

# Kankakee County Transportation Committee Minutes

July 31, 2012

Members in attendance: Roger Hess, Vice-Chairman, Kankakee County Board Member; Laura Dick, SHOW BUS; Cheryl Lockwood, North East Illinois Area Agency on Aging; Steve Mitchell, Kankakee County Training Center for the Disabled; Michelle Brutlag, River Valley METRO MTD; Bonnie Schaafsma, Kankakee County Health Department.

Others in attendance: Richard Nolan, McLean County Regional Planning Commission and Co-coordinator Region 6 HSTP; Pat McCarthy, Illinois Central School Bus; Dorci Schoolman, Options CIL; Michael Roof, VAC; Laura Sztuba, Kankakee County Health Department; Mike Lammey, Ashley Skimerhorn and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County Planning Department

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chairman Hess called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM, and welcomed everyone.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEE**

Vice-Chairman Hess turned the meeting over to Mr. Lammey for instructions for selection of new Committee Members. The Committee Membership and Officers will assume their positions at the close of this meeting. Committee members are to be nominated from the areas of:

Social Service Providers – up to 2 members

Medical Service Providers - up to 2 members

Government Agencies - up to 2 members

Transportation Providers - up to 2 members

From Social Service Providers, Ms. Schoolman nominated Mr. Mike Butler and Ms. Schoolman, Seconded by Ms. Brutlag.

From Medical Service Providers, Ms. Schaafsma nominated Ms. Schaafsma, seconded by Ms. Lockwood.

From Government Agencies, Ms. Lockwood nominated Ms. Lockwood and Mr. Hess, seconded by Ms. Schaafsma.

From Transportation Providers, Ms. Brutlag nominated Ms. Dick, seconded by Ms. Schaafsma.

A motion was made by Ms. Schaafsma to approve the appointments of the nominated Committee Members, seconded by Ms. Lockwood. Motion carried.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Vice-Chairman Hess opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Ms. Schaafsma nominated Mike Butler, seconded by Ms. Schoolman. There were no other nominations. Mr. Butler was elected.

Vice-Chairman Hess opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Ms. Schaafsma nominated Ms. Schoolman, seconded by Ms. Dick. There were no other nominations. Ms. Schoolman was elected.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the May 29, 2012 meeting were submitted for approval. Ms. Schaafsma made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mitchell. Motion carried.

### **PRESENTATION ON HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE**

Ms. Schaafsma distributed handouts to the attendees and gave a presentation on the Partnership for a Healthy Community. The County Health Department is required to do a community health assessment every five years. The two hospitals are required to do a similar community health assessment every three years. The Health Department, the two hospitals and the United Way joined together to do a combined project. They enlisted expertise from the Illinois Public Health Institute. The research is showing the strengths and weaknesses of the community, identifying five major health / community problems:

- Chronic Disease Risk Factors (Cardiovascular disease, cancer: obesity, tobacco use,)

- Access to Care, or lack of (Transportation needs, information needs, translator needs)

- Mental Health (Closing of some facilities due to loss of funding)

- Education and Unemployment issues

- Violence / Safety / Substance abuse

Discussion followed concerning the present or expected reduction of funding for current programs in these areas.

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

Ms. Schoolman stated that State budget cuts are affecting their organization. The Elgin CIL servicing three counties had to close. They have been told to expect a 4% cut in grant funding, but it could get worse.

Ms. Dick stated the downstate operating assistance funding seems to be holding steady, but Medicaid cuts are as yet unknown. They won't know until after bills are submitted and the payments will be cut. The mental health funding is a nightmare, with patients having to travel much further to get the services they need. Counselors who used to travel to the patients for counseling, now must have the clients all transported to their clinics, and home again. SHOW BUS is working to create a new position just to do case management for at risk children and mental health clients.

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

Mr. Mitchell reported that the pilot program for Managed Care is progressing with problems. The State has assigned the program to Illini Care and Aetna insurance companies, who take 17% of the available funds for operational costs. Ms. Lockwood stated there are a limited number of approved providers under the plan.

Ms. Schoolman stated that Options CIL and SHOW BUS in Iroquois County is starting a program for an attendant to assist clients who need help to get ready to go on the bus. There will be financial assistance for a friend or family member to assist the client, or Options will provide an assistant. The assistant will ride the bus with the client and help them as needed. Mr. Lammey stated Kankakee County has applied for grant funding to do a similar project here. Mr. Nolan stated that IDOT is not saying when the last rounds of grants will be approved. IDOT has had an upheaval due to retirements of people wanting to lock in their benefits and retirement packages, before the State makes changes.

Ms. Lockwood reported the Cares RX program has ended, leaving seniors to face greatly increased prescription costs. Changes to the Circuit Breaker program are also affecting the seniors. The State laid off Circuit Breaker staff, causing further delays in the processing of paperwork.

Mr. Roof reported that, starting tomorrow, the VAC will be going to the County Detention Center to meet with inmates who are Kankakee County residents and veterans of periods of conflict. If they are eligible for benefits they are not receiving, they will be helped with the application process. Veterans may be eligible for disability benefits, medical assistance and housing assistance. The intent is to lessen recidivism by eliminating the need to commit crime.

## **PROGRAM STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS**

Ms. Dick reported that SHOW BUS ridership continues to grow. One route now has to allow standing riders. No new busses have come through the applied for grants. SHOW BUS has been buying used busses.

Ms. Brutlag reported River Valley METRO ridership is also growing, with 912,000 riders in the fiscal year just ended.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE MEDIA**

No media present.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Lammey will be attending the Illinois Public Transit Association Conference September 5-7, 2012 in Champaign.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

August 20, 2012 Region 6 HSTP meeting in Pontiac, IL at 10 AM.

September 25, 2012 County Transportation Committee at METRO Centre at 9:30 AM.

October 15, 2012 Region 6 HSTP meeting Good Shepherd Manor, Momence, IL at 10 AM.

November 27, 2012 County Transportation Committee at METRO Centre at 9:30 AM.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Ms. Schaafsma. Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 AM.