

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) Meeting Minutes
January 23, 2018
MnDOT Central Office Transportation Building
395 John Ireland Blvd, Saint Paul, Conference Room 461
1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Members present:

Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability
At-Large Representative – Victoria Nill, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Susan Bishop, Minnesota Department of Health
Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce (via phone)
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association (via phone)
Kelly Garvey, 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)
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging (via phone)

Members absent:

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Laura Logsdon, Minnesota Management and Budget
Claire Wilson, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Others present:

Minnesota Department of Transportation:

Kristie Billiar, ADA Program and Policy
Jake Reuter, Office of Transit and Active
Transportation
Noel Shughart, Office of Transit and Active
Transportation
Sue Siemers, Office of Transit and Active
Transportation (via phone)

Leah Hegg, American Cancer Society (via phone)
Alan Herrmann, Scott County
Bryan McCoy, Headwaters Regional Development
Commission
Sherry Munyon, Minnesota Public Transit Association
Kim Pettman, Transit Advocate (via phone)
Mark Schermerhorn, Anoka County Transit (via phone)
Sheila White

Minnesota Department of Human Services:

Sarah Sinderbrand
Curtis Buhman

University of Minnesota:

Heidi Corcoran, Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Frank Douma, Humphrey School of Public Affairs
(via phone)
Kaydee Kirk, Center for Transportation Studies
Arlene Mathison, Center for Transportation Studies

Minnesota Board on Aging:

Clancy Farria
Courtney Whited

Region 5 Development Commission:

Cheryal Hills
Tad Erickson
Matt Kallroos

Robyn Bernardy

Jon Kelly, Minnesota Department of Commerce (via
phone)

Call to order & introductions: Willshire called to order the January meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:03 PM on January 23, 2019 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN. Everyone present and on the phone introduced themselves.

Review and approve agenda: Sutton moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Nill. The agenda was unanimously approved.

11/28/18 meeting minutes: Garvey moved to approve the November minutes, seconded by Nill. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Public comments: Pettman shared the following comments:

- She would like to find information on volunteer driver reimbursement rates in one place for people to access.
- She is hoping that MCOTA can support waiver for STSS providers for reimbursement for transportation.
- Transportation safety is important. She noted that all riders on fixed routes are also pedestrians. Transit stops/stations should be safe, including the clearing of snow.
- Always include greater Minnesota in transportation-related conversations since sometimes they are overlooked.

Draft report and recommendations on the Waiver Transportation Study

DHS staff representatives provided background and a status update on the study per the 2017 state legislature requirement for DHS to conduct a study of waiver transportation, including recommendations for coordinating and increasing transportation accessibility across the state, creating a rate framework for waiver transportation, and other recommendations to improve access. DHS selected one contractor to complete both study phases, and began working with Navigant Consulting.

Current status: DHS has received a draft of Navigant's final report. DSD leadership is reviewing the draft. The report will be delivered to the Revisor by the end of the month. [Click here](#) for project website.

The link to the final report will be shared with MCOTA when posted. Leadership at DHS are initially finding the recommendations hopeful. Members agreed that the RTCCs will find this very helpful as well.

Summary of Navigant's recommendations:

- Identify changes to policies, regulations, and/or state law needed to support recommendations and secure enhanced federal Medicaid matching funds (90/10) for implementation of program administration changes
- Develop and establish centralized, uniform statewide provider requirements and corresponding rates for a new waiver transportation service (includes program definitions and reporting requirements)
- Develop and implement centralized infrastructure to support a waiver transportation-specific provider network and payment management, which would include an online provider database for lead agency use and the ability for provider invoices to be automatically converted into claims for State Medicaid reporting purposes
- Develop and implement centralized infrastructure to support lead agency service authorization and coordination function, based on further study after implementing the previous recommendation. This function could include, for example, DHS contracting with transportation coordination service organizations and the use of a mobile app for individuals and lead agencies, similar to the apps used by Uber and Lyft.
- Develop and implement a new rate methodology for waiver transportation that considers provider costs for doing business and the variation in provider and service types.

