

# **KANKAKEE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**May 31, 2011**

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Committee Members: Dorci Schoolman, Chairman, Options CIL; Mike Butler, Vice-Chairman, Good Shepherd Manor; Laura Dick, SHOW BUS; and Roger Hess, Kankakee County Board Member.

Others Present: Cheryl Lockwood, Northeast Illinois Area Agency on Aging; Richard Nolan, McLean County Regional Planning Commission; Steve Mitchell, Kankakee County Training Center for the Disabled, Inc.; David Allen, Karen Smietanski and John Ford, Kankakee County Veteran's Assistance Commission; Pat McCarthy, Illinois Central School Bus; Glenn Nixon, Kankakee County Board; Marcie Sheridan, KC-CASA; Rob Hoffmann, River Valley METRO Mass Transit District; Mike Lammey and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County Planning Department.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Schoolman called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Everyone introduced themselves.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Ms. Lockwood presented the fact the State of Illinois has made law Seniors Ride Free, but has failed to provide sufficient documentation to the seniors to verify eligibility to the various transit systems to make it work. It may be months, if ever, before the State provides acceptable ID cards for the program. METRO started charging seniors half-fare on May 23 and has been actively encouraging the State to provide ID cards for those who are eligible for free rides.

Mr. Nixon has met with the property owner at the site of the future VA Clinic, and has received their agreement to place a bus shelter on their property, either near their building or near the street (William Latham, Sr. Drive). The cost of the shelter would be in the range of \$4,000 to \$6,000. There are volunteers who could do much of the labor, and donations may be available for concrete pads for the site. Mr. Nixon asked that METRO consider creating a bus stop on their route either in the parking lot near the building, or along Latham Drive in front of the building.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the March 29, 2011 meeting were submitted for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Ms. Dick. Motion carried.

## **PRESENTATION ON LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

Mr. Lammey and others had attended a training seminar where Federal requirements were discussed concerning entities who receive Federal money are required to provide

translation services at no cost to those with limited English proficiency. Documents must also be translated. There are translation service providers available, such as “Language Line Services”, who can set up a conference telephone call to translate live any of 170 languages. The service can be set up by contract for on-going use, or used sporadically. The law requires qualified translators be used, not a friend brought by the client.

Mr. Nixon stated his Police Department (Bourbonnais) had used this service on a one-time-fee basis when a conversation was difficult with a driver who only spoke Russian. Ms. Schoolman added that there are different classifications of qualifications of sign language interpreters, making it necessary to have the correct qualifications for the type of service involved, such as medical needs or legal issues. It was also brought up that there are computer programs to translate typing, including showing sign-language translation.

## **AGENCY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, INTERAGENCY COORDINATION, AND ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES**

- a. Accessibility Issues: Mr. Hoffmann stated they are working on siting the new bus shelters, including one they had thought was in the Village of Bradley, but is actually in the County’s jurisdiction. Chairman Schoolman stated the upgrade of the Kankakee Oak Street bus shelters looks about 80% right, not being wheelchair accessible. Mr. Hoffmann stated that it was 100% wrong, but that METRO was not the responsible party on it, as it was being done by the City of Kankakee without any input from METRO.

Mr. Hoffmann stated that the City has turned down 8 locations he has presented for possible transfer centers, whereas plans are progressing for transfer centers in Bradley and Manteno. One of the ten new bus shelters will be installed in Manteno with Manteno paying for the installation and the concrete pads. Manteno intends to purchase two additional shelters and install them as well. Mr. Hoffmann reported having the bus stop locations on a GIS layer on the County GIS System. They do not have the ability to show active GIS on their METRO website.

Ms. Lockwood has encouraged cooperation and coordination by the City in working with METRO with the Livable Communities Project, and will continue to do so. Mr. Hoffmann stated the names of Citizen’s Advisory Committee members are available from Michelle Brutlag.

- b. State Budget Issues: Ms. Dick reported the State has approved the annual bump up in funding, and is adding entities to the eligibility list for funding, but those may be cut by the Governor later. Grant monies are still in question. Requests for contract services are increasing from service agencies who can no longer afford to provide their own transportation service.
- c. No other issues presented.

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

- a. Social Service provider comments: Mr. Butler stated he received an e-mail from Mr. Kadlec from IDOT saying the 5310 awards will be coming in June. Ms. Schoolman stated the transportation needs they assist with through Options CIL have been partially met by hiring Blessed Hope Transportation to assist.
- b. Medical Service provider comments: no attendee.
- c. Government Agency comments: The request for a METRO bus stop at the new VA Clinic site was discussed. There is a bus stop ½ block west of the facility on Gettysburg Drive at Latham, but no bus currently goes past the front on Latham Drive. There is no sidewalk along Latham drive from Gettysburg Drive to the facility.

To change a current bus route from Heritage Drive to Latham Drive would mean other facilities would not have the bus in front of their facilities. Having a large bus drive into the parking lot of the facility several times a day would over time destroy the parking lot. There are other risks involved with pulling off the road and back out onto the road from a private parking lot. Also, persons with more serious disabilities who qualify for METRO Plus service could get curb to curb service to the front of the facility, even though there is not a bus route going by the front.

Ms. Schoolman suggested the possibility of a sidewalk being created from the rear of Option CIL on Heritage Drive to the rear of the VA Clinic, allowing access from the bus on Heritage to the VA Clinic or the other direction if the bus route is changed. She asked Mr. Hoffmann to try to find out how many people ride the current route bus to Options CIL, not the METRO Plus riders who would still have that service.

## **PROGRAM STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS**

- a. SHOW BUS: Ms. Dick stated she was asked why the rural bus service picks up people at their homes instead of creating bus stops for them to use. The answer is there are no sidewalks to create a bus stop at in the rural community. The JARC early bus service to Momence for a 5:00 AM shift started May 2, but so far had no riders that early. The people who need the service may have been moved to later shifts or may no longer work there. Catholic Charities provided a translator for visits with the employer's site. It may be beneficial to move the bus to a later schedule. Contact will be made with the employer and with the temp agencies that send workers there before any schedule change. Ridership on the Pembroke Township route is still going up.
- b. River Valley METRO: Mr. Hoffmann stated the issue with the Free Rides For Seniors Program is that the State needs to get ID cards to the seniors who qualify. The program will cost the METRO system about \$74,000 in fares. If the State does not get around to making eligibility ID cards, it may fall onto METRO to do so, adding another expense to their budget. The State has the

names of those eligible on a website, they should be able to print out ID cards from that site.

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

No media present.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

Region 6 HSTP Meeting – June 13, 2011 @ 10:00 AM – LifeCIL in Pontiac, IL  
County Transportation Committee – July 26, 2011 @ 9:30 AM – METRO CENTRE  
Region 6 HSTP Meeting – August 15, 2011 @ 10:00 AM – LifeCIL in Pontiac, IL  
County Transportation Committee – September 27, 2011 @ 9:30 AM – METRO CENTRE

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Schoolman adjourned the meeting at 11:12 AM.