



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, 7 January 2022

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Debra Galloway, Adam Duchesneau, Sandy Lasky

Core Members Absent: Dan Nason, Doug Frey

Advisory Group Present:

Advisory Group Absent: Charlie Dunn, Scott Nix, Beth Suedmeyer, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab, Silvia Nersessian, Mary Warzynski

Guests: Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV), Linda Faust (Guest), Kay Bell (Guest), Tanya Castle (Spare Labs), Kevin Chan (Spare Labs)

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, and after confirming a quorum was present, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting and performed a roll call. Dan C announced this was a public meeting, and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV for future viewing.

Selection of Clerk

Dan C volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Dan C reviewed the agenda for the meeting and topics he hoped to cover.

Discussion with representatives from Spare Labs re: their services related to microtransit

Dan C introduced Tanya Castle and Kevin Chan from Spare Labs and noted that he and Adam had exchanged correspondence with Kevin regarding services the company provides. Tanya introduced herself and described Spare as an on-demand transit, Software as a Service (SaaS) provider and that their platform could be used to manage a variety of services like paratransit, microtransit, non-emergency medical, dial-a-ride services, and fixed route. The flexibility of the platform would allow users to get started with one service or multiple and it is a turnkey solution. They also provide apps for riders and drivers similar to Uber and Lyft. She said that their platform could yield 30% to 40% operational savings by increasing efficiencies of vehicles, increasing passengers per vehicle hour and if

needed commingling passengers by bringing in those who ride paratransit service together with regular service, maximizing one's fleet. Further details were provided regarding credit card processing, commuter cards, data collection and analysis, and platform administration. Alice asked if she could send a list of examples and informational brochures. Tanya responded in the affirmative and noted nearby customers including Dean College and Merrimack Valley Transit Authority. Dan C stated that Sudbury was approximately 20,000 people and talked about our current transportation service offerings. Kevin Chan introduced himself and thanked the Committee for the opportunity to come speak. Deb asked about Spare's service model and Tanya described the same. After further discussion Dan thanked Tanya and Kevin for meeting with the Committee.

Update and Discussion – Go Sudbury! Uber and Taxi programs

Dan C inquired of Adam what the current financial situation was with the Go Sudbury! Taxi and Uber programs. Adam noted that we had \$30,000 remaining but noted that the December invoices for Tommie's Taxi were not yet in; he expected them to be approximately \$2,000. Alice asked if the \$30,000 balance was from the recent \$35,000 MeadowWalk mitigation money and Adam said yes. Adam noted that we were spending approximately \$8,500/month.

Update and Discussion – Funding options including but not limited to Sudbury ARPA funds, Annual Town meeting warrant article, various grants (BayPath, Sudbury Foundation, Community Compact Connector)

Dan C pivoted the conversation to various funding options. He started with noting that he was not able to get a submission in for the current cycle with the Sudbury Foundation and would have to wait until next quarter. Deb discussed the BayPath grant and noted that last year it was based on Cares Act funding but in the coming year the grant cycle would be stricter. She opined about the likely difficulty she would encounter to apply for and manage the grant. Related, she noted that the funds would be usable only for riders aged 60 or over and our programs included younger riders. She said she would update the Committee at a future meeting. Dan C then asked Adam about the Community Compact Connector grant. Discussion ensued about the complexity of this grant, the due date of March 18, 2022, and members agreed to discuss in a future meeting.

Dan C then informed the Committee that the Sudbury FY2023 budget was in formation and there was no money planned for Go Sudbury!. He also noted that Town Meeting warrant articles were due on January 31 and believed it was in this Committee's purview to request the Select Board and Town Manager put one forward. He stated that the Select Board next would meet on January 18 and it would have to be discussed then. Dan C also stated that a warrant article should be straightforward. Alice agreed that it was reasonable to put forward a request, and Adam stated that he thought it would be a good indicator of whether the Town wanted to provide services like these. Dan C clarified that this request would be a companion to our ARPA request, meaning if ARPA was approved this request would be withdrawn. Alice suggested that we consider negotiating with the taxis once our grant funding runs out. Sandy agreed that a request was in order and asked for confirmation of our current \$8,500/month burn rate. Discussion ensued about the amount to be requested and the group agreed on \$100,000. Adam stated that amount should be enough to last through FY 2023. Dan C offered, with Committee approval, to draft a proposed warrant article to present it to the Select Board for discussion on January 18. Dan C asked for a motion for the same. Adam motioned the

Chair of the Transportation Committee to present to the Select Board a proposal for \$100,000 to fund the go Sudbury taxi rides and uber rides program for fiscal year 2023. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Update and Discussion – Draft of Committee Annual Report

Alice suggested that the group next discuss the Committee Annual Report. Dan noted that he had provide the Committee with a draft and he received feedback from Alice and Adam. He also stated that he was not able to merge them together in time for this meeting. Adam suggested Alice’s version be shared as his was mostly rewording and grammatical changes. Dan shared the document and solicited more feedback. Deb noticed BayPath was not mentioned and said she would forward along some appropriate wording. Dan asked the group to all send any other suggestions and he would incorporate for a final review next meeting. Sandy asked where to find previous annual reports and Dan offered to send her a link. Dan noted that putting the document together reminded him of all the great work this Committee has done and thanked members for their efforts.

Update and Discussion – Recap of and action items from Presentation to Sudbury Select Board (Oct 19, 2021)

Dan referred to the action item from the October 19 meeting with the Select Board as the “business plan” and said he wanted to review it next. Alice stated that this would likely go through multiple iterations. He shared the document and noted that he worked on the Low-Cost option, Adam the medium, and Alice the high. Alice added that Deb also worked on the high. Alice led the group in discussion of the format of the report. Dan talked through the Low-Cost option and noted it was the basis for the previously discussed Warrant article. He also noted that he had used Kay Bell’s Summary Document in his section and thanked her for putting it together. Adam then talked through the Medium Cost option and his rationale for calculating costs. He estimated a 1/3 increase in rides and dispatching, for a total of \$135,000. Sandy noted that this option would not include professional staff and showed concern that only the High-Cost option would include money for staff. Alice agreed, stating that the burden had been picked up by staff and volunteers and thought even some part-time help was appropriate in this scenario. Adam suggested a Medium A and Medium B, similar to the Low-Cost options. Alice then walked through the High-Cost option which addressed the Livable Sudbury assessment needs, environmental issues, and increasing modes of transport. She then noted the similarities of Newton and its 13 villages and the MAGIC Communities and the benefits we could see through greater collaboration. Funding methods including co-pays, support from regional transit authorities, and the Community Connector grant were discussed. The group agreed that this option would require paid staff to administer.

Administrative Items

Dan updated the group regarding the Uber geofence and Metco families; in talking with Sudbury Public Schools he learned of five families in Mattapan that would qualify for Go Sudbury!. Going point to point measured approximately 33 miles so we should consider a distance slightly larger. He then brought up the topic of the Emerson Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment. Deb provided background on the initiative. Alice stated that we may be able to identify some high traffic destinations and ask if Emerson would support. Dan said he would add to a future meeting agenda.

Discuss and schedule upcoming meetings

The Transportation Committee voted unanimously to set the next meeting for **Friday, January 21, at 10:30 AM** via Zoom.

Review and approval of Meeting Minutes – Dec 17, 2021

Dan suggested that the review of meeting minutes be tabled until the next meeting. Deb offered to resend the draft minutes to the Committee.

Adjournment

Sandy moved to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded, and the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn.