



Town of Sudbury

<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Thursday, January 10, 2019

2:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room, Sudbury Police Station, 75 Hudson Road

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab, Susan Iuliano, Alice Sapienza, Beth Suedmeyer

Advisory Group Members Present: Deb Galloway, Scott Nix

Absent: Daniel Nason

Guest: Aniko Laszlo, Director of Coordinated Mobility/System-Wide Accessibility at MassDOT/MBTA

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as acting chair convened the meeting at 2:40 PM.

Selection of Clerk to take minutes

Bethany Hadvab volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee provided brief feedback on notes. Iuliano will make changes suggested. Committee moved to unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2018 meeting pending the suggested edits.

Review Action Items From 12/12/18 meeting

- Carty/Suedmeyer: Upload pertinent documents to website: ONGOING (**Action Item**)
- Sapienza: Send electronic copy of Sudbury commuter data from 495 Partnership for posting. COMPLETE. **Action Item:** Carty will check on posting.
- Galloway: Contact director of Weston Senior Center about their "Ride-Hailing 101" program. COMPLETE
- Suedmeyer and Carty to meet with Quarry North developers to discuss shuttle options. ONGOING
- Iuliano to contact a resource on the Emerson Board for input and direction ONGOING
- Sapienza and Carty to draft a proposal to improve access to medical transportation to be considered by the Committee at a future meeting ONGOING
- Suedmeyer will contact Aniko Laszlo to schedule her attendance at an upcoming meeting. COMPLETE

Ride Sharing Progress in Surrounding Communities:

- Galloway reached out to Weston COA regarding their experiences with ride-sharing. They are looking into a ride-sharing app called Circulation and reported that their board wants to do more research into Uber and Lyft. The COA is looking into obtaining ride sharing discount code, but

haven't been able to secure this yet. Galloway further reported that Newton just did an RFP to work with ride hailing service.

- Sapienza noted that Carlisle is using a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) grant of \$5000 to partially subsidize rides from Uber and Lyft.
- Chief Nix stated that Tewksbury Chief of Police reportedly got a grant for \$30,000 to assist with health related transportation from a program called Uber Health, focusing primarily on providing transportation to substance abuse services, which is a particular need for those who have lost their licenses. Chief Nix will confirm if the grant was from Lowell hospital as he believes it may have been.

Other Updates:

- Carty reminded team about Hadvab's email regarding the MassDOT 4/9-10 Transportation conference by Amherst Engineering.
- Carty reminded team about the email he sent regarding the Boston regional MPO survey to help determine the direction of that committee
- Carty reported that the committee should write an annual report that is due on 1/25. Carty and Suedmeyer agreed to complete this.
- Carty reported that Sudbury is about to embark on creation of a new master plan. A steering committee has been formed. Carty is on this committee and meeting start next Friday. The committee website should be up and running with information and documents by next week. The goal is for the master plan to be developed over the next 18 months.
- Members reported that MassDOT sent thank you notes to committee members for the letters written for MWRTA transportation grant.
- Suedmeyer shared copies of data from 495/Metrowest On the Go, identifying where people commute for work. This will be uploaded to website.

Meeting with Laszlo Laszlo, Director of Coordinated Mobility/System-Wide Accessibility at MassDOT/MBTA

- Laszlo introduced herself, stating that she met Suedmeyer through CTC and Sapienza has worked with her in the past. She reported having "tremendous experience" working with and networking with communities, and accessing transportation resources, and attended to share her expertise with the committee.
- Laszlo reported that she is working closely with transportation networks across the state. She noted that under Governor Patrick, a committee examine paratransit and transportation status across the state and developed a list with 60 recommendations in regards to the T and regional transit authorities. Many gaps were identified, especially the further away a community is from Boston. There was particular concerns for people with disabilities. One recommendation was a statewide council including groups from the medical community, veteran services and others who could help to identify unmet needs. A second recommendation was to develop regional coordinating councils of transportation to spearhead identifying unmet needs and working together on finding solutions. It was apparent that these councils would need support from the state. Therefore statewide mobility manager position was developed to be an information and support manager for regional transportation councils. Part of this role was to assist in finding state and federal resources.
- Laszlo is now working for MBTA and is focused on primarily on the greater Boston area but still has many contacts across the state, and therefore she can be a resource to this committee. She has significant collaboration and resource sharing with MAPC, MASSDOT and MTA.

