

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA)
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, April 26, 2017

Members Present

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability
Julie Belisle, Minnesota Department of Education (via phone)
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (via phone)
Ronald Quade II, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (via phone)
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services (via phone) (proxy for Claire Wilson)
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging (via phone)

Members Absent

Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health
Claire Wilson, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Others Present

Kristie Billiar, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Heidi Corcoran, Dakota County (via phone)
Frank Douma, Univ. of Minnesota, Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Larry Eisenstadt, Department of Employment and Economic Development
Nicole George, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Kaydee Kirk, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies
Roger Long, Voigt's Bus Companies
Arlene Mathison, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies
Tim Mitchell, Minnesota Department of Transportation (via phone)
Noel Shughart, Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of Transit
Troy Voigt, Voigt's Bus Companies
Tim Weltcin, Prime West Health (via phone)

Call to order and introductions

Henkel called to order the monthly meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:07 PM on April 26, 2017 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

Review and approval of agenda

Henkel requested to move the "Program review of coordination projects" presentation to the May meeting and replace with "Local Human Service – Public Transit Coordination Plan Update." Wilshire made a motion to approve the agenda with the suggested changes; the motion was seconded by Sutton and then was unanimously **approved**.

Review and approval of minutes from 3/22/2017 meeting

The meeting minutes will be revised to reflect that the following members were not present at the meeting: Joan Wilshire, Gerri Sutton, and Thant Pearson. Wilshire moved to approve the 3/22/2017 MCOTA meeting minutes with the recommended changes; the motion was seconded by Sutton and was then unanimously **approved**.

Proposed amendment to by-laws

Willshire made a motion to approve the agenda with the suggested changes; the motion was seconded by Tardy and then was unanimously **approved**. Per the bylaws, the At Large member will be appointed by the MCOTA Chair.

FY18-19 work plan

Shughart shared the work plan details, the activities and projects that will be planned and budgeted for the coming fiscal year. Per Willshire's request, CTS will ensure the MCOTA website be ADA compliant; Willshire offered the assistance of staff in her office.

Eisenstadt presented about the proposed task regarding a study about "Best Practices for Addressing Youth Employment and Training Transportation." There is currently a worker shortage in Minnesota and there is a need to engage youth in employment. Employers are willing to give youth a chance with work experience since they need workers and also want to be good corporate citizens.

Willshire proposed to fund a study/project on the topic of autonomous vehicles. This could be a good topic for an educational and outreach project (similar to Task 2019-5 on "Education and Outreach for transportation providers about Coordination Strategies"). Per the group's direction, Shughart will follow up and give further thought to the outreach that would be done as well as how to measure the outcomes if the investment was made.

Shughart clarified that there has not been an identified request for funding dedicated to the rollout of the RTCCs.

Sutton moved to approve the work plan Tasks 2018 - 1, 2, 3, and 4 and that the remaining 2018 tasks and all 2019 tasks be tabled for further discussion and approval at the May meeting; Willshire seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously **approved**.

MCOTA stakeholder communication for May

Mathison shared that the May communication would be emailed out after the May MCOTA meeting. She is looking for an additional 1-2 ideas for content. Content for the next issue will be assembled by mid-May and brought to the council at the May meeting for approval.

There is also a plan for a June communication scheduled to be sent in late June. Mitchell confirmed that there may be information to share about the RTCCs in the June communication.

Willshire asked if MCOTA should include anything on the legislative front in the communications. Henkel shared that the work being done in Dakota County could be included; Mathison will follow up with Corcoran offline.

Progress report on Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs)

Mitchell provided an update on the RTCCs. He shared that the project management team/advisory committee will be revived and help improve the organization and the process for the creation of the RTCCs. Shughart shared that there is strong interest at the local level in beginning this RTCC work and we don't want to lose their interest. If things are delayed, MCOTA risks losing locals' interest but at the same time MCOTA wants to ensure an effective process is in place that will lead to the success of the RTCCs.

