where such complaints are more common, CT is considering running portions of the live feed on a monitor on the bus as a reminder that there is a video record.

Mr. Predmore noted the privacy issues that may arise with the use of cameras. Ms. Dick noted the difficulties in working with riders with cognitive issues, and noted that the

best practice is for drivers to report any incident immediately. She also noted the efficacy of drivers being empathetic with the rider at the time of the original complaint.

The Committee discussed issues arising from riders (such as those using wheelchairs) refusing the use of safety belts; Mr. Glaze noted that there is a process for establishing a record that a rider refused the use of the safety equipment. Ms. Dick noted that the cost of the cameras is often pushed down in priority because there are so many needs for capital funds.

Ms. Wheat inquired about grant decision status; Ms. Sicks noted that she has not received any updates from Mr. Healy.

Faith in Action

Ms. Herr was unable to attend.

Homes of Hope

Ms. Phillips was unable to attend.

LIFE-CIL

LIFE-CIL staff were unable to attend.

SHOW BUS

Ms. Dick noted that work continues with the new IPTA committee regarding interaction with the managed care organizations. Ms. Dick noted that both Molina and Secure are back for this round, noting further that the private organizations may find it easier to be fiscally sound by not providing service. Specifically, the MCOs are very lenient with regard to no-show riders, for which there is no payment. There is a further requirement that some trips may only have one passenger at a time. The transit providers hope to maintain their operations while also keeping the state staff in charge of MCO oversight aware of the ways in which the MCO practices may disadvantage both riders and service providers.

Ms. Wheat noted that she has developed an HRS contact who may be helpful. Ms. Dick noted that contact information would be very helpful to the committee.

The inter-city bus project will connect from Pontiac to Normal at the Uptown Station multimodal center, providing various types of connections. The route also connects to the Route 24 route, providing even more connectivity.

There is continued concern about IDOT's ability to be current with grant awards and funding, and particularly with dissemination of the related agreements. There is speculation that the ongoing complications of the GATA process is a contributing factor.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Ms. Sicks noted that the outline regarding the data and plan categories being assembled, noting that the data and analysis applies to several transit-related projects. She asked that Committee members consider how to map and analyze their transportation activities.

The outline is a preliminary version of how the plan might be organized, and is subject to revision as plan development proceeds.

Ms. Dick noted that for rural providers it is difficult to gather demographic information on the ridership, since there is no qualification process for rural service that is open to all and generally provides paratransit level services. The Committee discussed possible alternative data sources and a timetable for collection and analysis of the provider information. The Committee also discussed some of the barriers to information collection posed by passenger reluctance to respond to some demographic questions.

NEXT MEETING

The Committee is scheduled to meet on September 12, 2018, at a location to be determined, at 2:00 p.m., should a meeting be required.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.



Jennifer Sicks
Land Use/Transportation Planner
McLean County Regional Planning Commission