



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, May 27, 2022

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Adam Duchesneau, Kay Bell, Bob Lieberman, Debra Galloway

Core Members Absent: Dan Nason

Advisory Group Present:

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

Guests: Sandy Lasky, Linda Faust, Ana Cristina Oliveira

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting at 10:32am. Dan Carty made an announcement that this was a public meeting, and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV. He took roll call, noted a quorum was present, then announced that he was making Adam Duchesneau co-host of the Zoom session.

Selection of Clerk

Dan volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Administrative Updates

Dan recapped the action items from last meeting:

- Dan emailed a thank you to Mary Warzynski on behalf of the committee
- Dan noted that he sent the ridership data off to the group
- Dan noted he reached out to the Sudbury Foundation to pause the grant request until the next cycle later this summer
- Kay shared information about the Lexington transportation initiatives
- Dan noted he established contact with Sandra Robinson of Needham, but they had not yet discussed the Needham transportation initiatives
- Alice noted she would report later in the meeting about the MPO technical assistance grant and the Mass Development grant proposal
- Dan gave a brief update on the Curtis Middle School civics group request for a bike lane on Route 20 and asked Adam if they could schedule time to discuss in more detail

- Dan noted he followed up with the Chamber of Commerce and Charlie Dunn was no longer our contact and that he met with new President Martha Welsh.
- Dan confirmed with Bob that he was receiving group emails sent to the Transportation Committee.

Update on Financial Status

Adam reviewed the expenditures and resources available for the GoSudbury programs and noted there were no updates to the tracking spreadsheet since last meeting as we had not yet received any May invoices from Uber or the taxi companies. He did add that we did receive an invoice for dispatch services and that he would add this in accordingly.

Topics for review in this meeting

Dan outlined what he hoped to cover in this meeting:

- Review rider data. Dan informed the group that he had sent out updated rider data via email and that due to Open Meeting Law did not share his opinions or observations in the same email but now that the group was convened that he thought it was quite obvious that there was a small group of what he called “power users” that were taking a large number of rides.
- Establishing a voicemail message for Go Sudbury! Riders to call
- Technical assistance from the MPO
- Mass Development grant
- Recommendations back to Select Board
- Extension of this committee by the Select Board. Here Dan reviewed a small number of edits to the Mission Statement that he was planning to propose to the Select Board, including making Dan Nason (DPW) an advisory member, replacing old member names with new as appropriate, making references to the Town Manager gender neutral, as well as extending the Committee another year.

Mass Development Grant, MPO Tech Assistance

Alice stated that the Mass Development grant was due on July 8 and wanted to discuss some ideas on how to proceed. She added that in the previous day’s Making the Connection meeting our consultant from Nelson Nygaard said there is money available in the MassDevelopment grant to retrofit vans to make them wheelchair accessible. Thus far the only taxi company we are in contact with on this topic is JFK and she wanted to know from the group if it was worth asking if they were interested in pursuing. If so they would have to submit their own proposal but she believed it would be beneficial to have more WAV vehicles. Adam stated he thought it certainly would not hurt. Alice also inquired of the group if we should include Annex Transportation. Dan said he thought it would be a good idea, and Adam thought we would like to use them but did not want it holding up the grant. He added that he would be in contact with Annex. Kay asked about the general availability of WAV vehicles. Alice discussed JFK Taxi, Tommy’s Taxi, and Annex. Bob asked about contractual obligations and added having additional resources would be a good idea. Further discussion ensued with the group. Citizen Linda Faust asked a question about why a taxi company would have to write their own grant and Alice clarified. Alice suggested we add Acton and Bolton to the grant group and remove Concord and Maynard. Questions arose about including Wayland and Weston. Alice volunteered to reach out to Maynard and Concord to make sure they were OK with not being included in this round. Adam stated he would reach out to Acton. Discussion ensued with regards to continuing to use the Cross Town Connect dispatch services.

Alice reported that the application for technical assistance went into the MPO, and everyone should have received a copy. She stated that she would follow up just to make sure they received it. Once

we know they received it and it is under consideration she did not believe we had to wait for a judgment before notifying the Select Board that this request was in progress. Dan asked about timeframe and Alice noted it was a rolling application for technical assistance, as opposed to applications for specific grants.

