

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, June 29, 2016

Members Present

Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability
Julie Belisle, Minnesota Department of Education (via phone)
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health (via phone)
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Mike Schadauer (for Tim Henkel), Minnesota Department of Transportation
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging

Members Absent

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Keith Bogut, Minnesota Management and Budget
Ron Quade, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Others Present

Frank Douma, Univ. of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Judy Ellison, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Nicole George, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Rolf Hage, Minnesota Department of Human Services
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
Sue Siemers, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Noel Shughart, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Craig Remp, Minnesota Public Transit Association

Call to order

Vice-Chair, Joan Willshire, called to order the June meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:10 PM on June 29, 2016 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

Review and approval of agenda

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

Review and approval of minutes from 5/24/2016 meeting

It was noted that Mike Schadauer is only a member of the Council if Tim Henkel is not present. Schadauer moved to approve the 5/24/2016 MCOTA meeting minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Collins and was then unanimously **approved**.

Stakeholder feedback on Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCCs)

Siemers shared that the second round of workshops has begun. On June 1 there was a Rochester workshop with 20 people attending, on June 6 there was a Marshall workshop with 30 people, and there will be five more workshops in July. Feedback received thus far on the workshops is positive. Once the workshops are complete the RFP will be released.

Hage and Reis attended the Rochester workshop. The group discussed how it is key that representatives from all agencies, including the internal departmental representatives, attend the workshops.

Siemers shared that she attended the Minnesota Association of County Administrators meeting this spring to communicate information on the RTCC initiative, the workshops, and to continue building relationships.

August 2nd is next PMT meeting. The PMT has decided to move forward with a planning grant toward the end of this year with implementation beginning in January 2018.

Siemers also mentioned that MCOTA has been asked to present at a transportation-related conference in Oct.

Metro Coordinating Council update

Sutton provided an update on the Metro Coordinating Council sharing that each county is at a different stage in their development. All counties are applying for 2017 grants. Dakota County is setting their 2017 work plan and elements on the plan include travel training and vehicle sharing. Shughart sits on the advisory board for Dakota County; they are viewed as a pilot project for the Olmstead group. Scott/Carver County have organized a user group and a provider group. Washington County has issued an RFP for a consultant to address gaps.

Volunteer Program Study overview

This project has two phases: 1) completing and distributing the survey and 2) the continuation of analysis and recommendations (fall 2016). Douma provided updates on some preliminary findings:

- 221 transit providers were identified, most in greater Minnesota. They identified 188 email addresses and of these they received 45 survey responses. Of the 45, 30 providers had volunteer drivers. This group of 30 was studied in depth.
- 2/3 felt they did not have enough volunteer drivers and ¾ had difficulty finding volunteer drivers
- Who are the drivers and what kind of service do they provide?
- Of the 30 providers, there were more than 900 individual drivers represented. The average age is 65. Over half are age 65-69. Each driver provided 17 trips on average a month. There were more than 1,500 trips per month provided and 180,000 trips per year.
- A total of 32,000 volunteer hours are provided per month. This number includes the number of hours transporting and also if there is any waiting time during appointments prior to return trip.

Member discussion:

- On June 30 there is a meeting with Commerce on volunteer driver programs and the insurance issue.
- Commerce has overseen the Uber/Lyft laws.
- How can we protect volunteer driver programs in this new environment (insurance) and what is best approach?
- Industry is not regulated but at the local level.
- Volunteer driver groups and MCOTA are looking at this issue from a perspective of wanting to be unregulated, service-friendly, flexible, etc.
- There are no national examples of this yet.
- It would be helpful to update the volunteer driver pamphlet.
- We would not want to bump volunteers into being considered employees by the IRS.
- Insurance is becoming a barrier to attracting drivers.
- The move with Uber insurance is concerning/affecting volunteer drivers' interest.

A motion was made by Hardy to approve the results from this study; Pearson seconded. Motion **approved** unanimously.

Medicaid Program (Managed Care and Fee For Service) policies and their impact on Volunteer Programs

Craig Rempp, President of the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA) and Tiffany Collins, MPTA Representative on the Council, presented information about this issue, how it is affecting many volunteer driver programs, and how the MPTA is addressing it. The MPTA would like MCOTA's support in this effort.

Two months ago at a MPTA board meeting, this issue came up and action was taken. Group has met since the spring; many providers are from southern Minnesota. Will see if hiring a consultant would be feasible given the structure.

- Issues: Two segments of volunteer drive program – managed care program and also MA rides
 - Contracts are often poorly worded and not in the best interests of the providers. Mostly for insurance companies or MTMs.
 - Every provider has a different fee structure.
 - Have had payments denied or get shorted. It is hard to catch errors and then monitor. The process for disputing claims is time-consuming and cumbersome.
 - Procedures and pay schedules with these companies are contract-related and are not shared in a timely manner.
 - Managed care systems and MTMs are pushing out forms to the organizations to fill out which the big systems need to turn in.
 - Cannot do rides outside the MTM.
- There will be committee meeting soon this summer to fight this. Many rides will be lost because of this. Professional help will be needed for this.

FY17 MCOTA work plan follow-up

Shughart provided an overview of the MCOTA work plan elements. A motion was made to approve the FY17 work plan by Tardy, seconded by Schadauer, and then **approved** unanimously.

Olmstead Plan update

In lieu of Billiar, Shughart shared that MCOTA is working to engage DHS further in the activities in the coordinating councils. The Olmstead report was delivered to the subcabinet. The schedule for the rollout of the RTCCs aligns well with Olmstead timing.

Agency updates

Willshire shared that July 26 is the 26th anniversary of the ADA. There will be an event at the Minnesota History Center with a theme of diversity and inclusion. She also noted that Tuesdays in July there is a series of free "nine nights of music" and some of the musicians are persons with disabilities. She will send out further information on these events to this group following the meeting.

As of April 9, Tardy shared that he has been retired from AEOA but he is still serving on the Board on Aging. The AEOA deputy director is filling Tardy's former position.

Public comments: There were no public comments.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn was made by Pearson; the motion was seconded by Schadauer and then **approved** unanimously. The meeting ended at 2:40 p.m.

Future meetings: Thursday, August 25; Thursday, September 29; Wednesday, October 19; Tuesday, November 22; Tuesday, December 20

Future agenda items: Medicaid Program (Managed Care and Fee For Service) policies and their impact on Volunteer Programs