

# COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

## March 31, 2009

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Amy Wiley, Provena St. Mary's Dialysis; Dorci Schoolman, Options CIL; Jeanette Tetreault, Thresholds; Richard Campbell, Kankakee County Veteran's Assistance Commission; Robert Davies, Iroquois County Veteran's Assistance Center; Andy Nicholos, Illinois Department of Employment Security; Bonnie Schaafsma, Kankakee County Health Department; Rob Hoffman, River Valley METRO Mass Transit District; Laura Dick, Show Bus; Patrick McCarthy, Illinois Central School Bus; Mike Lamme, and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County Planning Department.

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Wiley called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM, welcoming all.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of the January 27, 2009 meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Campbell made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Ms. Dick. Motion carried.

### **AGENCY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:**

Ms. Tetreault gave a power point presentation on the activity and services of her organization, Thresholds. Thresholds mission statement: "Thresholds assists and inspires people with severe mental illnesses to reclaim their lives by providing the support, skills, and the respectful encouragement that they need to achieve hopeful and successful futures." She stated they currently have 130 members they serve. They provide a recovery oriented program, where the member takes an ever increasing responsibility for their own needs. The members are given skills based training instead of mere care taking. Core services include counseling, skills training, education tutoring, adult basic education, GED preparation, social opportunities, referrals to other providers as needed, act as representative payee, substance abuse counseling and community-based support (case management).

Thresholds programs include their Center for Recovery (which is moving into downtown Kankakee), a Community Support Team, Supported Employment and a Residential Program using two group homes and one supported apartment site. Ms. Tetreault also distributed a handout highlighting the eligibility for their programs, membership, program goals and the services offered.

Ms. Tetreault then addressed transportation concerns. Virtually all of their members are below poverty, and as such have no cars. They depend on public transportation. Members use public transportation and ADA bus for rides to work, school, medical visits, shopping and recreation/social outings.

Thresholds currently provides transportation to programming, doctor visits and shopping as needed. They have a contract with Show Bus. Their Center for Recovery is moving into Kankakee in May, where most members will ride the fixed route service. Some of their members have identified a need where there is a gap in the bus service, on the Sunday night shift, when they need to go to work. (The River Valley METRO bus service is day shift only on Sunday.)

Mr. Lammey then presented on Veterans' transportation issues. The Veteran's Home cannot take non-residents on their bus with their residents to Hines, even when there are empty seats. He stated that the County Board Chairman and the Chairman of the Veteran's Assistance Commission have met in the past week, but he has not had a report back yet.

Economic Stimulus Issues were presented by Mr. Lammey. He explained the different funding sources for transit, urban and rural, and what was being applied for under each. He explained the urban, rural and State funding for projects for highway improvements and what projects were proposed for these funds.

Mr. Hoffman explained the suggested BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) to take people from the south side of Kankakee all the way to the Metra train, with the possibility of bus only lanes and traffic signal pre-emption. Mr. Campbell asked about any public transportation going to Joliet, the closest city to Kankakee. There is none at this time, but being discussed for southern Will County is an east to west travel plan.

Rural Human Services Transportation Plan Issues were presented by Mr. Lammey. The reorganization at the Region 6 HSTP is progressing well. Ms. Wiley pointed out the need for this County Transportation Committee to meet and present its activities, needs, concerns and successes to be shared at the Region 6 HSTP.

The Region 6 HSTP is reorganizing so that a County Transportation Committee in each county will perform in a similar way to ours, feeding information up to the Regional meeting, and receiving information back from the Region, with representatives from each county travelling to Pontiac for the Region 6 meeting.

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, who has not been paid since October or November. The State is waiting for Governor Quinn to decide what he wants to do about this program that had been initiated by the former governor, but without getting funding authorization from the legislature. Ms. Schaafsma stated they are waiting for reimbursement for three or four months from State Grant Programs for medical screening.

## **DISABILITY/AGING/TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:**

Ms. Schoolman presented on Social Service provider issues. There has been no change in this area. There is a need for taxi service with wheelchair accessibility. Chairman Wiley recommended she contact Value Transportation for wheelchair services. Mr. Lammey also suggested the ADA service from River Valley METRO as another option.

Ms. Schaafsma presented on Medical Service provider issues. She acknowledged METRO as a blessing for the past seven years in providing transportation to clients of the Health Department. Client transportation from rural Pembroke Township remains a challenge. Chairman Wiley pointed out that circuit breaker recipients can still ride the fixed route system free. Chairman Wiley also passed on a comment from Catholic Charities that they have clients needing to get to the medical facilities in Bourbonnais. It was pointed out that there already is a bus stop at those facilities.

Mr. Lammey stated he had already covered Government Agency matters.

## **PROGRAM STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS:**

Ms. Dick reported on Show Bus. The deviated fixed route service to Momence has been steadily increasing ridership since it started. It can go off the route to pick up those who cannot get to the bus stop easily. It has been picking up people at a nursing home in Momence. She was asked about service from Pembroke to Kankakee. Show Bus does provide this service. There may be a need to provide more rides that would originate and end in Pembroke Township. Chairman Wiley asked about bus service from Momence to Manteno, for the Manteno dialysis center. Ms. Dick stated that may be available.

Chairman Wiley then asked for an update from Mr. Hoffman for METRO – Urban Transportation Services. Mr. Hoffman stated they had 47,615 trips in February. ADA ridership has been steady in numbers, but more concentrated in the morning and afternoon, leaving down time for the vehicles. Midday and evenings are not operating near capacity. They have one new vehicle in and two new para-transit vehicles on order, expecting to expand their services. The first draft of Governor Quinn’s budget had the correct amount shown for the River Valley METRO Mass Transit District.

Chairman Wiley asked if it would be possible for METRO to send someone to nursing homes to sign up and certify patients for the ADA service. Mr. Hoffman stated that could be done for a number of patients at a time.

Ms. Schoolman asked about a committee for METRO concerning accessibility which a former Option CIL employee had attended. Mr. Hoffman stated he intends to recreate such a committee. Ms. Schoolman expressed a desire to attend the meetings.

Ms. Schoolman then inquired about the bus stop shelters at different locations, specifically that they are not wheelchair accessible. Mr. Hoffman stated that he is addressing those issues with the various municipalities, who installed them.

Ms. Schoolman stated her agency is going to be meeting with the mayors in the near future, and will be addressing the matter with them, also. Mr. Hoffman also stated they have problems with new commercial developments not having good locations for bus service or appropriate walkways from the roadway to the businesses.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE NEWS MEDIA:**

No media present.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Nicholas passed out flyers for the Kankakee Community College Job Fair to be held April 9, from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

It was suggested to ask Mr. Butler to present on Good Shepherd Manor at our next meeting.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE:**

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

- May 26, 2009 – 9:30 A.M. @ METRO Centre
- April 20, 2009 – 10:00 A.M. Region 6 HSTP @ LifeCIL in Pontiac, IL
- General Meeting Schedule – Last Tuesday of every other month at 9:30 A.M.
  - May, July, September, November of 2009
- Meeting Location – METRO Centre

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Wiley announced the adjournment of the meeting at 10:53 A.M.