Rider Data

At this point of the meeting Dan stated that he'd like to discuss the Uber distribution of rides by individual riders. Alice suggested that we tie this with what Deb and Ana Cristina have been working on with regards to setting parameters going forward. Alice added that she did not believe we needed to change qualification for registration of the program but rather some qualifications around frequency of rides and co pays. Alice continued that she, Deb, and Ana Cristina looked at the data and identified three people with large numbers of rides and noted that she'd like to know where they were going and why, as there may be good reasons for them. She thought they should be contacted offline to help find other options because of privacy issues. She noted one individual was going into Boston very frequently but after discussions found ways to offset. Dan shared the parsed data on his screen showing the high ridership. He noted it contained nine months of data and that names had been removed and replaced with a unique rider number. He noted that one rider took 46 rides in one month which equated to multiple rides per day. Another rider was brand new in April and took 32 rides. He also pointed out that this data went through April as he did not yet have the complete month of May data. Bob thanked Dan for putting the data together and proceeded to provide summary information. He noted that the total dollars spent was \$37,776 with the top 10 riders consuming \$29,864, or 79.1%, and of the 1,457 rides they took 1,092 of them. He added the top two riders took 577 rides for 46% of the total spend. He thought further dialog was warranted as the last thing he wanted to see was someone abusing the program.

Dan thought this discussion bridged the group into a conversation about what to do next. He shared the document "Recommendations for Transitioning GoSudbury! Pilots to Town Supported Programs" sent by Deb prior to the meeting. Deb started the conversation by stating she, Ana Cristina, and Alice had worked on this, and it was based on Sandy Lasky's survey data and Dan's ridership summary. She thought the goal was to continue the program providing services to fill in gaps, making sure it was still accessible to those with financial hardship. She added that as we transitioned from grant funding to Town support we should look to make it more sustainable, perhaps adding higher co-pays. She thought it made sense to have people re-register for the program as we made changes to the program as we might have to change waiver language or eligibility requirements. For example, we may elect to change the age category from 50 to 60. Dan added that we likely would not make decisions today but rather wanted the group to have information to consider for next meeting, and also by next meeting we would have May ridership data to see if the high rider trends continued. He asked if eliminating the essential worker qualifier would negatively impact us for any grants. Alice thought we could remove that as it was part of the initial urgent taxi grant but wanted to make sure people could get to work if needed. Discussion ensued regarding the Chamber of Commerce and information they may be able to provide. Dan noted he had the action item to keep the conversation with the Chamber going and that there may be discussions with the Chamber and the Select Board. Sandy Lasky inquired about how senior ridership overlapped with the financial need and essential worker categories and wondered if it would give us more information as to why people were increasing their Uber rides. She also considered the price of gas and driving may be impacting people's decisions to take more Uber rides.

Dan asked the group to review this document for next meeting and said he would send out the updated ridership numbers once May data became available. He asked the group to consider what the information is telling us and what recommendations we had moving forward.

Other Updates

Dan noted that given the time he did not believe the voicemail item would be covered today. He noted that we had been contacted by the Bird scooter company and asked the Committee if there was any interest in bringing them in; the consensus was not at this time. Kay Bell gave an update about a recent WGBH event that talked about accessibility. Dan inquired of Adam about the upcoming MAGIC Legislators breakfast, and both stated they planned on attending. Alice updated the group about a recent Making the Connections survey that had 700 responses, very meaningful and beneficial data, and would share with the group once it became available.

Next Meeting

The group set the next Transportation Committee meeting for Thursday, June 9, at 10:00 AM via Zoom.

Actions for Next Meeting

Dan summarized what will be undertaken before June 9:

- Alice will reach out to JFK with regards to the grant to retrofit a van for wheelchair accessibility
- Adam to reach out to Annex to see if they are interested in partnering with us, and also will check to make sure Annex, JFK, and Tommy's are eligible to participate in upcoming grants.
- Adam and Alice will contact Maynard and Concord to ensure they are Ok with dropping out of the next grant cycle
- Adam would also contact Acton to see if they were interested in joining our grant application.
- Dan will follow up with the Chamber of Commerce and refresh, distribute the Uber ridership data once May becomes available, and send Sandy's survey summary document.
- Dan asked all members to review the "Recommendations for Transitioning GoSudbury! Pilots to Town Supported Programs" document

Meeting Minutes

Dan announced that minutes for 22 April to be reviewed at the next meeting. Motion to approve the edited Transportation Committee meeting minutes for 13 May made by Kay Bell, seconded by Alice, and unanimously approved when roll call vote was called.

Adjournment

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting, Adam seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. **Text omitted.**