



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, October 30, 2020

10:00 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Sandy Lasky, Debra Galloway, Alice Sapienza, Doug Frey, Dan Nason

Core Member Absent: Adam Duchesneau

Advisory Members Present: Lisa Kouchakdjian, Ellen Joachim

Advisory Members Absent: Charlie Dunn, Scott Nix, Beth Suedmeyer, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab

Guests: Beth Perry, Linda Faust; Kay Bell (silent observer)

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 10:02 am following a voice roll call of attendees. Dan announced that this was a public meeting and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV for future viewing.

Several members had to leave early (with prior notice): Dan Nason, Lisa, Doug. The quorum was maintained.

Selection of Clerk

Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

CoA and Coolidge Mitigation Fund

Sandy described the process she was leading in terms of allocation of the \$10,000 Coolidge mitigation fund to the CoA by B'nai B'rith. She noted how important transportation is to seniors in the town and that the taxi companies are providing much needed service. Because of the duration of the pandemic, it is likely that that CoA vans (and MWRTA vehicles) will not be available in the short term. Therefore, she is very enthusiastic about putting the fund towards continuation/expansion of our current taxi services. Sandy will prepare a presentation for the next CoA meeting, to support the latter goal and will communicate the conclusion of the board.

MAPC COVID-19 Taxicab, Livery, Hackney Transportation Partnership Grant and Taxi Program a.k.a. the “Go Sudbury! Taxi Rides Program”

Dan shared on his screen detailed data on actual rides and riders (compiled by Alice using the spreadsheet provided by Beth Perry) from the start of service (9.12.20) to October 26. He agreed to send the handouts, including what he prepared on approved applicants and “how did you find out” data, after the meeting.

With regard to actual data, below, there are approximations because the companies’ invoices for actual fees are due at the end of the month. However, it is clear that Sudbury is meeting the grant designations in the following ways:

- Target populations:
 - 90% of riders meet the 50+ age criterion
 - 60% of riders also have some mobility, visual, hearing, or cognitive challenges
 - 60% of riders also qualify as financially vulnerable
 - Currently, fewer than 10% each qualify as veterans and essential workers.

- Target destinations:
 - 50% of trips were to non-COVID-related, non-emergency healthcare trips (medical and social service appointments, prescription pick up)
 - 25% of trips were workforce transportation for essential workers
 - 25% of trips were for grocery or other essential shopping.

In terms of cost, the approximate amounts spent for this period (about 25% of the original 6-month grant duration) represent 25% of the respective total costs (\$15,000 for Tommy’s Taxi, and \$5,000 for JFK WAV service). In other words, our “burn rate” is not of concern at this time.

Other Issues Related to Taxi Service

Rides originating at Nursing Homes remain an open issue. Debra will be in touch with each Taxi Company to provide us with their policies. Transportation was provided to residents of Orchard Hill assisted living.

Members agreed that ride requests for visiting family and friends justifiably fall into the “healthcare” designation. Beth will add “social interaction” to “medical, prescription, social services” categories on the spreadsheet. Linda Faust asked about visiting a family member, and was encouraged to consider this.

Linda also provided feedback on a recent experience she had with a taxi dispatcher, who was rude on the phone and not helpful in terms of alerting the driver coming to pick her up that she needed a personal interaction to know that the taxi was available. While she waited for her ride, someone in the store came up and asked if she knew the taxi was there.

Members discussed the need to alert the company about Linda’s experience and that drivers should know when/if a rider required extra assistance. They also discussed the need for policies and

procedures, as we learn more about the operations of these transportation initiatives. Dan reminded everyone that we are still learning.

The other rider issues that emerged from the data are (1) frequent cancellations (but, within a reasonable timeframe) and (2) high usage. After discussion of cancellations, Debra noted that Ana Cristina could get in touch with the individual cancelling rides and gently remind her that much time is spent on that process by Beth, so reducing the frequency would be helpful. Linda reminded members that chronic illness can result in unpredictable times when a rider would not feel well enough to go on a booked trip. All agreed that such cancellation would not be a problem but the nature of the business.

In terms of the high user, review of service to date did not reveal any red flags. However, the committee will continue to assess service regularly, to ensure conformance to the grant stipulations as well as operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Beth brought up the “waiting fee” that taxi companies levy for additional time a rider needs to arrive at the vehicle (if different from specified pickup times). She now books times accordingly, based on experience to date (i.e., later pickup for MD appointments and/or individuals needing time or assistance to reach vehicle).

In terms of general feedback from riders, Sandy has completed the postcard survey and Debra said these could be mailed out to riders as they apply, as well as being sent electronically to those whose emails are available.

GOSudbury (Uber)

Because of time constraints, this discussion was postponed to a later meeting. Dan (Carty) will meet with the Health Department to ensure that the proper safety protocols are in place as part of our White Boarding process.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of 2 and 16 October were approved with noted edits; Alice moved, Debra seconded, roll call of members indicated unanimous agreement.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be November 6, 2020, at 10:00 AM via the town Zoom service.

Motion to Adjourn

Debra moved to adjourn at 11:11 AM, Sandy seconded; roll call indicated unanimous agreement.