



Notes

Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting of December 12, 2018

LIFE Center for Independent Living

2201 Eastland Drive, Suite 1, Bloomington, Illinois

Committee and Others in Attendance:

Rebecca Wheat, Advocate-BroMenn ADS

Brandon Miles, Connect Transit

Shelley Snider, Connect Transit

Holly Phillips, Homes of Hope

Conan Calhoun, LIFE-CIL

Laura Dick, SHOW BUS

John Corey, Citizen Representative

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. Corey offered a motion to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2018 meeting, and was seconded by Ms. Dick. The minutes were approved without objection.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

None. The Committee moved directly to items for discussion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Ms. Sicks noted that MCRPC is completing the initial draft document for the Connect Transit Short-Range Transit Plan. The Committee will be asking for comments on the draft document once it is published.

Ms. Sicks requested that the Committee members discuss the recent Medicaid changes, which create a much more onerous process for approval, requiring physician sign-off for each trip, rather than the 6-month standing orders that have been. Ms. Snider noted that there is only a 48-hour window in which to submit the signed form. Ms. Snider has spoken with several of the hospitals and clinics, and discovered that the medical offices were not aware of the change. How this affects clients of the managed care organizations is not clear, although Ms. Wheat noted that she would contact practice managers at BroMenn on this issue.

The regulation in the state hospital licensing legislation (100-0647) was changed by the General Assembly at the request of the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) on November 11, 2018, to take effect in February. The Committee members noted the many challenges in complying with these changes, especially given that most of the affected parties are unaware of changed process requirements applied to every trip. Ms. Snider noted the complexity for patients seeing multiple doctors, and the difficulty of meeting the turnaround time of two days. Ms. Snider has been in touch with legislative offices without receiving additional information. Ms. Sicks suggested that MCRPC can draft



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a letter requesting information and clarification from HFS. The Committee members discussed some of the impacts. Ms. Snider noted that she had spoken with staff at RIDES, which was also unaware of the regulatory change. Her conclusion is that the notification did not emphasize the changes and the disallowed standing orders procedure. There was also discussion of the emerging practice by medical offices of charging for the forms being filled out, despite the forms specifically disallowing such charges by medical providers. Ms. Wheat noted and understands the goals behind the change, to simultaneously create greater accountability and to simplify the required paperwork; the group noted the counterproductive result of the form change on those who will actually be working under the new regulations.

URBAN AREA PROVIDER PROGRAM STATUS

Connect Transit

Mr. Miles advised that for the Better Bus Stops campaign, Connect Transit has installed 5 new benches, 3 shelters and 4 new pads. There are also 8 solar-powered LED light installations, which do require clear access to the light, and which should be installed by the end of the year. The 2-bus pavement cut-out at the Walmart in Normal will be completed when the construction season resumes in April, and will include 2 pads and 2 shelters.

The Board is considering a minor route change and a possible fare change. Should those matters proceed, Connect Transit will conduct the usual public engagement process.

Five of the FY 2018 CVP are in service, and the remaining five are expected to be in service in January.

Marcfirst

Mr. Predmore was unable to attend.

Advocate BroMenn

Ms. Wheat has no news, and Ms. Dick noted that the contract had been extended. Ms. Wheat noted that access into the County has been beneficial to the Adult Day Services program, and noted further that there are many compliments received regarding the SHOW BUS drivers.

Faith in Action

Ms. Herr was unable to attend.



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Homes of Hope

Ms. Phillips asked about the status of the CVP awards. Ms. Sicks noted that the only recent communication from Mike Healy had no specifics to offer. It appears that only Connect Transit has received notice and vehicles. Ms. Phillips advised that Homes of Hope has purchased two used vans, with each of the trade-ins having more than 100,000 miles of use. Ms. Sicks noted that she will try to contact Mr. Healy. Ms. Phillips noted that the new Homes of Hope email system has been bounced from IDOT addresses.

The Committee noted the advantages of a ramp-equipped small paratransit vehicle, for which a CDL is not required. Connect Transit may be in a position to sell such a vehicle, and Ms. Dick noted that PACE sometimes auctions vehicles. Ms. Snider noted that they had very little notice of the recent date to pick up the new vehicles. The Committee discussed the selection process used in allocations to §5310 applicants.

LIFE-CIL

Mr. Calhoun noted has been working extensively with Dave White at Connect Transit, and the concern that Connect and Bloomington are not well integrated with respect to transit. Route changes have reduced accessibility to medical facilities and some residential areas where tenants are likely to be persons with disabilities. Currently, the discussion is about short-term fixes for access, especially for hospitals and other medical facilities. There are serious issues, including the lack of an ADA coordinator until recently at the City of Bloomington. Mr. Calhoun is working with the City Manager on these issues. Ms. Snider noted that the City has requested additional work to be funded by Connect Transit (such as sidewalk improvements) as part of bus stop development. Mr. Calhoun is looking forward to the January 10th ADA audit and the Bloomington response to the audit.

Mr. Calhoun will also be working with Normal on various issues, but is concentrating on the more immediate concerns in Bloomington, continuing to work with Tim Gleason. Ms. Wheat inquired about the access issue at BroMenn, caused by the street realignment during the most recent construction. Ms. Snider noted that Connect now tries to reach out in advance on construction to preserve or enhance access. Mr. Miles noted that resistance by businesses and others to accommodating transit vehicle access.

Ms. Wheat offered to facilitate contact with senior staff at BroMenn regarding access issues. Mr. Calhoun noted that he will be turning more attention to access at the hospitals. Ms. Sicks noted that two MCRPC advisory committees that may be helpful as well.



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SHOW BUS

Ms. Dick noted that the three recent FTA program audits sometimes shift between the letter and the spirit of the law, and specifically ADA and access for people with disabilities. She also noted the difficulty of reaching anyone at IDOT as the transition between administrations gets under way. In discussion of the transition, the Committee noted the rising incidence of social developments requiring a response, such as community mental health, which are starting to overwhelm the ability to manage by local and state government.

Because of lack of payment by IDOT, SHOW BUS was unable to initiate the intercity route, and Ms. Dick noted that they will be seeking an extension of the grant to compensate for the delay.

NEXT MEETING

The Committee is scheduled to meet on January 9, 2019, at 2:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jennifer A. Sicks'.

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