

**Human Services Transportation Plan Steering Committee
Tuesday, February 6, 2024 – 12:00 PM**

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC)
Suite 401, 456 Fulton St., Peoria, IL 61602

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome, Introductions, & Roll Call

Reema Abi-Akar called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

RURAL AREA SUBCOMMITTEE				
Name	Organization	Representing	Present	Absent
Shelly Entrekina*	FCRT/FCRC	Fulton	X	
Barb Long*			X	
Doug Manock*	Fulton County Board/PCOM	Fulton		X
Audra Miles*			X	
Joe Coffin	Thrive Community Services	Knox	X	
Kraig Boynton	City of Galesburg	Knox	X	
Hannah Fuchs	Marshall-Stark PCOM	Marshall		X
David Lueders	Marshall County Board	Marshall		X
Mary Patton	AARP	Peoria	X	
Heather Bouchez	Best Buddies	Peoria		X
Traci Dowell	MSW Projects	Stark	~X	
Renee Razo	CIAOA	Stark	X	
Vivian Hagaman	Tazewell County Board	Tazewell		X
Max Schnieder	Tazewell County Board	Tazewell		X
Tyler Rogers	ADDWC	Woodford	~X	
Troy Maxwell	We Care	Woodford		X
URBAN AREA SUBCOMMITTEE				
Taylor Edwards**	EPIC	Agency	~X	
Jodi Scott	Advocates for Access	CIL	X	
Dr. ShamRA Robinson*	Greater Peoria Mass Transit District	Provider	X	
Angel Marinich*			~X	
Kylie Rathmann	Express Employment Professionals	Agency	X	
Chris Mitchell*	Paratransit Users	User	~X	
Connie Schiele*				X
Jim Bremner	Washington Township	Partner	X	
Greg Cassidy	TCRC	Agency		X

* = Shared seat

** = Proxy Vote

~ = Present via phone or internet

Also in attendance:

Reema Abi-Akar, TCRPC
Loni Baker, Stone-Hayes CIL
Dawn Cook, Tazewell PCOM
Gabriel Guevara, TCRPC

Khephra Jackson, TCRPC
Ray Lees, TCRPC
Hannah Lindner, Central IL Friends

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approval of minutes: October 17, 2023 and December 5, 2023

Chris Mitchell noted that bad weather, such as the frigid temperatures we have recently had, can affect transit ridership significantly. A quorum of the Urban Area Subcommittee was present in person, so Reema asked if the group consented to allow this subcommittee to vote on behalf of the whole group. The attendees agreed.

Reema conducted a roll call vote of the Urban Area Subcommittee to approve the October 17, 2023 and December 5, 2023 minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Presentation: Washington as a Dementia-Friendly Community

Jim Bremner presented on Washinton's designation as the 30th Dementia-Friendly Community in Illinois. Jim discussed the early planning efforts that went into establishing a pathway to receiving the designation, noting the commitment application that had to be sent to Dementia Friends. Letters were sent to community residents, industry professionals, and government officials to gain support for the effort.

An action committee was formed to fulfill some of the action items associated with getting the word out and delivering on goals. Jim outlined Washington's goal, which is reversing the historical condition of people with disabilities living on the periphery of society by teaching to and encouraging involvement from employers, community members, and community leaders.

Chris Mitchell asked about the involvement of caregivers, and Jim confirmed that there is one caregiver on the committee and another caregiver has been invited to serve on the committee.

Lastly, Jim credited the Agency on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association for their vital roles initiating the program and providing support throughout the process.

Action Committee Meetings are held at 12:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every month at the Washington Fire Station.

4. Provider and Agency Updates

Thrive Community Services (Formerly KCCDD)

Joe Coffin reported that his organization received three of the five vehicles they requested within the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP program).

City of Galesburg

Kraig Boynton reported the forthcoming reception of their seven paratransit vehicles requested through CVP. The request for proposal for dispatch software is active. Galesburg is in the process of conducting a county-wide transit study, with updates coming in July.

Central Illinois Agency on Aging (CIAOA)

Renee Razo reported that CIAOA is set to sell its twenty-passenger bus.

Fulton County Rural Transit (FCRT)

Shelly Entekin reported on the RLS review that took place on January 9th, 2024. FCRT was awarded two replacement vehicles through the CVP program.

Fulton County PCOM

Audra Miles gave no update.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

Gabriel Guevara reported the finalization of a survey for TCRPC's Active Transportation Plan. Guevara provided a brief overview of some questions asked throughout the survey. Reema added that this is a region-wide effort throughout Peoria, Tazwell, and Woodford counties, focused on walking biking and transit.