- Laszlo reported many lessons learned from ride-sharing and other transportation efforts across the state:
 - It is a sector changes quickly, noting that while TNCs are popular now, that can easily change.
 - Ride sharing includes: micromobility (bikes, scooters, ebikes), TNCs (ride hailing), and Microtransit
 - There are many pros and cons to working with taxi companies to meet demands/needs
 - Must consider RTA and COA resources and how they can be weaved into a network of mobility options.
 - Funding sources comes in silos, such as funding for seniors or people with disabilities.
 - When social services agencies contract with TNCs, it's critical to collect the data from TNCs because it is a record of unmet needs to an extent. Often times TNCs are protective of this data and won't share it unless written into the contract.
 - Marketing a TNC subsidy service is critical and needs to be factored into model from day one to ensure success of the program.

- Laszlo discussed the Ride Hailing Partnership Forum on 9/12/18 and handout out documentation from the meeting, illustrating various transportation models, partnerships and cost figures. A colleague of Laszlo's is working to organize this data into a table format.
- Laszlo Noted Massridematch.org, a website to search for available transportation in the area based on specific transportation needs. When the website does not have any matches, it tracks the current unmet needs. The organizers of the site are working now on putting all current transportation resources into this website. Chief Nix inquired if residents should be encouraged to use this website even if there are not any matches, because it will help to document unmet needs. Laszlo reported that needs are already well documented. Laszlo will provide data on these unmet needs from the website to complement information from the Livable Sudbury Needs Assessment data.
- Sapienza and Laszlo reported that GATRA in the Community Accessing Rides (CAR) pilot had an agreement with Uber and Lyft to have access to ride data.
- Laszlo reviewed the Needham Community Council's (NCC) concierge service for Uber and Lyft for those who need transportation and lack access. She reported that the NCC found that web portal is not as user friendly as the cell phone app. They have had to train staff on using this interface and have also provided this feedback to ride sharing companies. In regards to training individual users on how to access TNC apps on their phones, Apple stores provide 30 minute information sessions on how to use phones and apps. Needham Community Council found that people, especially seniors, are more receptive to learning about ride sharing and other transportation services when in a group of peers.
- Laszlo noted other lesson learned from Needham Community Council. NCC kept documentation of information such as how many people didn't have to break medical appointments due to offering TNC services. Like Sudbury's FISH, the volunteer ride service in Needham was being overtaxed and could not provide all the rides needed. The NCC started with a budget of \$10,000 toward subsidies, and not all of this was used in first year. They then got additional funding through natural partnerships such as local hospitals. Documentation of the impact of these services was helpful in securing grant funding. These natural partnerships helped to bring in the needed subsidies to continue the program. A concierge service model was chosen because people may not have access to credit cards, phones, or computers, and also to enable the NCC to manage subsidies.

