

ECRTCC Policy Action Sub Committee Meeting

11/26/2019 at Cambridge City Hall

Present: Tim Schmutzer, Bob Benes, Carri Levitski, Marcia Westover, Ashley and Karen

Via phone: Susan Morris

Not present: Jeanette Kester and Jack Friebe

Refresher of past meeting happenings by distributing notes.

Isle Ministerial Meeting debrief. We gave them information about the ECRDC. We also attended commissioner meetings in Kanabec and Pine counties. The letter was distributed to the counties at these events. Kanabec chose to rewrite the letter and sign off on it together. Pine has been reached out to in order to find out if they're signing off. Chisago, Isanti, and Mille Lacs will all be spoken at in December.

Karen attended a Volunteer Driver Advocacy meeting in Arden Hills regarding legislative action. This meeting suggested we have different letters for Federal and State purposes. We need to revise our letter to be applicable at the state level. Suggestion was made for Jack to help us.

The state issue is the insurance, the mileage rate is Federal. That's the distinction between the two.

The Association of MN Counties (AMC) could help us lobby regarding the mileage federally. The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) was also mentioned.

HF2377 focuses on insurance specifying volunteers are not for hire.

We need to keep focus on both efforts.

We have a need for a definition of a volunteer driver. Connie Cardinal was reached out to regarding Foley CARE's definition of them. We will check with MnDOT's definition.

There is a need for a meeting containing all key players going forward. Suggestions made included Penny Flannigan the lieutenant governor. Tina Smith, Angie Craig, etc. Where do we want to host this, when, and how do we get attendees? Suggestion for February in St. Paul aligning with the AMC conference. Susan could bring this up at their upcoming board of directors meeting which is roughly 1.5 weeks out.

Having one of the attendees call the meeting may make people more inclined to attend. Name recognition will be key.

Karen will distribute a list and then we can fill in the missing blanks as a group. We may get the staff representing the individual rather than them in person.

We are pursuing the "foster parent insurance pool" to find out what it means. It was mentioned by one of the transit providers in our area. These pools have a lot of red tape around them.

MCIT will only insure by counties/large entities. We can ask them, but it sounds VERY doubtful they will jump on board. Robin Seitz is the head of MCIT?

Other entities that could serve in this capacity are unknown.

Susan had to leave the phone call, but said we should send her any questions following the meeting and she will get back to us.

We should either pursue the bill, OR the insurance pool to avoid redundancy.

The getting there safely brochure is experiencing yet another hold up. This is a huge hinderance to us going forward.

Speculation was made about the rate issue being set so low to avoid insurance companies having to cover these drivers. We may need to change the wording in our letter in order to be more effective.

We may need to wait for more local support before having this meeting in order to have more ammunition behind our cause.

Should we establish a chat group with other entities after this same issue for ongoing conversation. This may give us a unified voice by approaching this effort statewide.

Suggestion was to hold back efforts on the insurance pools and pursue federal legislation. The pool may be the end result if insurance companies initiate it.

Talking points: inequity of 14 vs 58 cents, emotional appeal, direct quote from someone effected, etc.

Ask Erica Bliss for a quote from an effected veteran?

*Additional notes:*

*Would MCOTA have any pull on setting up a meeting with influential people? Ask Penny Flanagan if she would call the meeting instead of us.*

*We must thoroughly understand the state and federal laws, the differences, and the changes that we wish to see.*

*We need to rewrite our letter in order to clarify Bob's comments regarding insurance company's understanding of "for hire driver" vs. volunteer driver. From what I understand, if a Volunteer Driver makes more than the Charitable Reimbursement Rate (whatever that may be) that any money past that rate becomes payment, not a reimbursement. So then, they are considered a Driver for Hire, hence the insurance issue.*

*Why is there a difference in charitable reimbursement vs. business reimbursement?*

*MCN and RTCC's – Partner on this issue of talking points regarding legislation. Bob will talk with Marie Ellis at MCN.*

*We need to put this issue out to the RTCCs on the FLOCK.*

*FLOCK – what is a Volunteer Driver? Definition.*

*Set Up A Coalition:*

- 1. We must name the initiative*
- 2. Who would be part of this group? The RTCCs...*

*Instead of an ask, Tell. "I am adding you to this group as I feel that you have a strong affinity towards this legislative change..."*

*Add: Sherry Munyon, Lori Vrolson, Tom Gottfried...*

*Inequity of 14cents vs. 58cents  
Emotional Appeal then logical solution*

*What matters more? The people or the insurance companies?!*

*Stories*

*Contact Erica Bliss and all RTCCs before the next meeting for TRAGIC storie(s) regarding not having a volunteer driver.*