

Southwest Colorado Transit Coordinating Council
Meeting Summary
Friday, February 25, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Conference Room, Region 9 EDD, Durango and via phone conference

Attendees:

Region 9 EDD: Bryan James, Christina Knoell, Nita Purkat, Peter Tregillus, Conor Wakeman.

Via phone conference: Jason Armstrong, Betty Bewley, John Egan, Rick Evans, Mary Holaday, Rebecca Levy, Laura Lewis Marchino, Martha Mason, Musetta Wollenweber.

I. WELCOME/BACKGROUND

Conor Wakeman welcomed the group and gave guidelines for how the meeting would run with more than half the people participating over the phone.

II. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

III. INTRODUCTIONS

Self-introductions were made. Members identified their organizations and provided an update on their activities.

Conor—Worked on short-term priorities from November meeting, and coordinated and provided technical assistance on two grant applications, both which were covered later in the meeting.

Martha—Participated in the Easter Seals grant application. Her organization, the Southwest Center for Independence, still has vouchers for transportation for people with low vision.

Mary—Manages public transportation in Montezuma County through their Senior Center. They are interested in ways to coordinate medical trips to Durango.

Jason—Is the Adult Services Director for Community Connections, which works in Archuleta, La Plata and Montezuma counties. His office provides case management and direct services for adults, both residential and community-based. He said finding accessible transportation is problematic, and they are looking for resources for Medicaid trips. They have a van that is used for their day program in Durango, and they share a van in Cortez.

John—Reported Archuleta County received Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding, with which they will increase bus service up to 12 hours per day, and FASTER funding for a new bus. They will be using a CDOT-fund consultant, Peter Schauer, who will come mid-March for a week, to assess their program.

Nita—Runs medical and senior transportation from Dove Creek to Cortez and Durango. They are waiting for a contract from CDOT for administration and operating funds to start offering public transportation. She assisted with the Easter Seals grant application. As a result of the last

meeting, she has received phone calls from out of the area about how to provide Medicaid transportation.

Peter—Is in hiring mode for drivers and dispatch because Road Runner is expanding its demand-response hours to weekends and evenings. They are considering a fixed route in Ignacio during lunch hours. They are trying to build a bus barn using FASTER funds. He is part of the Colorado FTA Section 5309 coalition going to Washington, D.C. in March. He knows of an accessible van available from CDOT, if anyone is interested.

IV. REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 17th MEETING

Conor provided an overview of the last meeting. The action items to address for this meeting included: testing the Google Group, filling out 211 forms, identifying training opportunities, vanpool outreach, have a meeting of the Mobility Management Committee, and research grant opportunities. All of these items were addressed later in the agenda.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Information/Resource Sharing

i. *Google Groups*—Conor discussed the lack of usage of the Google Group. Information and documents concerning LCC administration, from trainings and conferences, and from previous LCC meetings have been uploaded to the site and are available for members to download. Conor requested direction as to whether the group would like to continue using the site. Comments included:

- Peter said using the site is a matter of habit. He is not yet used to checking the Google Group regularly.
- **Conor will send out regular reminders to use the Google Group, what is posted, and instructions for how to use the site.**

ii. *211—Agency forms and services form*

Conor has not received any 211 forms from LCC members. He has electronic and hard copies available. 211 could be a great resource for LCC members because it provides program and agency information over the phone. In addition, these forms will provide program and agency information to the Southwest Connect Portal, an online resource tied to the La Plata County Youth and Master Family Plan. They are trying to collect information about public, private and non-profit organizations that provide human, social, educational, and public services in the five-county area. Having LCC member information on their site would provide another avenue for marketing. Comments included:

- Rick said these programs sound like great tools and they would tie into the marketing piece of the Mobility Manager project. Before 211 or SWConnect can be useful, they need to be marketed.
- John said the programs can be advertised with a poster or sign in transit centers, on buses and in vans. The LCC itself should wait to market until the organization has an official representative.
- John offered to participate in a marketing committee, if other were interested.
- Christina said she has 211 magnets, pens and other marketing tools LCC members could distribute and put in senior centers. She will bring them to the next meeting.

iii. Driver and other trainings—Conor has not heard back from Kent Harris regarding what Durango could offer in terms of trainings, and the LCC members requested he call Kent and ask him to make a presentation about trainings at the next LCC meeting. Conor will emphasize the demand for trainings among LCC members.

