



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, September 7, 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: None

Advisory Group Present: None

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

Guests: Linda Faust, Ana Cristina Oliveira, Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV)

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting at 10:33 AM. 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, and announced that he was making Adam Duchesneau co-host of the Zoom session.

Selection of Clerk

Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Administrative Updates:

Because the main purpose of today's meeting was to review material to be presented to the Select Board on 9.13, Dan first thanked everyone for agreeing to this date change and recommended that we

1. Review updated financial status of GoSudbury (Adam),
2. Discuss and agree on a policy for handling crisis transportation situations (Debra, Ana Cristina), and
3. Focus on the draft slides for 9.13.

Financial Update. Adam shared his screen with the latest accounting for GoSudbury (taxi and Uber), noting that we had not yet received all the taxi invoices for August. He noted that Uber outlay had decreased since the high of April and May and that we had \$80,000 left from the \$100,000 town allocation for the remainder of the fiscal year. In summary, we spent 20% of the funds in 17% of the time, so we need to watch volume and costs closely.

Dan reminded the group that we had implemented changes in number of rides per month as of August 1st—Alice stated that no rider (taxi or Uber) had exceeded the cap of 20 rides in that month—and we should see an impact of the policy going forward. Kay asked if copayments (now implemented) would make a difference, and Alice said they rarely account for as much as 20% of total costs in similar initiatives (e.g., Newton, Community Accessing Rides, etc.).

Dan recommended that we review year-on-year data for both programs: original policies were in effect February 2021 for Uber and May 2021 for taxis. Changed policies and their impact can be reviewed on a bimonthly basis from 1 August 2022 going forward. For the October meeting, we can review August/September data for both years in both programs.

Crisis Transportation Requests. At the prior meeting we had agreed to a contingency amount of GoSudbury funds (accounted for separately and with accompanying ride data) that Debra and Ana Cristina would use as necessary. Debra reminded the group that this was to provide emergency support, over a short period, for a rider who did not immediately qualify for the program subsidies.

After discussion, Kay Bell moved to set aside \$1,000 contingency, Alice seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous. Adam asked Debra and Ana Cristina to talk with him and he will account for the funds (which may go for vouchers) and number of rides. Neither Debra nor Ana Cristina expected there to be many instances of this need over the coming year. Alice reminded the group that the town Social Worker, HOPE Sudbury, Gifts of Hope Unlimited, and St Vincent de Paul were also potential sources of support for these crises. Debra said she would reach out to this network in the town.

Select Board Presentation:

Dan had sent out a draft presentation earlier and, before sharing it for input from the group, stated that he would ask the Board to post that there might be a joint meeting (if a quorum were present) of the Transportation Committee with the Select Board on 9/13. (There is expected to be a joint meeting between the Select Board and Planning after the Tuesday meeting.)

He stated that the desired objective of the presentation was to respond to the earlier Board requests: What does the committee recommend of the three scenarios? How willing are other municipalities to collaborate with Sudbury in a regional initiative? What are the likely grants available for such an initiative? Dan continued that the Select Board's upcoming meeting with Planning provided a perfect opportunity to emphasize the links not only between the proposed scenario and Livable Sudbury findings but also between the proposed scenario and the Master Plan recently approved.

After sharing his screen of the draft slides with the group, Dan acknowledged that he would spend very little time reviewing what has already been presented but simply remind the Board that it

created the Committee and the Committee reports to it. (From the charter approved in 2019: “The Sudbury Transportation Committee was created by the Selectmen to address a key feature of livable communities: transportation.”)

Some of the comments of the group regarding the draft presentation follow:

- The flow of the material is good.
- The Board is likely to ask about how much we are spending, so we should include the number of rides for each program since last presentation and the average ride cost.
- Appetite of other communities for collaborating with Sudbury in a regional initiative is high, but:
 - Town staff capacity to implement some of these initiatives is limited. Sudbury had a 3-year head start for planning before beginning a pilot.
 - Challenges to collaboration also include differences among communities because of the state’s Home Rule status (MGL Ch 43B passed in 1996). Thus, Sudbury’s Uber dashboard, or liability requirements for vendors, etc., may not be consistent with those of other municipalities. Achieving consistency for a collaboration takes time.
- Kay’s stakeholder diagram is excellent and conveys the scope of the proposed initiative.
- Three slides linking the proposed scenario to the Master Plan are important and very beneficial (Alice offered to summarize the links as a “back pocket” reference and inclusion in an appendix, if needed).
- Appendices can be included with the presentation for additional material (more data on stakeholders, the “use cases” described by Debra, explicit linking to Master Plan).
- Noting the impact and value of the scenario to the town’s resiliency goals was important (i.e., the proposal includes use of hybrid/E vehicles as well as multi-passenger vehicles to reduce emissions and congestion).
- Also to be emphasized is the impact and value of the scenario to D(iversity)E(quity)I(nclusion) efforts, as described by workforce development pilots and focus on Transportation Equity goals of both federal and state transit.
- In terms of the grants landscape, a regional effort puts large state funding organizations (MassDOT) as well as federal (Federal Transit Administration) in the roster of support. Other support might come from commercial and social service organizations (cf/ the CAR initiative a few years earlier).
- The Board should also be advised that we expect to hear back from the MPO regarding the request for technical assistance by 1 October, and that the MPO route planner is assessing data from our taxi and Uber pilots for possible proof-of-concept (and fundable) transit programs. The proposed scenario is too big for Sudbury to “go it alone,” so expertise from regional and state organizations is needed.

Dan stated that the final slide contained the Big Asks: Would the Board agree to support level funding for next year (i.e., another \$100,000)? And, what feedback could the Board give the Committee regarding whether we proceed to grow the programs? Kay suggested that moving between Dan and Alice in the presentation was a good tactic to keep the audience interested, as had been the case in the prior Board discussion in April.

Meeting Minutes:

Two sets of minutes were reviewed: 8/12/22 and 8/26/22. After sharing his screen for these, Dan requested a motion for acceptance. Alice moved to accept those of 8/12, Debra seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous. Kay moved to accept those of 8/26, Bob seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous.

Next Meeting:

The group set the next Transportation Committee meeting for Friday, 23 September, at 10:30 AM, by Zoom.

Actions for Next Meeting:

- Update on Debra's meeting with Jim Nee, MWRTA, 9/15
- Survey of program riders
- Incorporating Annex Transit into the GoSudbury programs
- Review of extrapolated financial status
- Re-submitting a proposal for funding to The Sudbury Foundation
- Review of urgent rides (if they occur).

Adjournment:

Adam moved to adjourn the meeting at noon, Kay seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.