- Laszlo noted the taxi pilot RFP. The T has the ride program with accessible vehicles but it lacks on demand convenience, so an agreement was made with Uber and Lyft to provide this service. The cost per ride is much less costly than using the ride, however, it has led to increased use of the service. Lyft and Uber have WAV (wheelchair accessible vehicles). There are 100 or so on the road but not all can fit the largest size wheelchairs. Completion rates for taxi rides was 85% and 95% for Uber and Lyft. The Ride decided to use taxis as well to allow residents without debit or credit cards to use cash to pay for services. Creating cross jurisdiction with taxis is a current obstacle to be addressed. Taxis in Framingham and Natick can currently offer accessible rides. The Ride is providing subsidies of up to \$40.
- Another example of successful transportation collaboration is the Quaboag Connector, whose motto is “Community Transportation for All” and runs between Springfield and Worcester. The website is rideconnector.org. The collaboration is between 2 RTAs that provide no fixed route services. Success may be due in part to a hospital, big box stores and community college in that area. MassDOT pays for the driver. Distances are enormous. 4 COA vans run the services. Some of the towns provided funding. The COA does dispatch. Trips are for everyone, not just seniors or disabilities. Vans run from 630a-7pm and cost \$2 each way. The priority rides go to those traveling for work and education, and medical and shopping trips are based on availability. It took a couple of years to organize this program.
- Sapienza inquired, What don’t we know? Laszlo shared information on funding sources and other supports.
 - She reported that there is a mandated tax on TNCs. 10 cents on each ride goes to state and 10 cents on each ride goes back to city of origin. The taxes are collected by state.
 - She also shared information on the Charting Progress To 2040 grant, which will have \$2M available in 2021. The application process opens later in 2019 and will cover 3 categories: Community transportation, Park and ride infrastructure building and Air quality/mode shift. This is available to Sudbury and pilots for “smallish” money. Sudbury should let Laszlo know if the town is interested in applying, and should provide a few paragraphs describing the proposal. It will be added to a list from which some of the pilots will be selected for funding. This program has limited availability currently and will be open to the general public in 2021.
 - Efficiency and Rationalization grant, Jan 15-Feb 15th, provides up to \$100K for single town project and \$200K for multijurisdictional projects. The MAPC is working on submitting a proposal, based on the multi-town “taxi, bus, and livery” transportation initiative that was awarded Technical Assistance.
 - MassDOT grant opening in May for transportation for seniors and people with disabilities.
 - National AARP has technical assistance for each livability domain including transportation assistance. No money is provided, just assistance is offered between March and Nov.
 - Commission on Healthy Aging came together and one of the subcommittees is transportation. There is a list of suggestions and they are working on operationalizing those suggestion. The governors’ council on healthy aging ties into age-friendly MA and AARP.

Hadvab left @ 4:00; Carty continued to take minutes and will send to Hadvab

Laszlo continued to discuss possible funding options

Discussion of Current Status and Next Steps:

- Group discussion ensued about whether or not we should pursue action with MWRTA or Crosstown Connect. Laszlo suggested both as Sudbury could become the link between the two organizations
- Laszlo inquired about the existing Route 20 shuttle; Galloway stated that demand is high but the challenge is getting people to Route 20 to take advantage of shuttle. Laszlo suggested a 5310 grant application may be an option to expand the service.
- Laszlo suggested that the committee map out geographically who is riding; point of origin, their age, needs, destination, etc. then start out with low hanging fruit. Sapienza stated that we were likely to start with health related trips as our pilot.
- Galloway stated the Route 20 shuttle currently runs two days per week and that it would cost approximately \$6,000/year to add a day. We have the van, we need drivers and money to pay them and cover expenses like fuel.
- A brief discussion ensued regarding longer distance transportation options - example given of a commuter bus into or towards Boston.
- Group then discussed the Metrowest/495 Transportation Management Association (TMA) as well as nuride.com a.k.a. AgileMile. Anika stated this service may be available to Sudbury and it should be looked into.
- Galloway stated that the Livable Sudbury presentation will be held Tuesday February 12th, 6:30pm, at the Goodnow Library.
- Sapienza initiated a conversation about equity and inclusion and its relevance to Transportation initiatives. Galloway stated much more on this topic will be covered at the Feb. 12 Livable Sudbury presentations. Laszlo stated that there are future Governors Council initiatives coming directly related to mobility related issues.
- Suedmeyer took the action item to draft a brief Transportation Committee annual report, Carty and Sapienza to review draft and group will discuss and vote in our next meeting.

Action Items:

- Suedmeyer and Carty to develop committee annual report that is due 1/25
- Committee members will consider attending April 9th and 10th MassDOT Transportation Conference

Upcoming Meeting:

Next meeting set for Thursday January 24th, 9:30AM at the Police Station. Carty to secure room via Nix.

Adjournment

Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 4:36PM.