- Nita said she called Kent and Roy Peterson about trainings, and they said they did not have any scheduled in the near future. She usually pays \$25-50 per person per training, depending on the program.
- Conor will also contact the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) for information about resources to subsidize trainings and the mechanism to schedule trainings.
- Peter said CASTA manages Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) funds for trainings. Peter said he would talk to Elena Wilken of CASTA and Amber of Durango Transit when he goes to Washington, D.C. with them in March.

iv. Vanpool—Conor said he had not had much time to work on the vanpool project. He conducted an initial outreach effort among employers but did not get much response. He provided the group with a list of employers in the region and requested feedback on what employers should be approached about developing a vanpool program for their employees.

- John said there is a private party in Archuleta County interested in forming a private organization to address transportation issues, in particular between Pagosa Springs and Durango. He has not talked to this group about a vanpool program.
- Rick said vanpool programs are eligible for 5311 program funding, but they may have to be open to the general public. Vanpool programs are exempt from ADA requirements, and they can be run by a private company or a public agency.
- Peter said operational costs funded with 5311 monies require 50% match.
- Rick said generally riders pay operational costs, while the agency running the vanpool program pays for the vans upfront. Even with relatively low ridership, vanpool programs can be feasible. It is a good precursor to a fixed route.
- Rick said vanpool programs are in the LCC's scope, but it may not be a priority.
- Musetta said getting this program running will take time and the group should focus on other things. A committee could explore the details of getting it going.
- Laura said the Mobility Manager Committee could take this on.
- John said he has 3-5 calls a week from people about transit to Durango, and not just medical. There seems to be some demand but he can't accommodate it.
- **John, Musetta, Rick and Conor will meet to discuss a vanpool program for Pagosa Springs to Durango.**

B. Mobility Manager Committee

i. Review of meeting summary—Christina reviewed the summary of the Mobility Manager Committee meeting held January 14th. They discussed the LCC's long-term priorities, mobility management, job descriptions of other mobility managers, potential funding sources for the position, and how the LCC would benefit from a Mobility Manager. They needed more information about mobility management before they could make a recommendation to the LCC, but they were interested in the position and believe the LCC could benefit from having a Mobility Manager.

ii. Mobility Management Discussion—Conor gave a brief presentation on mobility management and what a Mobility Manager for the LCC might look like. His presentation addressed what mobility management is, the benefits of mobility management, the functions of a mobility management program, what the typical Mobility Manager does, what a Mobility Manager for our LCC would look like, and where people can find more information. In particular, the group discussed the potential activities for the Mobility Manager, which are included below:

- Produce outreach and educational information about transportation options;
- Advocate for the LCC and transit providers at the regional and state levels
- Research, write, and administer grants
- Manage regional and local transit services coordination
- Promote transportation options to local businesses and communities; and,
- Facilitate regional transit planning efforts.

Conor's notes for his presentation are attached to the email that distributed this meeting summary to the group. Comments from the group included:

- The group discussed the potential activities and job description for the LCC Mobility Manager. Generally, the group thought the list should be cut down for a single position.
- Rick said Mobility Manager job descriptions can be too broad for a single person.
- Laura said the two outreach activities from our list could be combined.
- Peter said some parts of the potential activities sound like direct services because the position includes system and program work. When having the Mobility Manager deal with transit users, the LCC should consider regional versus local activities and figure out how much providers should do to assist the Mobility Manager.
- Peter said the LCC needs stories about how mobility management systems work to optimize our use of the position.
- Laura said education is key, and this position should help make the LCC a mini-resource for agencies looking for technical assistance and for transit users about transit options.
- John said asking one person to do most of these activities would be too much and suggested having a mobility management office or program with at least two people.
- Laura said the group should look at having one person to start and think about growing if the first year is a success and the demand is there.
- Rick said transportation planning would end up taking too much of the position and suggested taking that off the list of activities. He also suggested taking out grant writing and having the position focus on outreach, education, coordination and facilitation.
- Laura said she felt grants were the first priority because LCC agencies need assistance to enhance capacity and make progress on regional coordination efforts. As long as the projects grants are written for follow the recommendations of the Southwest Colorado Regional Transit Feasibility Study and/or assist regional efforts directly or indirectly, grant writing should be among the Mobility Manager's duties.
- John said the position should not be overgrown from the start and the LCC should prioritize projects for the first six months to one year, and then look at priorities for the second year. The LCC has to have clear expectations for the position.
- Peter said the LCC needs to help expand providers' system capacity while contributing match for the Mobility Manager position. The LCC needs to identify a funding base, and

advocate for continued funding at the county level. Even with great ideas, budget cuts may affect agencies' ability to provide service and participate in the LCC.

