

Committee and Others in Attendance:

Rebecca Wheat, Advocate-BroMenn ADS  
Shelley Perry, Connect Transit  
Holly Phillips, Homes of Hope  
Conan Calhoun, 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.

Committee members noted some revisions needed for the 2018 minutes previously provided. The Committee agreed to table the minutes for future review.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION**

None. The Committee moved directly to discussion and provider status.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Ms. Sicks noted that there is no further information about the status of the pending CVP awards, and her impression is that there will be a substantial delay. The decisions regarding last year's awards, and there is no date established for the current year.

Mr. Calhoun reported on the Statewide Independent Living Councils meeting. He noted that there was repeated reference to SHOW BUS as the premier example of operating rural transit, and Ms. Dick as the best example of extracting maximum service from limited resources.

Ms. Sicks noted that the SILC agencies had been uncertain about the role of the HSTP coordinators. That has been resolved, and the discussion brought the agencies and the coordinators into common cause. She noted that there is continued concern about IDOT's view of the related issues and programs. In particular, the slow payment from IDOT has affected the program stability of each grant recipient. The CVP delay may also impose a 2-year wait to receive new vehicles, which could put some agencies at a serious disadvantage.

Ms. Phillips noted that Homes of Hope has submitted 3 applications, and was denied in the last cycle. Mr. Healy did provide a debriefing as to how the applications could be revised to improve the chance of a grant being approved, noting that the application discussion of coordination activities would be helpful. The Committee agreed that It would be preferable for the organization and process used over the past 2 or 3 years be continued, in the wake

Ms. Sicks noted that a very capable former HSTP coordinator has joined OIPI and will continue working on the CVP process, which should help once the current delay is resolved

Ms. Dick noted that the introduction of GATA as controlling IDOT contracting has caused delays, and the issuance of contracts is noticeably delayed. IDOT had initially contended that their contracts for that did not involve a transfer of funds were not required to use the GATA contracting process; that understanding was challenged and rejected.

Mr. Predmore noted that IDOT provided notification regarding CVP awards, but further noted that he had not received any notice for the current pending applications.

The Committee discussed various explanations for the contract delays, noting that vehicles have been delivered to agencies, and the agencies have been directed to put them into service, without a contract having issued. Ms. Wheat and Ms. Dick noted that there has been a feast and famine cycle. Ms. Wheat also noted the complexities of inter-agency coordination and shared transportation, and the difficulty of making resource sharing function on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. Predmore suggested that the Committee use a scheduled meeting for a field trip to look at the accessibility issues with the bus stops. Ms. Perry noted that she and the CT staff are proactively involved in planning for sidewalks and related issues. Mr. Calhoun noted that he has an archive of reported issues that might be the basis for this inspection; he further noted that he speaks with clients who would use the fixed route system if they were more comfortable with the bus stops.

Ms. Dick noted a recent conference where an issue was raised, that some larger systems have contracted with non-profits to provide demand response services not bound by the strictures of paratransit service as currently defined. Ms. Perry noted that the current proposals for first mile-last mile problem come with potential negatives. Ms. Dick noted that the Uber/Lyft model is not adequate to manage this type of service, for multiple reasons including safety and lack of accessibility.

### **URBAN AREA PROVIDER PROGRAM STATUS**

The individual Committee members will report on their programs at the next meeting.

#### *LIFE-CIL*

Mr. Calhoun noted that there continue to be many comments from clients regarding the proposed fare increase and closure of the Olive route. For many clients, the fare change is a non-negotiable issue, because they will be unable to afford transit use. There are

concerns about the bus stop signs, specifically the contrast ratios, and the difficulty of seeing them against a background of trees, lawns and other foliage. Mr. Calhoun noted a specific incident where a person with a vision disability was dropped off at a non-ADA compliant stop, and needed the help of a local resident to safely reach the stop needed to return to his destination.

Mr. Calhoun also noted issues with hospital access at both Advocate BroMenn and OSF St. Joseph's. There is also concern regarding the location of the CIRA bus stop that is not on the airport campus. Ms. Sicks noted that the former general manager at Connect had reviewed the sign designs and presented them to the Board of Trustees. Ms. Dick noted that there was no indication that the signs had been reviewed by anyone who could speak to the suitability of the designs from an ADA context.

Ms. Sicks noted that in the development of the Connect Transit Short-Range Transit Plan, MCRPC staff discovered that much of the software used by transit systems for various types of data collection is not interoperable. Both meshing the various software products and acquiring new software are extremely expensive.

Ms. Perry noted that she is a recent hire at Connect Transit, and has recently taken on Mr. Glaze's prior position. She advised that she has extensive experience in working with people with disabilities and with ADA compliance, and is open to ongoing discussion with the community to resolve issues as they arise, and to prevent further occurrences.

Ms. Dick noted that these issues are perfectly timed to be incorporated into the revision of the HSTP rural and urban plan, including the development of a mission statement. The overall question of accessibility, and the need to employ substantive definitions of accessibility in all facets of transit services, public and private. Ms. Sicks noted that the urban and rural agencies providing services intend to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the law with respect to ADA in particular.

Ms. Dick and Mr. Calhoun noted the need to take a stand in the plan on these concepts. Ms. Dick noted the need to acknowledge the need to support the diversity in the community of riders and residents, and to incorporate that support in the mission statement for the plan and the TAC. Ms. Wheat noted that the core goal is creating and improving accessibility, and the reduction or elimination of barriers to that goal. She also noted that there is a local pool of interns (from ISU and IWU in particular) who are versed in the technology used in apps and other uses and could assist in refining them. Ms. Perry noted that Connect has hired and intern and interviewing candidates for additional internships.



### **NEXT MEETING**

The Committee is scheduled to meet on May 8, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. Ms. Sicks asked that the Committee members consider possible dates for an extended field trip (perhaps a full afternoon, 1-4 pm), and a short list of places to visit and assess.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer A. Sicks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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