

**Human Services Transportation Plan Steering Committee/
HSTP Rural Subcommittee/HSTP Urban Subcommittee (in lieu of
Lack of Quorum)**

Tuesday, June 4, 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 Entrekin*	FCRT/FCRC	Fulton		X
Barb Long*				X
Audra Miles	Fulton County PCOM	Fulton	~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				
Dawn Harper	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
Allison Borland, SEAPCO
Meghan Brake, TMCSEA
Ian Chenoweth, TCRPC
Dawn Cook, Tazewell County PCOM

Katy Deadmond, WIAAA
Lindsey Kerr, Lifeline Pilots
Liberty Pritchard, TCRPC
Jodie Vanderheydt, SEAPCO
Crystal Wells-Wright, EP!C

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approval of April 2, 2024 minutes

While there was no quorum of the combined HSTP Steering Committee, a quorum of the Urban Area Subcommittee was present in person, so Reema asked if anyone from the group opposed allowing the Urban Subcommittee to vote to approve the minutes on behalf of the whole group. No attendees opposed.

Greg Cassidy motioned to approve the minutes, and Kylie Rathmann seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved by the HSTP Urban Subcommittee members.

4. Provider and Agency Updates

Reema asked the group if they agreed to switch this agenda item with the following item, the Presentation from Meghan Brake. No one opposed. As a result, this item was addressed after the presentation.

EP!C

Dawn Harper reported on their new distributor, Ken Kapps, in Peoria with Midwest Transit who will personally deliver parts and assist with technical issues.

Jim Bremner asked if he would do the repairs as well. Dawn replied that he will not, but will tell you what you need to do.

Dawn reported that EP!C is waiting to hear when they will receive their vehicles. Reema stated that she did not know when vehicles will be delivered.

TCRC

Greg Cassidy reported that they had funding from 3.5 years ago approved for 3 vans that will now cover 1.5 vans due to increases in paratransit costs. Greg highlighted ongoing staffing concerns, especially finding enough drivers. TCRC is in their new building in Pekin in the old bank building. Their food trailer will be opening near the end of the month to serve lunches.

SEAPCO

Jodie Vanderheydt reported that they use CountyLink and CityLift for their programs and that they have encouraged their schools to use them as well, as it is cheaper than sending school buses.

Express Employment Professionals

Kylie Rathmann reported that the local Peoria Area Transition Center is going to be using their vans to help inmates get to jobs across the city. About 50 people are now being transported to work outside city limits where there is no bus access. Kylie highlighted ongoing work to get all eligible employees a job and transportation.

Kylie reported on Goodwill's job fair on Friday, June 7th. Jodie Vanderheydt offered to provide an informational flyer on the event.

Washington Township

Jim Bremner highlighted Washington's age 65+ \$3 cab service and their CityLift service for ages 18-59 with disabilities. Individuals aged 60+ with or without a disability can utilize either Agency on Aging or We Care services. He reported that ridership was up, and they are working on their Section 5310 application to continue the CityLift service for another year to a year and a half.

Advocates for Access

Jodi Scott reported that they have a home modification program that was passed by the legislature. They are now able to do home ramps, subject to some eligibility requirements. Jodi offered to send flyers on the program to Reema to be distributed. Reema asked if there was a geographic area for the program. Jodi replied that their geographic area covered Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, and Fulton Counties.

City of Galesburg

Kraig Boynton reported that they are continuing to work with IDOT to get new vehicles to replace their old ones. Kraig highlighted that they are still using two 2004 vehicles, one with over 700,000 miles, daily. He reported that they just received an additional vehicle with 18,000 miles.

Kraig reported that their consultant for their transit study will be in their city and county doing outreach in the future to gather data. They are working with RTAC to sign off on the expansion. The city submitted their recommendations to IDOT for the purchase of dispatch software. They are waiting for a signed amendment from IDOT to use an old grant to purchase new Super Medium Duty vehicles.

Kraig reported that the Galesburg Department of Transportation is participating in a career day with the local school district.

The city is partnering with Warren County to figure out how to transport Warren County residents to Knox County to help fill gaps in access to food and basic necessities.

Tazewell County PCOM

Dawn Cook gave no report.

Western Illinois Agency on Aging

Katy Deadmond gave no report.