- Peter added the Mobility Manager and providers should make sure elected officials know about transit efforts and buy in to public transit, something that is tough right now.
- Rick said the Mobility Manager could keep in touch with providers and keep track of efforts to develop political will regionally and locally. Providers should be busy operating their transit agencies.
- Musetta said the LCC should invite elected and budget officials to a meeting to let know about the LCC and agency plans for coordination and expansion.

John Egan made a motion to support an application to CDOT for 5310 funding for a Mobility Manager, pending successful requisition of necessary matching funds and the SWCCOG, or another agency, agreeing to act as fiscal agent for the grant. Christina Knoell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Laura said she will give the SWCCOG an update about the LCC's intentions and a draft job description for the position. She will distribute the job description to the Mobility Manager Committee for review. John said to include a Scope of Work with the job description.

iii. Position and Funding Options—CDOT distributes 5310 funding for Mobility Managers on two-year cycles. The applications will not be ready until April. The application would likely include a request for about \$40K for the position, which Region 9/SWCCOG would administer. Laura said match for the CDOT grant could come from the National Center on Senior Transit grant the AAA has put in. Laura said she spoke with Amber at Durango T about their intentions to also apply for Mobility Manager funding. If they pursue it, Durango T would have a Mobility Manager accomplish different objectives than the LCC.

iv. Fiscal Agency—Laura will approach the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments about acting as fiscal agent for the LCC 5310 application. Laura said the upside of having the SWCCOG as fiscal agent is it would signal to the communities and other officials that local governments in the area support public transportation.

D. Advocacy

There was no report.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Information on Colorado transit authorities and coordinating councils

Rick was hired by CDOT to provide technical assistance to the state's LCCs. CDOT funded 11 LCC last year, and most are currently in the same situation as ours. Rick said page 3 of his report, which was included with the meeting materials, includes his general observations as of late last year.

b. Long-term Priorities Discussion

This item was moved to the agenda for the next meeting.

c. Grants Update

i. NCST Grant—Bryan reported the Area Agency on Aging applied on behalf of the LCC for a National Center on Senior Transit Small Grant to fund trainings for LCC members. The scope

for spending grant funds is pretty broad, and could be used for driver trainings, training for the Mobility Manager, and funding or policy trainings. The award of the grant has been postponed, but Christina hopes to hear back soon.

ii. Easter Seals Project Action—Martha reported several LCC members collaborated on an application for an Easter Seals Project Action grant, which would help form a coalition to address accessible transportation for people with disabilities. There is no funding attached. Easter Seals facilitates a two-day planning session and provides technical assistance for a year. The Planning Committee for the grant includes Nita, Conor and Mary Kay Taylor. Martha and Jason are also interested in participating in such a coalition. Easter Seals will announce the awards mid-March.

iii. RBEG Grant—Conor said the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RGE) is a USDA program to provide technical assistance to rural transportation providers. There are only two awards nationally. Peter said the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) applies for this funding to provide technical assistance to transit agencies across the country. He will send the CTAA application information to Conor.

d. Rideshare—Conor said Region 9 used to run a Rideshare site, but they no longer have the staff to maintain it. The group suggested he contact Terry Woodward about partnering with SWConnect to keep the site running.

e. Next Steps—Martha said the Southwest Center for Independence has a need for transit from Durango to Mancos for doctor's visits to Mancos Valley Health Center. The LCC should put transit from Durango to Mancos on the list of priorities.

e. Other—Betty said the LCC needs to make sure La Plata County Senior Center is included in these efforts. La Plata County Social Services support transit to clinics for their clients and make use of Medicaid funding to do so. They currently pay Durango Transportation to do this, and they would like to have more options available.

VII. NEXT MEETING

The group agreed to schedule the next meeting for the last two weeks of April. Conor will send out a Doodle poll to see when everyone is available.

The meeting adjourned at 12:08pm.

Minutes submitted by Conor Wakeman

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