Resolution on volunteer driver reimbursement/MPTA legislation

Nill provided an overview of the draft waiver and also verbally shared Munyon/MPTA's feedback and additional edits. Brickwedde agreed with Munyon's proposed edits but requested to see this in writing. He also expressed that the resolution should be in line with agency/state governmental leadership. Members agreed edits will be circulated in

writing after the meeting. It was also suggested to include MCOTA member organizations and only the names of the chair and vice chair. The document represents a unified approach from multiple organizations/agencies that MPTA, and any agency, can be used in their work with legislators. Discussion:

- Some members said that the efforts at the federal level regarding the rate are key but so are the efforts on this topic at the state level.
- Tardy noted that there is concern about the interpretation of this issue/statute by state agencies. For years, it has been interpreted in a good way. The interpretation lands with the agencies. Brickwedde noted that the changes in recent years have been with insurance providers and how they are enforcing their policy restrictions, not the interpretation of agencies per se. For example, following the advent of TNCs who have changed the playing field, there has been a change with the insurance companies and how they're interpreting this topic.
- It was also shared that MCOTA has *not* put forth a set of policies/proposals as an entity this legislative session.
- Tardy and others noted that volunteer drivers are affected by what TNCs are doing. There is a big issue of volunteer drivers leaving because of the changes and this especially affects rural areas of Minnesota, who also do not have TNCs.
- Munyon felt that statutorily MCOTA has a responsibility to support this type of effort. MPTA is asking for MCOTA to support this resolution, a document that is simply stating the facts.

Tardy moved to approve the resolution with all of the written and verbal edits (including to the changes of how organizations and chair names would be listed); Nill seconded. Members agreed to review the final document in writing and take a vote electronically within the next day. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs)

Hills, Erickson and Kallroos provided the update to MCOTA. Here is a summary of what they shared:

The RTCC is a 2 year grant with the first year being planning and the second year being implementation. In this first year, Region Five has facilitated stakeholder meetings as well as public meetings. Stakeholder meetings have been very well attended and the group is very excited about what the RTCC can do for the region. At these stakeholder meetings we have defined the region, membership, and bylaws, as well as refine the public participation plan, create DRAFT goals and from those DRAFT goals create DRAFT activities/ resources. Besides the stakeholder meetings we have had the public meetings which are intended to gain public feedback on what the stakeholders have come up with so far in the planning process. Our first public meeting was very well attended and much of that is because of the help from local transit providers and their willingness to transport individuals to and from the meeting. Having food at both public meetings and stakeholder meetings has helped with attendance from what we have seen as well. Below is a list of successful community engagement items we have used in making the Region Five RTCC a success.

Community Engagement

- Public meetings
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Websites
- o Region 5
- o MCOTA
- Social media
- Targeted promotion
- Leverage relationships w transit providers
- Videos to promote RTCC
- Flyers/ Postcards to promote upcoming public meetings
- Spanish translation
- Signage on buses
- Budget for food at meetings

Discussion:

- MCOTA would like see the videos when they are ready.
- How are you engaging the human service organizations in this work? Answer: We have done outreach to all the human service coordinators in the counties. Also, outreach to veterans services groups, workforce, continuum of care providers, council on aging, etc.
- Both public and stakeholder meetings have been well attended.

- Corcoran said it would be helpful to have all coordination efforts to be shared statewide, perhaps in the form of a conference call. Siemers said there are quarterly meetings for all grant recipients where best practices and much more are shared. Tomorrow is the second meeting of this group.

Emphasis areas for MCOTA to recommend for RTCC implementation

- This document provides more information to the organizations going through their planning process. Emphasis area language is based on MPO planning.
- Staff from Headwaters, who work with the RTCC, said based on their experience it is difficult to operate a one-call/one-click with human resources that are needed for multiple systems and providers. It takes money for infrastructure and technology needs.
- Getting payment is difficult because billing processes are archaic and difficult. DHS is helping the RTCCs to figure this out. They are working on a solution at the local level, not the state level.
- Shughart said he will incorporate this feedback into the application.

Quarterly stakeholder communication topics

Mathison reviewed the proposed topic as detailed in the handout. This next communication would be sent in February. Members did not have any major feedback.

FY19 MCOTA budget update

MnDOT is currently working on an amended contract with CTS on strategic planning. More information will be shared at the February meeting. Overall, the budget is on schedule.

Olmstead Plan

Next week is the first Olmstead meeting of the first administration. The working group for Olmstead is in a holding pattern with respect to the priorities of leadership. There are a series of amendments to the goals of Olmstead. A series of public involvement meetings have been held statewide. Another round of comment opportunities will be held this spring.

Other member updates:

- Shughart shared that Nill is now the permanent office director of the MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation.
- Shughart also share that MnDOT has rearranged project management to align with the new RTCC structure. Siemers oversees all of this. She is also the 5310 project manager across the state. The idea is to have the 5310 program be an offshoot of the RTCCs.
- Also, Shughart noted that Tardy is completing his service of 8 years with the Board on Aging and this is his last MCOTA meeting.

Review draft agenda for next meeting

Willshire suggested to invite MnDOT CAVx Office staff to an upcoming meeting to give a presentation on the report that came out in December.

In terms of meeting rooms, MnDOT's TEC Center Room is more accessible and may have better phone quality. Rueter will schedule future meetings for that room.

Adjourn: Bishop made a motion to adjourn; Nill seconded. All **approved**.