



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Thursday, February 21, 2019

9:30 AM

Police Department Training Room, 75 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA

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

Advisory Group Members Present: Deb Galloway, Scott Nix

Absent: Charlie Dunn

Also present: Christine Gallery, Senior Vice President Planning and Chief Strategy Officer Emerson Hospital; Kelsey Magnuson, Community Benefits Coordinator Emerson Hospital; Adam Duchesneau, Sudbury Planning Director

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 9:40 AM.

Selection of Clerk to take minutes

Bethany Hadvab volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Tabled until the next meeting due to lack of time.

Discussion

Carty gave an overview of the purpose and development of the committee. Gallery gave information on Emerson's "Community Benefits" which pay for unreimbursed services that help to improve the health needs of the community. This is required to keep nonprofit title. One such project has been the youth behavior survey done through the schools to obtain information on at-risk behaviors. Reported that the most recent health needs assessment, as with assessments in the past, demonstrated the continued need for transportation. Maura Healy has placed an emphasis on social determinants of health, which includes transportation and access to other needed supports and services. Therefore, Emerson is taking a more holistic approach to health and health services. Transportation is now one of these focuses. They are examining current transportation structures and solutions that can be expanded, as well as speaking with stakeholders such as the Sudbury Transportation Committee. Gallery reported that Emerson will not be able to provide the trans-

portation directly, and therefore partnerships within the community are essential for enabling Emerson to help support medical transportation needs.

Sapienza inquired what percentage of Emerson patients come from Sudbury. Gallery stated likely around 10%, noting that it was a significant proportion.

Nix offered the Police Department training room as a place to offer information sessions regarding Emerson and transportation services.

Iuliano inquired about Emerson's involvement with other transportation efforts and other communities. Magnuson attends MAGIC meetings and has been working with Cross Town Connect to determine how they can support a more robust transportation structure for Emerson patients. This is in the very early stages of partnership between Emerson and Cross Town Connect. Magnuson discussed how Cross Town Connect does provide first and last mile service using CoA vans, and the conversation with Cross Town Connect will focus on how to help provide day time services for medical. Sapienza shared that COA vans are limited in their flexibility, given the current lack of COA van regionalization, because the primary focus of these vans is for senior transportation. Sapienza noted that TransAction Associates, the transportation company that also provides dispatch services for Cross Town Connect, could also be a source of transportation resources for an additional cost. Magnuson noted that MAPC was looking into Trans Loc for a transportation pilot. Sapienza clarified that there was a request for information, but that the process had not progressed beyond that point.

Gallery reported that Emerson has funds set aside to help solve some of these transportation concerns. Sapienza inquired about Uber Health effectiveness. Gallery reported that it is limited and just as a last resort for people leaving the ER and using the MGH cancer center. She reports that Emerson's PHO (Physician Hospital Organization) often receives grants to pilot additional service programs. Through a grant from Partners, Lyft is being used, to help a cohort of high need patients with transportation to medical appointments and the pharmacy. Emerson in the past had a Chart Grant to reduce medical costs. This supported this group of high need patients through outreach, case management, multidisciplinary team of supports and follow up to ensure compliance with medical recommendations as well as psychosocial supports.

Carty clarified the committee's current trajectory, noting that the focus on transportation is based on needs assessment and additional data that identified medical transportation as a major and concrete need. Sapienza added that transportation is a significant need for Sudbury's most at risk patients, including seniors, persons with disabilities and individuals who are low income.

Sapienza discussed the potential for an Uber/Lyft pilot and how residents would be chosen to participate based on health, financial and transportation needs. Gallery stated that there is a fear of seniors getting into a car with someone they don't know and this limits the success of the program. Sapienza stated that the TNCs can get a group of consistent drivers and provide additional screening to ensure safety and comfort. Sapienza also noted that TNCs have some access to wheelchair vans and are exploring additional options for this as well, as this is an identified need.

Sapienza provided an overview of the Needs Assessment data in relation to transportation and health needs. She provided a document entitled: Need for Transportation to Health Resources: Sudbury. She emphasized need based on medical conditions and financial need. She emphasized further the lack of on demand transportation other than TNCs or taxi services.

Sapienza inquired if Emerson can assist with any of these needs. Gallery inquired if Sudbury is looking to purchase a vehicle. Carty stated that this is not the case and Sapienza noted that a pilot with a TNC is more along the lines of where Sudbury can start. Sapienza summarized her past conversations with TNCs and their abilities to provide data and transportation through a pilot program. Gallery inquired about next steps. Carty stated that the committee wanted to hear about Emerson's current programming, as the purpose of this meeting. Gallery reports that there is not a formal relationship with either Uber or Lyft and Magnuson reported that she does not know how much data the PHO is collecting from this program. Therefore Emerson is not tied to any one agency or direction and is open to exploration. Carty stated that he would like to build upon Emerson's current structures to ensure that there are no conflicts with current programs. Gallery reported that Uber Health and the PHO programs are still in the very early phases. She reports that these two current programs operate independently and Emerson needs to have an internal discussion to increase communication about these programs. She reports that her team will meet internally and then will have additional information about ideas and next steps for this committee. She stated that the PHO is not part of Emerson, but is an outside independent agency.

