

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL MEETING**

**Minutes**

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 12, 2020

**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Zoom

**PRESENT:** Rob Paterson; Sarah Schneider, Mobility Manager Valley Transit; Susan Garcia Franz, Winnebago County Health Dept; Steve Tomasik, Go Transit; Holly Keenan, Lutheran Social Services; John Meissner, Options for Independent Living; Jim Collins, Go Transit; Laura VanHooreweghe, Paratransit Coordinator Valley Transit; Bryn Ceman and Pam Bartelt, Winnebago County Department of Human Services

**1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:**

Bryn Ceman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 2020 MEETING:**

Rob Paterson moved for approval of the minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting; seconded by Holly Keenan and carried.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**4. ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR:**

Bryn shared that Nick Musson who was previously the Chair person has moved to a new position with GWAAR. We are now looking for interest in taking over this position. Rob Paterson indication his interest in this position. Steve Tomasik moved to accept this; seconded by Susan Garcia. Bryn will work with Rob to come up with the quarterly agenda and will actively review the 2019 – 2023 goals and provide updates.

**5. PUBLIC HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN:**

Bryn shared the coordinated plan which can be found at ECWRPC.org:

<https://www.ecwrpc.org/programs/transportation/public-specialized-transportation/>

Once on the [Public Transit & Specialized Transportation Planning](#) page, you need to scroll down to 2018 Plans and choose Winnebago County.

The plan was reviewed by the council with some of the highlights following.

Holly Keenan mentioned that they are attempting to fill some of the gaps for rural needs and the Catch-A-Ride program is providing rides in the evenings and weekends for employment related rides. There is an article in the Herald regarding this program which is also highlighted on Linked-In. It was shared that there has been and continues to be work efforts on creating affordable transportation with the Winnebago Catch-A-Ride program by using a combination of volunteer drivers as well as through their relationship with other providers. They have been working with a grant in order to subsidize some of these rides. They are looking at finding sustainable funding for this. The Oshkosh Economic Development received a three-year grant from the Oshkosh Community Foundation and they hired a part time individual to work on connecting the business community which will provide resources and support moving forward.

Susan Garcia Franz mentioned the database that was put together by United Way/Fox Valley which has specialized transportation listed. Sarah Schneider shared that she and Holly maintain the list which can be found at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vT0tkv9xJirg6B9fYMCID9Yn05aEiatjW6R8cuyAY5GpqsXWpsLFwKCaMVfz1zxhgJ3V1fmgLyw0E/pubhtml>

Discussion was had on meeting the needs of consumers being discharged from hospitals and institutions. An event had been planned to address this however was cancelled due to COVID. Route 10 is one option as it does go past the jail with the first stop shortly after 7:30 a.m. This is an intercity connection between Valley Transit and City of Oshkosh. Susan did mention that timing of those being released from jail often occurs in early morning hours between 4:30 – 6:00 a.m., when transportation services are not running yet.

If any of the goals are not currently a barrier, they may no longer be goals. Previously there had been issues which have since been resolved.

Bryn addressed the possibility of having some type of program that would help empower consumers with understanding the process of accessing public transportation options.

John Meisner joined the meeting. John is with *Options for Independent Living* and they work with people with disabilities and the elderly. They address many issues such as transportation, housing, local businesses becoming more accessible. They offer equipment tryout for individuals prior to purchasing them to see what best fits their needs. They do not sell the equipment. Sarah mentioned the need for training on mobility devices and all the aspects that go with it. Goodwill Industries has also expressed interest in partnering in this.

MTM services for Medicaid will be transitioned to a new entity VEYO. More to come on this as COVID situation allows. Look at areas where additional help may be needed.

Looking at learning more about any accessibility plans for the city. ‘Complete Streets’ is a group that goes county by county and will be good to promote in Winnebago County. If anyone is interested in working on this, they could contact Susan Garcia Franz. There is a Winnebago County Bike n Ped Committee that is looking at opportunities in the community. The city does have plan which Susan will send to Bryn. Holly mentioned that *Cycling without Age* has been working

with connectivity throughout the area. Oshkosh Area School District has been approved to provide free bus rides starting in fall. This has covered a lot of the goals of the plan and will continue to be reviewed.

**6. VALLEY TRANSIT AND GO TRANSIT PROGRAM UPDATES:**

Sarah mentioned that they have hired a travel training specialist that will help with any barriers that are encountered. COVID changes practices daily. They opted not to go fare free. They have extensively increased sanitation procedures. Masks are strongly encouraged and riders that are symptomatic are not allowed to ride. A ten-person capacity is now in place. Route times have not changed. Laura shared that ridership has decreased from about 500 down to 100.

Go Transit is showing a similar decrease, down by a third of what they have had in the past. They have put temporary barriers in for the drivers with permanent barriers on order. Cleaning and sanitation measure have been increased. Trying to manage social distancing.

**7. WINNEBAGO CATCH-A-RIDE UPDATE:**

They are still providing rides with the majority in manufacturing section. An average of 55 – 60 rides pers week. Volunteer drivers have all stepped away due to COVID with all rides being covered by the three partners.

**8. MRH WINNEBAGO COUNTY VAN UPDATE:**

Ridership is down. There are a few engaged drivers that are only providing essential rides such as medical, food, essential. January 1 – April 30, 2020 there were 84 rides provided. Masks were provided for drivers and riders with disinfecting of vehicle between each ride. Ridership is down but still going.

**9. NEXT MEETING DATE:**

The next meeting of the Winnebago County Specialized Transportation Council will be held on August 11, 2020 location TBD.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business, Susan Garcia Franz moved for adjournment; seconded by Steve Tomasik and carried at approximately 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Pam Bartelt, Human Services Department

Upcoming Meeting: November 10, 2020