

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday, March 15, 2016

**Members Present**

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability  
Julie Belisle, Minnesota Department of Education  
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association (via phone)  
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health (via phone)  
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services  
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council  
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging (via phone)

**Members Absent**

Keith Bogut, Minnesota Management and Budget  
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Ron Quade, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

**Others Present**

Frank Douma, Univ. of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs (via phone)  
Judy Ellison, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Tom Gottfried, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Daniel DuHamel, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Steve Kelley, Univ. of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs (via phone)  
Kaydee Kirk, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies  
Arlene Mathison, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies  
Emily Parks, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Jackie Peichel, Minnesota Department of Human Services/Minnesota Board on Aging  
Laura Roads, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Commercial and Freight  
Mike Schadauer, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Noel Shughart, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Stephen Whitehead, Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota  
Leah, American Cancer Society (via phone)

**Call to Order**

Chair, Tim Henkel, called to order the February meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:05 PM on March 15, 2016 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

**Review and Approval of Agenda**

Willshire made a motion to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded by Sutton and then was unanimously **approved**.

**Review and Approval of Minutes from 3/15/2016 Meeting**

Willshire moved to approve the 3/15/2016 MCOTA meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Belisle and was then unanimously **approved**.

**Changes in vehicle inspection requirements under STS**

Shughart provided a brief overview of the group's discussion at the last meeting and the changes in vehicle inspection requirements under Special Transportation Services, or STS. The language has been forwarded to elected officials to move forward.

Roads presented the background on and an overview of the changes in vehicle inspection requirements under STS laws. She also provided handouts with this information. The group discussed the changes to regulation.

Tardy made a motion with regard to Minnesota Statute 174.30, Subdivision 1-1 to broaden the definition of applicability, including taxis, to include all forms of public transportation in Minnesota. The motion was seconded by Sutton and was **approved** unanimously.

#### **Veterans Transportation Project in Northern Minnesota**

Whitehead shared information about the medical appointment transportation services that are available for veterans. There are approximately 29,000 veterans across the state have been transported since the Veterans Transportation Project began about three years ago. This year they are looking to expand to southwest Minnesota.

The program involves the DAV purchasing vehicles and giving them to the VA medical centers. Whitehead's group finds volunteers to operate the vehicles and encourage veterans to utilize this mode of transportation. The DAV also has coordinators to field calls from veterans and schedule their rides. The organization also coordinates closely with counties and other organizations.

#### **Olmstead Plan Update**

Shughart provided an update about public transit data that was recently collected. This data also includes information on the use of public transit by persons with disabilities. This transit ridership data serves as an effective indicator. Though the term *disability* has not been defined by Olmstead there was the recent on-board transit survey where more than 30% of transit users self-identified as having some type of a disability. Overall, the sense is that everyone benefits as the system grows, including persons with disabilities.

#### **Regional Transportation Coordination Councils Update**

The technical advisory committee has determined there will be a two-phase approach: a planning phase and an implementation phase. An RFP is planned to be issued by January 1, 2017 for the planning phase.

To define the geography of the RTCCs, the committee is deciding to use the regions used for the county human service directors group.

The committee also discussed the funding that will be issued from the MnDOT Office of Traffic to hire a staff person for each council. A full rollout is anticipated in 2018. MnDOT funding will take effect when the full rollout is ready; the pilot will need to be funded with other money. There will be legislative groundwork that will be laid before that time.

The next committee meeting is April 6.

#### **Update on *Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness***

The statewide plan to end homelessness was approved recently and is now being implemented. MITCH is a cabinet-level council that is working on overseeing the plan to end homelessness by 2020. MnDOT is involved with MITCH and they are working both internally and externally to coordinate implementation of the plan.

Members of MCOTA noted that the RTCCs can play a key role in the local implementation the relationship between homelessness and Olmstead.

### **Panel discussion on program reporting**

Last year MCOTA examined at the commonality of data across agencies. A report was created on this subject for MCOTA. The panel members discussed how their agency does reporting:

- Belisle, Dept. of Education: For children who are homeless, the transportation goal is keep the child at the school they've been going to, per McKinney-Veto legislation. School districts have to absorb these added expenditures and it was explained how the school district gets reimbursed for the transport of school children who are experiencing homelessness. Belisle will send Shughart additional information to share with the council members.
- Reis, Dept. of Human Services: His office at DHS operates the non-emergency medical transportation program. Data is collected in a health care claims type of system. There are geographic boundaries as to how far people can travel within the Medicaid system. With DT&H, it is a similar process. The rates for reimbursement are calculated by state statute.
- Gottfried, MnDOT: He shared about how greater Minnesota public transit gathers operational expenses for subrecipients. They receive state and federal funds and the give the funds to recipients. Calculation is based on total of all expenditures. They work in partnership with local jurisdictions. Operational information is needed per statute. An overview of how the number of passengers are tracked was provided.

Shughart noted that the various state agencies report on various pieces of information including miles, hours, health care reporting, monthly stat reports , etc. The future RTCC staff will need to be aware of and involved these systems.

### **Update on remote meeting connection options**

In order to maintain a good audio connection for teleconferencing for remote persons, that limits meetings to the MnDOT building. Shughart suggested improved the public notice communications/announcements for meetings, especially on the web.

Willshire suggested there be a communication to MCOTA stakeholders to see what the additional stakeholder needs are with respect to connecting remotely to meetings.

### **Agency Updates**

No updates were shared.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments offered.

### **Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Belisle and seconded by Sutton and the motion was **approved** unanimously. The meeting ended at 2:52 p.m.