AARP

Mary Patton reported that AARP conducted a study on caregiving, which resulted in the Pathways to Fare program; Mary offered to identify and handout an overview of the program. Illinois AARP is proposing a nonpartisan board focused on prescription drug affordability, specifically the upper limit of drug costs.

Express Employment Professionals

Kylie Rathmann asked if the committee has some type of sponsorship that enables volunteers to provide transportation service to employees who work night shifts and on the outskirts of town. Additionally, Kylie asked if Washington's transportation service comes to Peoria to bring people to Washington. Jim confirmed that the service is strictly Washington to Peoria

because it's funded by Washington's tax base. A committee member mentioned that there are some possible veterans' assistance programs that Kylie could look into to provide services to veterans.

Washington Township

Jim Bremner reported that he presented some figures on disability and senior transportation service at Washington's board meeting. During the past 12 months, Washington has provided over 3,000 rides to seniors and people with disabilities. The programs that facilitated these rides are the partnership with CityLink/CityLift for people with disabilities and the township-sponsored cab service in Washington. Jim reiterated Chris Mitchell's view about weather impacting ridership numbers, particularly in the past few months.

Greater Peoria Mass Transit District (GPMTD)/CityLink

Dr. ShamRA Robinson reported that GPMTD is excited to finally have PCCEO Head Start move into the transit center, while providing workforce development, economic development, transportation, and education. ShamRA also reported that CityLink will continue printing rider's guides, despite a previous decision to stop printing them. Additionally, CityLink is training new operators and is actively seeking new drivers. Applications can be found on the CityLink website to apply for a job. Lastly, GPMTD is hiring a new customer experience coordinator to log and review passenger feedback.

Advocates for Access

Jodi Scott gave no report.

MSW Projects

Traci Dowell reported that MSW Projects is at full driver capacity. MSW Projects received its CVP award. One of MSW's vans is being repaired in Springfield and has an estimated turnaround of two weeks.

EPIC

Taylor Edwards reported that EPIC filled an open driver position that was vacant for a month. Since the position was filled, EPIC has been fully staffed. Lastly, EPIC was awarded a few vehicles through CVP.

Stone-Hays CIL

Loni Baker gave no report.

Central Illinois Friends

Hannah Lindner reported that their organization is now able to rent accessible vehicles to provide patient transportation services to clients with special needs.

TransDev (CityLift/CountyLink)

Angel Marinich congratulated EP!C for being fully staffed. Angel identified the driver shortage as their biggest concern right now. She said that applications are pouring in, but many candidates are missing interviews or simply lacking the qualifications. One candidate is graduating, and two additional candidates are in the process of undergoing necessary training.

Angel also reiterated the impact that harsh weather has had on transportation operations. Angel congratulated ShamRA and the GPMTD on the PCCEO partnership. Lastly, Angel informed members of the *Night to Shine* event hosted by the Tim Tebow Foundation. The event will be held at the Riverside Church, and CityLink will have a special fixed-route bus providing transportation to group homes, while CityLift will provide three buses to the same effect.

Tazewell County PCOM

Dawn Cook reported on her review and assessment with We Care.

Paratransit User

Chris Mitchell congratulated ShamRA and GPMTD on securing the partnership with PCCEO Head Start. Chris added that contacting churches for drivers and money could address funding and staffing deficiencies.

Chris directed praise at Angel for Tim's training ability and Kyle's professionalism while assisting her walking to her destination.

ADDWC

Tyler Rogers gave no report.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

Khephra Jackson reported on the public transportation aspect of TCRPC's Active Transportation Plan. He informed the members of the three phases of the project, which include information collection, route evaluation, and a transit narrative.

Kylie Rathmann asked if there were instances of former stops that have not been updated. Khephra confirmed that there is occasional signage indicating a stop where one no longer exists.

6. HSTP Coordinator Report

Reema reported on the CVP awards, noting its positive impact on transportation services looking to acquire vehicles.

Reema also informed members of the Transportation Equity Study, which was conducted by Peoria County. The study focused on the 61605 zip code of Peoria and posed two transit-specific goals: offering free transportation

for non-emergency medical appointments and providing reloadable bus passes with a cash payment option.

A survey for TCRPC's Active Transportation Plan will be released soon, mainly asking people about their experiences walking, biking, and riding public transit.

IDOT requested that regions conduct annual HSTP surveys. There are a total of four surveys: community, existing riders, agencies, and transportation providers. HSTP Surveys will be distributed after TCRPC's Active Transportation Plan survey, as not to confuse people with multiple surveys at once.

The State of Illinois amended the *Open Meetings Act*, adding childcare needs as a reason for people to opt to attend a meeting virtually. ShamRA inquired about the use of proxies for vacation purposes. Reema confirmed that the use of a proxy option is available to all members at any time. Members would have to fill out a proxy form, which Reema agreed to send to the committee.

7. Other

None

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m.