

East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council

November 10, 2022

ECRTCC Advisory Board Meeting 9:am – 11am

Bob Voss, Trish Rydlund, Michelle Thomas, Michelle Lichtig, Helen Pieper, Aaron Berg, Tim Schmutzer (9:06), James Hartong – Kanabec County Economic Authority -Executive Director, Kevin Stenson, Rhonda Torgerson, Penny Messer, Beverly Sidlo- Tolliver, Beth Sumner, Joel Smith – Acct Executive MTM, Mike Moilanen, Kathy Burski, Terri Huro, Tina Neary, Brandon Nurmi, Melissa Marengo – MTM Operations Manager, Jessica Peterson

9:00 **Call to order:** Karen called to order.

9:05 **Introductions:**

Updates:

9:15 **MnDOT – RTCCs and MCOTA updates:**

Michelle Lichtig –
Outreach engagement update:
ECRTCC,
Matt Kallroos and Michelle L. together in RDC National Conference in Kansas City - re: networking of RTCCs and RDC's,
St. Louis County HHS Conference. 1000's of people attending. Booth and presentation.
Possible RTCC to go to MSSA – March 2023 – MN Social Services Association. Presentation, not a booth.

Importance of one-on-one discussions, answering questions, learning that we are here and available.

MCOTA update – Next meeting – Presentation from Ted Nelson 6WRTCC. Veterans Transportation. Grant Opportunity they utilized from Support our Troops. Current situation and partnerships.
Rena Shetty – Age Friendly presentation. Work Teams.

9:35 **Service Provider Updates:**

(please include information about current volunteer driver program services)
Brandon Nurmi – Arrowhead Transit – Employment/operators/dispatchers Needed! Chisago is running with all its routes.

Helen Pieper – Timber Trails – steady course, industry problem with bus shortages. Delays. Ordered in 2021, expected in 2024. Difficulty in getting parts. More enforcement in regards to no-shows, rider's rules.

Rhonda Torgerson – technical difficulties...

9:50 **ECRTCC Updates:**

Bob Voss and Loren Davis to discuss MN SafeRides and ECRDC's/ECRTCC's involvement.

Subsidized car rides for those who need a ride home from bar. Subsidized by organization, bar, contribution from liquor/beer distributors. Moving the non-profit to be under the RDC. Keeping impaired drivers off the roads. Could expand to other groups as well, possibly? MN County Insurance Trust (MCIT) – issue with sharing vehicles... will this matter?
Aaron Berg – concept of voucher program. RideShare – get through legality restraints to rework it. Building Block to get a program going. Expansion Possibilities. Get this rolling by the first of the year.

Next Steps:

10:00-10:15 **Subcommittee Assignments – Breakout Rooms:**

1. Exploration of shared vehicles
 1. Engage ECRTCC Advisory Board to gauge interest in Volunteer Driver Shared Vehicle Program
 2. Sharing underutilized vehicles in the community
 3. Investigate Live Well at Home Grant options (and other funding sources)

Breakout room participants:

Michelle Thomas
Tim Schmutzer
Natalie Matthewson
Beverly Sidlo-Tolliver
Michelle Lichtig
Aaron Berg

First things to do:

1. Partners for Data Collection (vehicle inventory).
2. Pilot Program to find one existing need with one existing vehicle. Develop a successful program.

2. Micro and macro hub investigation and development

1. Micro Hubs:

- a. Activate most current survey results, generate a one question survey shared throughout social media and other forms of outreach.
- b. Identify locations for small hubs in communities within the region.
- c. Work with transportation providers, stakeholders, riders, cities, counties to identify most efficient locations.
- d. Create regional awareness, responding to the need for micro hubs.

2. Macro Hubs:

- a. Investigate Cambridge and Hinckley's NLX hubs - meeting with each location's personnel to assist with regional perspective, transportation options, and economic/community development.
- b. Collaborate with transportation providers, stakeholders, public riders, cities, counties, chambers/businesses, legislators.
- c. Create regional awareness, delivering the message touting the benefits of these large stations for multimodal socio-economical hubs.

Breakout room participants:

Karen Onan
Bob Voss
Kevin Stenson
Rhonda Torgerson
Helen Pieper
Melissa Marengo
Mike Moilanen
Jeanette Kester
Julia Dupla will be in this group moving forward.

First thing to do: Document the Need.