Greater Peoria Mass Transit District

Angel Marinich requested the flyer for the Goodwill job fair and highlighted that GPMTD is open to any job fair anywhere, as they are still in a significant driver shortage. They will be at the Heart of Illinois Job Fair at the Riverplex this summer.

Angel reported that they are receiving assistance from six drivers from their location at a university in Kansas for the summer. The qualification process and pay have been the biggest barriers to recruiting new drivers. Angel reported that a frequent paratransit user in Washington recently passed away.

GPMTD has a new safety manager who is working to increase safety, morale, and efficiency. GPMTD has been having some issues at various locations where the parent or caregiver of the rider is not at the drop-off point for rider drop-off, causing delays. They have also experienced some rider behavior issues that have caused delays.

Stone-Hayes CIL

Loni Baker highlighted that they also have the home modification program covering Knox, Henderson, and Warren Counties.

Fulton County PCOM

Audra Miles reported that Fulton County is working on responses to the findings of the 5310 compliance review that was done in January.

Marshall County Board

David Lueders gave no report.

Paratransit User

Chris Mitchell highlighted a driver named Larry who was helpful and effective in handling a situation with a rider breaking transit rules.

5. Presentation from Meghan Brake: Illinois Center for Transition and Work

Meghan Brake reported on the Illinois Center for Transition and Work. The center is run through the University of Illinois with funding from the Illinois State Board of Education. They provide resources and training to educators to assist students aged 18-22 who continue attending school or working on education or employment goals. The ICTW has six regional boards throughout the state that share information. Targeted students may be learning how to access their community and work rather than have a traditional school day.

Meghan reported that the ICTW is developing a comprehensive resource designed to support educators in overcoming common barriers. The results of a statewide survey show that students are finding creative ways to get to work even through a transportation barrier. The Region 3 survey indicated that funding was not a barrier.

Jim Bremner highlighted lower than anticipated ridership in Washington Township's ride service for individuals with disabilities aged 18-59 and asked how to contact qualifying families and advertise the service. Meghan highlighted Washington schools' promotion of the service but did not have a direct answer.

Kraig Boynton asked if it was possible to get a list of employers with qualifying employees to potentially establish a service contract with them. Jodie Vanderheydt suggested contacting the Division of Rehabilitation Services to have them send information to their customers. She offered to post information on Washington's service to their transportation planning website.

The group discussed the Division of Rehabilitation Services. This is a State of Illinois department, though there is a Pekin office that serves Tazewell County. The group also discussed the transport of individuals from Washington High School. Dawn Harper said that the school transports the students to EP!C with their school bus, but Jodie said that for work, the students use CityLift.

6. Region-wide Surveys

Reema highlighted four surveys requested by IDOT. All the surveys were created by the Rural Transit Assistance Center years ago. The data gathered will be compared to the results from 2022. The surveys are available in print in the packet, as well as online. Each survey is one page front and back.

There are surveys for Agencies, the Community, Transit Riders, and Transportation Providers. The Community Survey will be shared on Tri-County social media and other outlets. Kylie Rathmann asked if she could share the Community Survey with her associates without personal vehicles and, if so, who they should turn the surveys in to. Reema responded that they can take the survey and turn them in to whoever is easiest. Reema also highlighted the difference between the Community and Rider Surveys. Current transit users should take the Rider Survey.

Reema reported that IDOT has requested an update to the HSTP document. Rather than do a full update, the document will be updated with current survey results and demographic information. The update is due by March. A draft will be shown at an upcoming meeting. The surveys will be open until the next HSTP meeting.

Kraig Boynton asked if he could share the responses to a similar survey the City of Galesburg recently conducted rather than send another survey out. Reema responded that similar surveys already conducted could potentially be integrated into the responses.

Kylie Rathmann asked if there were any updates on the bus route audit report. Reema replied that the employee who was working on that is no longer at Tri-County, so it will take longer to compile the results, but staff is working to do so.

7. HSTP Coordinator Report

Reema reported that Tri-County's Call for Projects is open for Section 5310 funding, as well as other funding sources. The Call for Projects can be found on Tri-County's website. Reema is available to assist with the application if necessary. Applications are due by 3:30 p.m. on June 28th. Funding is only available for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area. Reema reported there is a disability resource fair at EP!C's building on July 26th. Someone from Tri-County will attend.

7. Other

a. Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.