

# Human Services Transportation Plan Steering Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, February 06, 2018 - 12:00 PM**

TCRPC Conference Room, 456 Fulton Street, Suite 420, Peoria, IL

## Meeting Minutes

### Welcome, Introductions & Roll Call

Hannah Martin called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

<b>RURAL AREA SUBCOMMITTEE</b>				
Name	Organization	Representing	Present	Absent
Shelly Entrekin*	FCRC/FCRT	Fulton		X
Barb Long*				X
Doug Manock*	Fulton County Board	Fulton		X
Audra Miles*	Fulton County PCOM		X	
Susan Lindsey	KCCDD	Knox	X	
Kraig McCluskie	Galesburg Transit	Knox		X
Diana Bradstatter	Marshall-Stark PCOM	Marshall		X
Debbie Daykin	Marshall County Board	Marshall		X
Mary Patton	AARP	Peoria		X
Andrew Dwyer	GPMTD - CountyLink	Peoria	X	
Traci Dowell	MSW Projects	Stark	X	
Robert Mueller	Stark County Board	Stark		X
Mary Jo Holford	Tazewell County Board	Tazewell		X
Michael Godar	Tazewell County Board	Tazewell		X
Tyler Rogers	ADDWC	Woodford		X
Mike Hutchinson	We Care	Woodford		X
<b>URBAN AREA SUBCOMMITTEE</b>				
Dawn Harper	EPIC	Agency	X	
Jeannine McAllister	Advocates for Access	CIL		X
Doug Roelfs	CityLink	Provider	X	
Renee Razo*	Central Illinois Agency on Aging	Agency	X	
James Barrett*				X
Connie Schiele	Paratransit user	User		X
Don Rulis	CWTC	Agency	X	
Greg Cassidy	TCRC	Agency	X	

\*Shared seat \*\*Proxy Vote

### Also in attendance:

Hannah Martin, TCRPC  
 Julie Briner, MSW Projects  
 Ellen Larsen, VNA Community Services  
 Dedra Mannon, Galesburg Handivan  
 Dr. Leslie McKnight, City of Peoria

Julie Main, Galesburg Transit  
 Nancy Anderson, Dept. Human Serv.'s  
 Chris Mitchell, Public Citizen  
 Audrey Barrett, Snyder Village  
 Reema Abi-Akar, TCRPC

## **Public Comment**

Chris Mitchell addressed the committee regarding her experience using public transportation for grocery shopping at Kroger on Wisconsin Ave. She had to plan what type of groceries she could buy based on what she can carry. Sometimes she had to take multiple trips. Other difficulties included pulling a shopping cart on cracked sidewalks and roads. If she didn't take a fixed route bus, she could sometimes call a taxi, but it might be two hours before it arrives. Ms. Mitchell uses CityLift now, rather than fixed route service. She complimented the drivers for going the extra mile help her combat the cold weather issues of recent months.

## **Approval of the December 05, 2017 Minutes**

A quorum of the committee was not present. Action to approve these minutes will move to the next meeting in April.

## **Provider and Agency Updates**

### ***Central IL Agency on Aging***

Renee Razo reported that they are looking to hire more drivers.

### ***RTAC, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs***

Dave Patton introduced himself to the committee as the new RTAC manager, replacing Ed Heflin who retired last summer. He formerly worked at RTAC and for IDOT over twenty years ago and has now returned to the transportation realm.

Mr. Patton informed the group that they have brought in a speaker from Easter Seals/National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) to the upcoming April RTAC Conference in Springfield who will speak about some federal compliance areas such as Title VI. He also made sure to note that there is widespread frustration with transmissions of 2015&2016 Ford CVP vehicles. The warranty runs out at 60,000 miles, so it's important to keep tabs on that component's performance.

### ***Snyder Village***

Audrey Barrett is having difficulty finding drivers to take people to medical appointments. Andy Dwyer confirmed that WeCare (the Woodford and Tazewell Counties' rural public transportation provider) does not provide service to Washington because it is not a rural community as defined by the 2010 census.

### ***Galesburg Handivan***

Dedra Mannon expects to have a van for sale in 2019. The service continues to struggle with a high demand from area nursing homes. Currently, about 75% of their rides are scheduled to or from such facilities. In their town of 30,000 people, 3,800 residents are pre-registered riders.

### ***TCRC***

Greg Cassidy happily reported that all expected vehicle deliveries have occurred.

### ***City of Galesburg***

Julie Main reported on their request for an Intercity Bus grant. The funds would go toward improvements around the Amtrak transit center such as signage and shading for outdoor waiting areas.

### ***Greater Peoria Mass Transit District***

Andy Dwyer announced that he will represent GPMTD at the APTA (American Public Transportation Association) conference in Washington DC. The next phase of Coordinated Dispatch efforts went into effect on February 1, 2018. All ride scheduling for both CountyLink service and CityLift service call the same number – 309-999-3667. Also, GPMTD has received the last five vehicles (a total of 31 in the last 6 months) and will be selling the old vehicles on govdeals.com for anyone interested in purchasing the retired fleet.

