

COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 27, 2009

IN ATTENDANCE:

Amy Wiley, Provena St. Mary's Dialysis; Cheryl Lockwood, NE Illinois Area Agency on Aging; Jeanette Tetreault, Thresholds; Richard Campbell, Kankakee County Veteran's Assistance Commission; John M. Fulton, Veteran's Assistance Commission President; Rob Hoffman, River Valley METRO Mass Transit District; Laura Dick, Show Bus; Mike Butler, Good Shepherd Manor; Patrick McCarthy, Illinois Central School Bus; Aimee McSparin, The Herald; Mike Lammey, and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County Planning Department.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Wiley called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM, welcoming all, introducing herself and asking everyone around the room to introduce themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Chairman Wiley then asked for any Public Comment. There were no public comment forms filed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the November 18, 2008 meeting were presented for approval. Ms. Lockwood made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Mr. Campbell. Motion carried.

AGENCY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

Ms. Lockwood gave a power point presentation on the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging. Their Agency covers the Counties of Kankakee, DuPage, Lake, Grundy, McHenry, Kane, Will and Kendall. She explained the services provided to seniors include information and assistance outreach, case management, congregate meals, home delivered meals, some legal services, transportation services, long term care ombudsman advocates, counseling, health promotion and disease prevention, elder abuse intervention, emergency support services and family caregiver support. She stated these services will have even greater needs in the future as America ages. In 2030, there will be 1 in 5 Americans age 65 or over. She distributed brochures titled "Working Harder to Make Aging Easier."

Mr. Hoffman then explained the effect of the Circuit Breaker program. He stated that there were four times as many Circuit Breaker riders not paying fares than had been anticipated. This does translate to lost revenue for METRO. The circuit breaker postcards need to be laminated so they don't wear out before the end of the year. Mr. Hoffman stated that it had been suggested to the State to issue photo ID cards with an expiration date for this service, but it wasn't done. Ms. Lockwood also stated that it was

an unnecessary burden on the circuit breaker recipients (and agencies helping them) to have to reapply each year to re-qualify.

Veterans' transportation issues were discussed. Discussion with State Representatives Lisa Dugan and Careen Gordon has occurred about this problem and we are waiting to hear back from them. Mr. Fulton reported that he has been dealing with this problem for a long time. He had worked at the Veteran's Home in Manteno and is the President of the Veteran's Assistance Commission for Kankakee County. The Veteran's Home cannot take non-residents on their bus with their residents to Hines, even when there are empty seats. There are many local veterans that could be served by this bus. There will be more as more troops return from foreign battle zones in the near future. Through the VAC, they had a new van 5 years ago, but couldn't keep (medically) qualified drivers to operate the van. They hired people to drive veterans to Hines, but ran into liability issues and had to stop doing that. They gave it away to a Peoria based organization that could use it.

Rural HSTP Region 6 was then discussed. Laura Dick, this Committee's appointee to the Region 6 Committee, presented changes upcoming with the Regional organization. The Region 6 Committee is assuming responsibility for the program. Kankakee County and McLean County MPO staff will provide staff functions for Region 6. The scheduled February 23rd meeting in Pontiac will take place and no meeting will be cancelled without prior approval of the committee. New Freedom and Job Access Reverse Commute applications will be coming due soon. The Federal Stimulus Package may create a need for quick action to access the new funding sources made available with short application deadlines.

Ms. Lockwood stated that the Eastern Will County program has received approval for funding for possibly transporting Monee area residents to Manteno. Chairman Wiley agreed the need is great for this service. Mr. Hoffman reported having met with PACE to work on similar issues of transporting people across the county line.

Chairman Wiley reported that checks are being held by the State and not paying a local private transportation provider under the State's All Kids & Family Program. There is a lawsuit filed against the State for spending money not appropriated by the State Legislature, only by the Governor's order, so the money is being held up. The programs involved benefits for parent(s) with dependent children. All benefits have been stopped and the checks may or may not ever be sent out.

DISABILITY/AGING/TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:

Mr. Butler inquired about 5310 grant applications for capital purchases (vehicles). This Committee and the Region 6 Committee have not been given a timeline for accepting and considering applications.

Mr. Lammey stated there will be changes in the funding available due to the Federal Stimulus Package. We have to wait and see what those are.

PROGRAM STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS:

Mr. Lammey reported that SHOW BUS will begin a Monday – Friday Deviated Fixed Route from downtown Kankakee to Momence on Monday, February 2nd. As a deviated fixed route, clients who cannot get to the scheduled stop that are near the route may call in and they can be picked up at their residence or business. The bus will stop by Baker & Taylor in Momence and by the old City Hall building in Momence. SHOWBUS is adding busses and drivers. Each rider is charged \$1.00 one-way.

Chairman Wiley then asked for an update from Mr. Hoffman for METRO – Urban Transportation Services. Mr. Hoffman stated they have continuously increasing ridership in the 20% range. Versions proposed for the Stimulus Package include \$8.4 billion for Transit. He is preparing to apply for any funds that could become available to the local system. He believes there will be funding for better fuel-efficient vehicles; greener, less polluting, vehicles. Mr. Campbell asked if the focus on this was only for busses, or what about considering railroad options? Mr. Hoffman explained the current focus was on busses, including improvements and enhancements such as BRT – Bus Rapid Transit with signal pre-emption, bus priority/HOV lanes on highways and 15 acre park and ride lots.

QUESTIONS FROM THE NEWS MEDIA:

Ms. McSparin inquired about SHOW BUS picking up medical appointment patients with the new Kankakee to Momence route bus. Ms. Dick explained that regular passengers near the deviated fixed route would be handled by the new route, but the Special Medical type riders would still be handled by the Special Medical service bus.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. McCarthy informed us that the Grundy County Transportation Committee is meeting on February 17, 2009 at 1:00 PM at the Morris Public Library. Ms. Lockwood also attends that meeting.

Jeanette Tetreault is scheduled to present on Thresholds at the March 31, 2009 meeting.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

Chairman Wiley then reviewed the meeting schedule planned for this Committee:

- March 31, 2009 – 9:30 A.M.
- General Meeting Schedule – Last Tuesday of every other month at 9:30 A.M.
 - March, May, July, September, November of 2009
- Meeting Location – METRO Centre

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Wiley announced the adjournment of the meeting at 10:46 A.M.