



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, August 20, 2021

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Sandy Lasky, Alice Sapienza, Dan Nason, Doug Frey, Adam Duchesneau

Core Members Absent: Debra Galloway

Advisory Group Present: Carmine Gentile

Advisory Group Absent: Charlie Dunn, Scott Nix, Beth Suedmeyer, Bethany Hadvab

Guests: Ana Cristina Oliveira, Kay Bell, Linda Faust

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 10:32 am. Dan made an announcement that this was a public meeting and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV for future viewing, so there is no expected right to privacy.

Selection of Clerk

Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Summary of Funding Options

Dan C invited Representative Carmine Gentile to review possible transportation funding for Sudbury and the MAGIC area. Carmine began with MA House #3903, a bill amending House #3852 for the purpose of *financing improvements to municipal roads and bridges*. One project might be to purchase and then construct a parking lot on the MBTA land next to Buddy Dog on Route 20, so that people could take a future shuttle to Riverside station. He noted that the focus of the bill is on bricks and mortar improvements and unlikely to be available until next summer for the 2023-2027 grant cycle.

Carmine noted that Item 6921-2112 of the above bill provided funds for design and construction to increase access to commuter rail and mass transport. Again, this would be focused on bricks and mortar projects.

However, he said there are other funding sources for transportation, both capital and personnel. Sandy asked how we might stay abreast of funding options, so that we could apply. Carmine

responded that the Transportation Committee could be in touch with both him and the Town Manager. He also suggested that other grants, such as MassDOT's reallocation of the CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funds to create a program to fund new transit commute options for employees.

Dan C opened the meeting to questions for Carmine. Doug emphasized the need for wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) and said that the TNCs—Uber, Lyft, etc.—do not yet provide accessible services in our region. Carmine responded that he spoke recently with Ed Carr of MWRTA and believed that organization would be the likely provider because they are nonprofit.

Alice mentioned the Carlisle experience, in which that town's CoA worked with the Lowell Regional Transit Authority to win 5339 funding (now 5310) for an MV-1, wheelchair accessible, vehicle. The town then contracted with a 3rd party livery service to operate the MV-1 on behalf of Carlisle, and subsidized rides by 40% to 50%, with the rest coming from voucher purchases by residents. Carmine will address this possibility with Carr and the MWRTA.

Sandy added that we need to determine what we need, both capital and human infrastructure, so that we could take advantage of what Carmine determined as "once in a generation—or once in a lifetime" funding opportunities over the next 2 to 4 years. Carmine also said the funding would be allocated according to priorities (e.g., a sewer running along Route 20 to handle stormwater, a community center in Wayland) and after these supplemental budgets would be rolled out for transportation.

Dan C reminded the group that we would be presenting our story and accomplishments to the Select Board in October, and that such a presentation would be a useful basis for communicating with Carmine and Town Manager about transportation gaps and recommendations.

(Carmine was holding Office Hours and had to leave the meeting around 11 AM. He was warmly thanked for his attendance and input.)

Administrative Updates

- Dan C reiterated that the Transportation Committee and Committee membership were extended by the Select Board. Members need to take the oath at the Town Clerk's office and attest to receipt of Open Meeting Law and other documents. The Committee will be in operation year to year and is not intended to be a permanent committee.
- The next Meeting the Connections meeting will be August 26th at 9 -10:30 AM (Dan C is unable to join this time).
- A likely date for the Select Board presentation is 19 October.
- Transportation Committee email glitches appear to be resolved. Alice is copying Doug on all emails to the committee (he was unable to receive up to now).
- A question posed to Cody Lowe of Uber about rides exceeding 25 miles was answered in terms of Sudbury's unique geofence. Instead of a fixed radius geofence, Sudbury has a town-border geofence.

Go Sudbury! Uber/Taxi Program

Alice had distributed a summary of Uber services up through 18 August and this was shared by Dan with the Committee. She pointed to the increased stability of ride parameters, such as wait time, distance, and cost, allowing more detailed communication to potential riders. Sandy commented on the anomaly of June ridership (225 rides vs. 129 in July) and the resulting low cost of average ride. Alice suggested that there was an increase because the service became better known and attractive and that, as we have now provided more than 500 rides, we can use that denominator for determining expected usage and cost.

Linda Faust noted that she is having some difficulties using Uber, even with a volunteer helping her. Ana Cristina will work with them both after the meeting, to resolve the problem.

Dan C brought up his “heat map” of current Uber rides (pickup and destination), illustrating where there are densities that may be attractive for microtransit and other shuttle options. Sandy agreed that, with the addition of more communities using Uber (e.g., Making the Connections), we will have solid data to bring to transit authorities as well as funding sources.

Alice added the challenges facing towns new to transportation by taxi and TNC and reminded the group that we had spent 3 years planning for our programs. We are the lead by default and also the example and mentor for other town personnel. She expects that the taxi collaborators (Concord, Maynard, Stow) will have rides to report starting in September.

Dan C then shared the accounting report prepared by Adam, showing sources and uses of funds. We are close to expending the first tranche of the MAPC second tax grant and will follow expenditures closely, in case we have to make some adjustments. Dan C believes we are spending about \$3,500/month on taxi services.

He asked if all appeared to be going well, and Ana Cristina, Alice, and Adam replied that things are going smoothly. CTC dispatch, in particular, is a great benefit—they are responsive, flexible, and efficient, providing monthly reports to Sudbury. Other towns likely have no dispatch capability and, thus, are learning “on the job.”

Other Items

- MWRTA Retreat: Dan C asked members to think about what is important to bring up at that meeting. Earlier, four items were identified as important with regard to the upcoming MWRTA Advisory Board retreat:
 - 1) WAV rides (wheelchair accessible vehicles)
 - 2) Route 20 as a focus for expanded transportation options, possibly Microtransit
 - 3) The Transportation Committee would like to share the data and results from our current pilot studies with the MWRTA Board at the retreat (Debra to follow up).
 - 4) How we have worked with Taxi companies to offer transportation, especially for medical appointments.
- Plan for Select Board presentation; because of the limited time between now and 19 October, Dan C suggested that members be responsible for specific tasks (e.g., Doug focusing on access; Adam on finance, Dan C on data analytics).
- Sandy recommended that we all determine what “story” we want to tell the Board, and how should we tell that story.

- Who should be responsible for keeping Carmine and the Town Manager abreast of Sudbury's transportation issues and needs?

Minutes

Alice moved to approve the edited minutes of the August 6 meeting; Doug seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Next Meeting

Because of the Labor Day weekend, the next Transportation Committee meeting will be Friday, September 10, at 10:30 AM via Zoom.

Adjournment

Sandy Lasky moved to adjourn, Dan N seconded and the motion passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 11:38 AM. Dan N informed the group that he would be in a class on Fridays for the next 6 months, so would not be able to join during this time.