### ***EPIC***

Dawn Harper confirmed the transmission issues with 2015 Ford vehicles. Their El Dorado has been down for over a month.

### ***Illinois Department of Human Services***

Nancy Anderson brought up two cases of recent ICC graduates having difficulties accessing transportation to job interviews, let alone gainful employment. The individuals live in the Metamora-Germantown Hills area and are not able to obtain drivers licenses and transport themselves due to health reasons. Andy Dwyer offered to help navigate that situation. Depending on exact address, the trip ends may be considered urban and thus outside of WeCare's rural service area.

### ***Marshall-Stark Transportation***

Traci Dowell reported that they are still sorting out issues with their state grants and the GATA system. They may look to others in the room for advice.

### ***VNA Community Services***

Ellen Larsen has recently taken over as Executive Director and is excited to collaborate with this committee and expand transportation capabilities in the Galesburg area.

### **HSTP Coordinator Report**

Ms. Martin highlighted that there will be an upcoming meeting with all HSTP Coordinators and representatives of regional Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in the state. They will meet in Springfield to discuss the transportation goals of the Statewide Plan for Independent Living.

Additionally, the National Center for Mobility Management will be hosting a webinar to discuss the importance of mobility stakeholders supporting Complete Streets initiatives. Such

changes in street design aim to improve accessibility for all users of the transportation system, rather than prioritizing automobile traffic.

### **Nutrition and Transportation Needs in Central IL**

Two Kroger locations have closed their doors as of February 5, 2018. The absence of these stores has created a food desert status for two significant neighborhoods as they no longer have that access to comprehensive grocers, and especially fresh produce. Both CityLink and the City of Peoria have been working to mitigate this issue to the best of their abilities.

Doug Roelfs reported that he has been attending meetings put together with city council members Denise Moore and Tim Riggerbach, and state representative, David Koehler's office. They have broke into two working groups. One is focused on transportation options, the other looks to develop a food co-op.

Dr. Leslie McKnight, Interim Assistant City Manager for Economic Development, addressed the City of Peoria's efforts to address this issue. Dr. McKnight noted that the Dream Center would be using their buses to operative a pilot shuttle service from the old Kroger locations to the next closest grocery stores. CityLink will assist by backfilling the routes.

To assist with promoting transportation services, Andrew Dwyer noted CityLink staff's efforts to digitally advertise using Geofencing. This type of advertisement would be able to target those individuals in the areas previously served by the two Kroger stores.

Ms. Martin also brought up Tri-County's efforts to create a GIS map CityLink can use to show all the grocery stores that are easily accessed from CityLink routes.

Dr. McKnight passed around information about the Dream Center shuttle service. Local entities have donated to fund this pilot project through March. The handouts noted the stops and times of the shuttle. The same information will be available on the city's website.

Dawn Harper spoke to the Harmon Avenue Kroger closing issues. She has recently moved to that area and has talked about the problem with the owner of the liquor store owner on Laramie Ave. He has started selling more grocery items and would be willing to expand that inventory but is concerned about increased pedestrian traffic. More people have been patronizing his store already, and the lack of sidewalks makes it dangerous to access by walking or wheelchair. Dr. McKnight followed that city is certainly interested in looking into other grocery store models, not only grocers like Kroger.

Following discussion noted that the struggles in retaining grocers in these urban neighborhoods are very similar to those of rural communities. Both locales often experience higher rates of poverty and struggling businesses. It has been difficult to find a business model that is sustainable. Most often, grocers make or lose money on perishable foods. Businesses that are successful in these areas include stores like Family Dollar or Dollar General, both of whom have

expanded grocery items in recent years. Other models might include a fresh food hub or mobile food recovery van – initiatives in line with an area non-profit, Gifts in the Moment (GITM). Dawn Harper and Don Rulis added that group homes for individuals with disabilities have obtained fresh food for residents through monthly a subscription service.

Reema Abi-Akar, a planner at Tri-County RPC, has experience seeing a productive, intense, alternative model to providing food and health needs to impoverished communities. While in her graduate program and the University of Michigan, her coursework in sustainability introduced her to the Flint Farmers Market. It's a facility located within a 5-minute walk to the transit center, open year-round with indoor and outdoor elements. It housed a demonstration kitchen, fitness classes, and community meeting rooms. The indoor farmers' market included several vendors that accepted SNAP Bridge Card and provided value with a Double Up Food Bucks matching program for healthy food purchases up to \$20. The facility is managed by Uptown Reinvestment Corp., a nonprofit. Funding came from a wide variety of sources: local/regional sponsors, education institutions, health organizations, state DOT, CDBG program, the FTA, and US Dept. of Commerce.

### **Other**

None.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

—Submitted by Reema Abi-Akar & Hannah Martin