Sapienza inquired what percentage of patients using the PHO and Uber Health programs are from Sudbury. Gallery will look into this.

Nix emphasized the concerns about safety and the need for additional screening. Nix stated that if there was a group of screened drivers that the PD and the committee supports, this information and confidence can be expressed to residents in need.

Sapienza noted local taxi companies and their recent loss of business. Discussed incorporating local taxi companies into a transportation plan.

Suedmeyer expressed that relationship with Cross Town Connect is still fairly new, and Sudbury, like Emerson, is still working on determining the services offered and the best way that Cross Town Connect can serve these communities.

Carty noted that the team is leaning toward Uber Health. Suggested that Emerson and Transportation Committee meet together at a TNC presentation. Sapienza has done research on Uber and Lyft prices and suggested sharing the pricing with the taxi services to see if they can meet or beat those prices and would like to join the health transportation efforts. Carty inquired if Uber and Lyft should meet with this committee. Sapienza noted that Uber and Lyft should attend separate meetings. Gallery noted that if they funded a pilot, it would only fund patients going to Emerson hospital or other Emerson facilities. Suedmeyer and Sapienza stated that the pilot program participants would be screened to ensure that this was the case.

Gallery discussed clustering appointments, stating that this could be done with rehab, but would be challenging with individual physicians. Sapienza suggested that communication with the PHO or individual providers could help with clustering. Gallery stated that she is already in communication with the PHO and Magnuson stated that she can bring this information back to the PHO and the team.

Magnuson and Gallery left the meeting.

Next steps were discussed. The plan is for Uber and Lyft to do presentations at separate meetings in the near future. Carty will arrange this. Sapienza noted that focus should be on Uber and Lyft data sharing, safety, driver selection/training, concierge service exploration. Galloway stated that Coolidge could be a concierge center for Coolidge residents. Galloway and Hadvab expressed concern that the other housing complexes likely do not have the capacity to provide this service for their residents at this time.

Sapienza provided a copy of the Brookline Lyft Pilot Program that Hadvab emailed the group early this week.

Reviewed action items from last meeting. Quarry North Shuttle exploration and uploading documents are ongoing. All other tasks were completed. Carty stated that he is continuing to explore incoming taxes from Uber and Lyft and how it is utilized. Sapienza stated that it is only around \$2,000. Carty will follow up with Charlie Dunn about where workers drive from and where there are gaps in employees. Galloway was following up on MWRTA grant, reporting that there is not a concrete decision at this time. Hadvab reported that she spoke with Metrowest Health Foundation. They stated that it would be worthwhile for the Transportation Committee to submit a Responsive Grant concept paper that could result in up to a 1 time grant of up to \$20,000. Sapienza stated that she shared grant information with Galloway and Hadvab that can be used for a concept paper.

Sapienza reported AARP Challenge Grant is due in early April and they provide small grants of about \$7000. She then expressed concerns about the need for someone to help with grant writing. Carty will follow up with Town Manager about the potential for hiring grant writing support.

Gentile expressed that until recently, 50% of Sudbury ambulance calls were served by out of town ambulances. Nix reported that the town added a second ambulance and this has helped with this balance, but there is still the need to access out of town ambulance support at this time. Sapienza reported that Uber/Lyft pilots can reduce ambulance calls by up to 20%.

Sapienza discussed the no-fare e-Cab model of highly vetted drivers which is paid for by businesses and municipalities. They are not set up to do fares. It is a small electric vehicle that does not go above 35 miles per hour. There is an hourly rate and they will only contract in 4 hour intervals because they want to hire full time drivers.

Nix reported an electric charging station at Whole Foods and Nason noted 2 at DPW. Sapienza and Carty discussed bringing the idea of charging station at the housing developments such as Melone.

Next Steps:

-Magnuson and Gallery will obtain information about their current pilots, including success, and data collection. They will also obtain information on Sudbury resident usage of Emerson services. A member of the Transportation Committee will be in contact with Magnuson and Gallery as needed.

-Carty to reach out to Uber and Lyft to set up times for them to attend upcoming Transportation Meetings.

-Consider AARP, MWHF and other grant opportunities.

-Carty to speak with Town Manager to discuss potential for grant writing hire

Next Meeting is March 14th at 9:30am at the PD Training Room

Adjournment

Sapienza moved to adjourn at 10:59a. Iuliano seconded and the committee unanimously agreed.