

Kankakee County Transportation Committee Minutes

May 28, 2013

Members in attendance: Mike Butler, Good Shepherd Manor; Roger Hess, Kankakee County Board Member; Laura Dick, SHOW BUS; Cheryl Lockwood, Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging; and Dorci Schoolman, Options CIL.

Others in attendance: Richard Nolan, McLean County Regional Planning Commission and Co-coordinator Region 6 HSTP; Rob Hoffmann, River Valley METRO Mass Transit District; Pat McCarthy, Illinois Central School Bus; Amy Carmack, Good Shepherd Manor; Michael Dobrow, Community Outreach Coordinator for State Representative Kate Cloonen, 79th District; Mike Lammey and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County Planning Department.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Butler, called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM, and welcomed everyone.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the January 29, 2013 meeting were submitted for approval. Mr. Hess made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lockwood. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF CONSOLIDATED VEHICLE PROCUREMENT GRANT APPLICATION

Ms. Carmack gave a summary presentation on the Grant Application by Good Shepherd Manor. They are requesting two light-duty Paratransit vehicles. They have been notified they will soon receive two busses they had previously been awarded in a grant. These vehicles will be better accessible for their aging population, some of whom now use wheelchairs or walkers, and need to carry oxygen tanks. These vehicles will replace older 12 to 15 passenger vans that are not wheelchair accessible. They presently have 124 resident clients, age 22 to 84. Forty-two clients have been at their facility for the entire 42 years of operation. The new vehicles will be safer for the clients and the staff helping clients into them.

Mr. Hess made a motion to approve the application for a favorable recommendation and to forward the recommendation to Region 6 HSTP Committee. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schoolman. Motion carried.

INTRODUCTION OF MICHAEL DOBROW

Mr. Michael Dobrow introduced himself as the Community Outreach Coordinator for State Representative Kate Cloonen, 79th District. Representative Cloonen has an office in the PNC Bank Building in Kankakee. He forwarded Representative Cloonen's desire to assist in any way she can with our transportation needs. Ms. Carmack reported that Representative Cloonen had sent a letter of support for the Good Shepherd Manor grant request, even though their facility is no longer in the 79th District, to go along with the current District Representative's letter. Mr. Dobrow distributed his business cards to those present.

AGENCY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, INTERAGENCY COORDINATION, AND ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

Ms. Schoolman reported that their office has been invited to River Valley METRO on Friday of this week to review plans for improvements and shelter installations at 344 METRO bus stops.

Ms. Dick reported that the state budget issues continue. Kankakee County has applied for medium duty buses. IDOT has stated that the super medium duty buses will be delivered in October. Ms. Carmack stated they were told their past approved buses will be here in December.

Ms. Dick reported that an IDOT approved specialized mini-van builder has now gone out of business, leaving some grant recipients without warranty or access to parts.

Ms. Dick also reported that Chrysler vans with a wheelchair ramp installed was found to be a "trip hazard" for staff members assisting wheelchair patients onto the van. The ramp was found to be installed in a "skewed orientation", not straight and level. Chrysler was contacted and their reported response was that the ramp was "not designed for ambulatory use." So, if the ramp is not safe for people walking to push the wheelchairs up the ramp, how do clients in wheelchairs get into the van? Ms. Schoolman offered to have people start a letter-writing campaign to Chrysler about the issue. Ms. Dick declined the offer until it can be checked further.

DISABILITY/AGING/TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Ms. Lockwood reported there had been a push for legislation to require the state to pay Medicaid claims in a more timely manner, since they were six to nine months in arrears. Providers have had to take out loans to stay in business. Medicaid payments have now

been paid up through March, thus taking the pressure off the state to pass legislation requiring the payments to be timely.

PROGRAM STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Ms. Dick reported that IDOT has added more requirements for accounting for contract funds and the oversight of such funds, which imposes additional steps of handling the money and further complication of the process. Mr. Lamme reported that the new procedures will require Show Bus to collect funds, turn it over to the County, and then have it returned to Show Bus as a different category of funding.

Due to complaints about the new procedures, the implementation has been pushed back to January 1, 2014, instead of July 1, 2013. There has been no dissemination of procedures or rules for how to do this and hence, no assurance that the methods employed will be acceptable at audit time. The accounting rules for the County are different from the rules for Show Bus. Additionally, costs for an overseer at the County to facilitate the new procedures will draw down from the limited funds to provide service to the County.

Mr. Hoffmann pointed out that most counties do not have someone like Mr. Lamme who is knowledgeable about how transit systems and funding need to be handled. Those counties should have a mentor from IDOT to help them to do it right or to fix the things they unknowingly do wrong.

Ms. Dick agreed that there is a lack of mentoring from IDOT for counties, but disagrees with IDOT mandating new regulations without first getting input from the accountants and auditors to create regulations that are functional.

Mr. Hoffmann stated that State Association should work on getting the problems with the new regulations resolved.

Mr. Hoffmann asked if Kankakee County had received their DOAP contract yet. Mr. Lamme replied that they had not, as the new applications were just being prepared to send in. The County had only recently received the contracts for JARC and New Freedom, programs started July 1, 2012.

QUESTIONS FROM THE MEDIA

No media present.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Schoolman reported Options CIL will be hosting their annual ADA Celebration on July 30, 2013. They will have a guest speaker, Bill Bogdan, Disability Liason, from the Office of the Illinois Secretary of State, discussing the new laws pertaining to parking for the disabled.

MEETING SCHEDULE

June 3, 2013 at 10:00 AM (Region 6 HSTP meeting) at the historic Courthouse in Pontiac, IL

July 30, 2013 at 9:30 AM (County Transportation Committee) at METRO Centre

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Hess and seconded by Ms. Schoolman. Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 AM.