

# KANKAKEE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

**November 30, 2010**

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Members: Dorci Schoolman, Chairman, Options CIL; Laura Dick, SHOW BUS; Michelle Brutlag, River Valley METRO Mass Transit District.

Others Present: Cheryl Lockwood, Northeast Illinois Area Agency on Aging; Richard Nolan, McLean County Regional Planning Commission; Jeanette Tetreault, Thresholds; Amanda Foltz, Catholic Charities; Mike Lammey and Lindsey Harper, Kankakee County Planning Department.

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Schoolman called the meeting to order at 9:40 AM with no quorum present.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

There were no public comment forms filed.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes from the September 7, 2010 meeting were left unapproved due to lack of a quorum.

## **PRESENTATION FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES:**

Ms. Foltz presented an overview of the Catholic Charities organization, outlined in a brochure that she handed out. Catholic Charities, located in Kankakee at 270 N. Schuyler Avenue, offers numerous resources, including children's services, counseling services, senior programs, and community services. Ms. Lockwood asked about the qualifying guidelines for the Community Care Program. Ms. Foltz established that one must be 60 years of age or older and meet certain financial guidelines; a single person must have assets less than \$17,000, and a married couple must have assets less than \$35,000. Chairman Schoolman noted that the Elder Abuse and Neglect programs allow anonymous calls.

Following the overview of the organization, Ms. Foltz discussed some of the transportation issues facing Catholic Charities and their clients. Ms. Foltz identified four transportation concerns of the organization.

- 1) Catholic Charities in Kankakee County has seen an increase in Spanish-speaking bus clients. There is a need for bilingual signage and bus schedules printed in Spanish.
- 2) There is a need for expanded rural transit to Pembroke Township and other outlying areas. Ms. Foltz commented that there have been reports of the elderly being charged relatively large amounts of money for rides to

- Kankakee. Ms. Dick has also received reports of such abuse. Mr. Lammey brought up the fact that SHOW BUS regularly services Pembroke Township.
- 3) Senior citizens are having difficulties finding transportation to and from doctors' appointments.
  - 4) Bus stops are not friendly to seniors.

Ms. Foltz also commented that METRO employees and customers are allowed to use the restroom facilities at Catholic Charities.

Ms. Dick gave a brief clarification of the SHOW BUS system. SHOW BUS is reservation based, and reservations should be made 24 hours in advance. SHOW BUS offers door to door service. Ms. Dick mentioned that there are currently three, fourteen-passenger buses that service Pembroke Township; however they fill up quickly. The road conditions are too poor for larger buses.

Ms. Brutlag and Ms. Dick discussed going to Catholic Charities to speak about METRO and SHOW BUS services. Ms. Foltz reported that the organization is looking for people to come speak to them.

Chairman Schoolman mentioned that the County Transportation Committee is not well known, and it would be worthwhile to contact other organizations to get them involved in the committee. Organizations mentioned include KCTC; Jackie Haas, CEO at the Helen Wheeler Center for Community Mental Health; Nancy Kimpton at Prairie State Legal Services; Riverside Hospital; the Provena Intergenerational Center; and Larry Garcia at the Kankakee County Hispanic Partnership.

#### **HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN (HSTP) ISSUES:**

- a. Ms. Brutlag reported that the HSTP is in draft form, and Mr. Hoffman is currently working on it. It is now online for comment. The plan is to approve the HSTP and have it available for those who wish to apply for JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute) and New Freedom funding.
- b. Ms. Brutlag gave an update on the Citizens Advisory Committee, stating that there is a need for more applicants. METRO will begin phone interviews for the current applicants in December or early January. METRO is looking for 5-7 committee members.

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

- a. Accessibility Issues: Chairman Schoolman reported that her client, who needed transportation from Bourbonnais to the Rehabilitation Institute in Chicago, decided to hire Blessed Hope Transportation using workers' compensation funding. However, there may still be a need for similar services for those who cannot afford to hire private transportation. Ms. Lockwood reported that Southlawn in Monee has closed, as of November 5, 2010, and her agency is currently searching for a new transit provider. Ms. Brutlag informed the committee that three METRO stops in the City of Kankakee have received funding for improving accessibility. These stops are located on Jeffrey Street in front of the high school, Chestnut Street and Schuyler

Avenue, and near the Kankakee Community Resource Center. There is a possibility that a fourth stop may receive funding. Ms. Brutlag also discussed the ten new bus stop shelters that will be arriving soon. The locations for eight of these shelters have yet to be determined; however, it is known that one shelter will be placed on Court Street in front of the library, and another will most likely be located in Manteno near the Family Video. These ten shelters will be advertising shelters that require hardwiring and a location suitable for advertising.

- b. State Budget Issues: Ms. Dick reported that SHOW BUS is currently waiting on the approval of two JARC grants, three New Freedom grants, two State Capital grants, and four Intercity grants. Mr. Lammey noted that the operating costs of two JARC grants and two New Freedom grants have been approved; however there is currently no vehicle available to provide the service. Ms. Dick stated that service will begin on January 1, 2011 regardless of approval of the contracts. SHOW BUS is currently looking into used buses. Ms. Dick noted that payments from the downstate operating fund will likely run late the entire fiscal year.

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

- a. Social Service provider comments: Ms. Lockwood stated that providers are waiting for funding and are currently relying on donations and fundraisers. The State of Illinois recommends that service providers apply for loans to cover expenses, but it is currently difficult to get approved for a loan.
- b. Medical Service provider comments: no attendee.
- c. Government Agency comments: Mr. Lammey reported that the Hines Veterans' Hospital is putting seven vans into circulation to take patients to Hines from Kankakee. Hines is also investigating four sites for a local clinic.

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

- a. Ms. Dick reported that SHOW BUS has added service to Sun River Terrace on its Momence route, and it has been very popular with thirty or more riders a day. SHOW BUS has also added an extra loop from the Hopkins Park Town Hall to Momence, and it is a work-based route. Ms. Dick noted that SHOW BUS intends to add an additional loop to St. Anne, but there is currently no stop in the village.
- b. Ms. Brutlag reported that as of November 1, 2010, METRO is offering a 20-Ride Pass for \$20. The pass does not expire and can be purchased anywhere that sells monthly passes. At the last METRO Board Meeting, the Board approved extending New Years Eve service to 2:00AM, and after 8:00PM, rides will be free. METRO is currently finalizing the details on a "safe spot" program with the Kankakee County Soldiers. Ms. Brutlag has been speaking at school assemblies promoting the program where anyone can use the bus as a "safe spot." METRO intends to inform all local police chiefs of the program at a January meeting. Chairman Schoolman suggested that METRO partner with Harbor House and KC Casa, as they would be interested in the program.

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

No media present.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Ms. Tetreault noted that Transitions has moved to a new location in Kankakee, and it is now more accessible to members. Mr. Nolan mentioned that there is a need for coordination among counties to communicate with the VA. Ms. Lockwood stated that the Kankakee Livable Communities Task Force is concerned with bus stop accessibility and requested a bus stop completion "report card." Mr. Lammey stated that there will need to be a replacement for Mr. Scholl.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE:**

The tentative 2011 County Transportation Committee meeting schedule is located on the November 30, 2010 agenda. Mr. Lammey stated that there is a Region 6 HSTP meeting on Monday, December 6, 2010 at 10 AM. Chairman Schoolman stated that everyone should attend one of the Region 6 meetings in Pontiac to obtain an understanding of how the entire process fits together.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Schoolman adjourned the meeting at 11:00AM.