Next steps on volunteer driver language

Peichel shared that she connected with Hage recently and there has not been any legislative movement on the volunteer driver language. The group acknowledged that legislation typically does not get approved on

a first go-around. Shughart shared that as a non-legislative action, a volunteer forum could be held with the provider community in order to advance this idea and the associated definitions.

Next steps on autonomous vehicles

Henkel provided a recap of what MCOTA has discussed to date with respect to autonomous vehicles, including the presentation given at the March meeting by Douma. This continues to be a relevant and timely topic for MCOTA. Henkel shared that a MnDOT staff person will be invited to speak on the topic of the MnDOT autonomous vehicles bus study at the May meeting.

Local Human Service – Public Transit Coordination Plan update

George gave a presentation to members on the local human service-public transit coordination plan. Topics addressed during her presentation included the scope of work timeline, plan development status, and themes from southern Minnesota.

Olmstead update

Billiar shared that the most recent subcabinet meeting was held in late April. There was an abundance of public commentary, about 15 people from the general public attending. Many of the comments from the public were related to personal care attendants and “person-centered” planning and defining what this is. The May subcabinet meeting will be focused on the goals of the quarterly report (MnDOT reports on the baseline of transit service). There is also a goal to on the RTCC information with the subcabinet by June at the latest. Billiar is connecting with Mitchell on the RTCC topics.

FY17 MCOTA budget update

Shughart provided an update on the FY17 budget and the expended funds to date. He shared a handout with the figures. There will be \$12,000 in unspent funds.

Agency updates

- Peichel shared that June 29 is a date for Hage’s retirement celebration. More information will be shared on this event.
- Willshire shared that there is a disability transit summit on May 11 at the Wentworth Library in St. Paul. She will distribute details via email.
- Shughart said the MnDOT Office of Transit has given out \$23 million in two-year grant funding for service improvements and capital acquisition in greater Minnesota. There is a non-match in the first two years. The aim is to reach the goals in the Greater Minnesota Investment Plan.
- Shughart recently met with the Mobility Mania group in Grand Rapids to develop more transportation options and better coordination.
- Advocates for eliminating homelessness recently met with Shughart to discuss ideas to work with Uber and Lyft in small cities to develop transit options for homeless persons. This is part of the work the MnDOT Office of Transit is doing to address homelessness.

Public comments

Eisenstadt asked what is the role of the private sector to provide transportation to their employees, especially those working non-traditional work hours and locations on accessible to public transit. George shared that the private sector has been engaged on this topic somewhat; one example shared was the coordination work being done in Rochester and in Thief River Falls with the private sector. Long and Voigt from Voigt’s Bus Companies shared that they are also working to bridge that gap and partner with the public agencies on these issues though sometimes the agencies are wary of their involvement since the agency thinks their funding might be reduced if they do so. Long and Voigt noted that they wish to be part of the solution, hence their involvement with MCOTA.

Adjourn

Willshire made a motion to adjourn; Sutton seconded; the motion was unanimously **approved** at 3:03 p.m.

Future 2017 meetings:

- Wednesday, May 24
- Wednesday, June 28
- Wednesday, July 26
- Wednesday, August 23
- Wednesday, September 27
- Wednesday, October 25
- Wednesday, November 15
- Wednesday, December 20

Future agenda items:

May:

- AV bus study – Jay Hieptas, MnDOT (or representative), Action requested: Information
- Update/check in on research projects
- Review website redesign
- Program review of coordination projects (to be emailed prior to meeting) – Nicole George, MnDOT, Action requested: Information
- Presentation on lessons learned from Mobility Mania Conference (to be emailed prior to meeting) – Noel Shughart, Action requested: Information

June:

Presentation by Mobility Transportation Management (MTM) on their activities (to be emailed prior to meeting) – Jim Nienaber, Transportation Manager, MTM
Action requested: Information

Standing agenda items:

- Review and approve agenda
- Review and approve meeting minutes
- Monthly communications
- FY17 MCOTA budget update
- Agency updates
- Public comments