[See Collaborative White Boards below](#)

Question	Brainstorming Ideas	Next Steps
How do we take inventory of the underutilized vehicles currently in our community?	County Vehicles Faith communities Senior Living communities. Could colleges and universities be partners? Could students do some of the data mining? (Should be separate from the relationship building with these orgs	1. Connect with Emergency Preparedness programs to identify transportation needs. 2. Discuss Pilot Project - mine one need and connect with one existing vehicle (ie employers who have worker shortages - especially if they have vehicles. Could they provide ridesharing?)
What barriers might the owners/organizations have regarding the sharing of these vehicles?	1. Insurance 2. Maintenance 3. Other liability for vehicle owners 4. What is the availability of the vehicles (hours, days, etc) 5. Vehicle owner organizations require their own training so universal education may not work	1. MN Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) is working on this at the State level.
Pursuing a Live Well at Home grant to obtain new vehicle(s)?	Is this a good idea? Who should we be partnering with? Who could provide a match?	

Instructions
1. Read each question.
2. Brainstorm ideas and further questions that need to be addressed.
3. Identify next steps.

Other:
1. Question about disposed of vehicles?
2. Discussed flexibility of purchasing vehicles

Macro DOTS - Related to Northern Lights Express Passenger Rail Line. Passengers use DOTS hub as destination, allowing for all mobility services to be available to them for continuing their journey.

Micro DOTS - Located at convenient identified spot enabling continuation of route to a previously unavailable location.

Connect Timber Trails and Arrowhead Transit allowing for passenger to continue into another service area.

Connect Timber Trails and Tri-CAP Transit allowing for passengers to continue into another's service area.

Survey needed?

Promotion of location and travel opportunities through veteran services, Lakes and Pines, Senior Organizations, Jobs and Training, Technical Schools, etc.

mission



<u>Question</u>	<u>Brainstorming Ideas</u>	<u>Next Steps</u>
Verify Need.	Documentation from past surveys, LCP surveys, provider denials, a new one question social media question to verify need? Moving a vehicle from north to south can be done rather easily - redesign, expansion. Episodic Hours could be used.	1. Social Media Survey. Community Survey. 2. Where are denials gathered? Tina Neary? Helen? Erica? 3. Cities input.
What providers can travel outside of their service areas?	None. Unless there is verification of need. If the vehicles are FTA funded, they must stay within their service design. If they are outside FTA funding, if we find a funding source to support it, we could do it. Who has disposed of buses? Can not be in 5311 program.	
What would it take to grant providers the ability to travel outside of their service areas?	Pilot Program? Verify need, much outreach.	
Currently, how can a rider get from Mora to Milaca? Vice versa.	DAC routes. Otherwise no.	
Currently, how can a rider get from Harris to Ogilvie? Vice versa.	DAC routes. Otherwise no.	Julia, Helen, Rhonda?
Currently, how can a rider get from Cambridge to Princeton? Vice versa.	Need to update with details on (GIS) maps	
Need to travel further...	Could veteran service providers assist with verification of need to St. Cloud and/or Twin Cities? ... others: health systems, ... does NEMT cover most of these needs? Cost to counties...	1. Speak with Veteran Service Providers - start with Erica Bliss
	Jefferson Lines... carry across from Pine County into Stearns County? Involvement with Pine Tech? CMJTS?	

10:15 – 10:40 **Group Discussion**

Tim:

Asked that we engage Stauber’s office and other representatives. Reach out to who should be in regards to the ECRTCC. Federal issues, barriers, NEMT, CMS, FTA Rules...

Pipeline to MCOTA and US Reps.

Outreach to newly elected officials. 45 mins/hour crash course of what’s happening in transportation for your constituents. 30 mins. Before Christmas. Relationship of everything... “Who You Gonna Call?!” Names and Faces together. Natalie’s Chat Message.

Plan another meeting for December to just discuss these two topics.

Inspirational question – Rhonda got her microphone to work!

Tim likes the outreach!

Helen likes hearing from other providers!

Bob liked the open discussion about the SafeRides and our unlimited opportunity to discuss ideas.

Thanks for your input.

10:45 **Adjourn:**

2022 – 2023 Upcoming ECRTCC Advisory Board Meeting Schedule:

Second Thursday months listed below. 9am to 11am

January 12th

March 9th

May 11th

Virtual via Zoom.

Our Website : eastcentraltransit.com

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