



Town of Sudbury

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Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, February 3, 2023

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

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

Core Members Absent: Debra Galloway

Advisory Group Present: None

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

Guests: Ana Cristina Oliveira, Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV), Linda Faust, Lisa Kouchakdjian (Select Board), Ravi Simon (aide to Carmine Gentile, Mass. State Representative)

Confirmation of Quorum: The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting at 10:31 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: Dan summarized the major topics for today's discussion—not necessarily in the following order:

- Discussion of ride constraints, including ride vouchers (based on Debra's earlier input)
- Annex Transit
- Minutes (two past sets)
- Finances review
- Meeting with MPO/CTPS and MWRTA on 6 February
- Prior meeting with Carmine Gentile (2.2)
- Member updates.

He added that the Committee's Annual Report had been signed and submitted. Alice suggested that a template be constructed so that excerpts from the Minutes could be entered into a "draft annual report form" and later edited for timely submission.

Finance Review: Dan shared the screen with the Excel file provided by Adam, who noted that the MassDevelopment check had been received. Sudbury's portion is \$87,000. Monies allocated to Acton, Bolton, and Stow will be sent shortly, so those towns can pay January taxi service with these funds. There will be a \$10,000 check from MAGIC to be shared among towns collaborating in the Making the Connections grant. Depending on how this will be divided, Sudbury could receive another \$2,000 for GoSudbury support. There is also money remaining from the prior town allocation of \$100,000 (about \$24,000), so both taxi and Uber programs should be set for the current fiscal year. MassDev money can also be used for Annex Transit service, both as supplement to the taxi program when JFK vehicles are unavailable and as reasonable accommodation (for persons with a disability) for the Uber program.

Alice noted the similarity in timing of funding between MAPC and MassDev grants: about 6 months from the time the application was submitted (about 3 months to hear about the award and another 3 months until a check was received). She recommended we build this timeframe into our future planning, so as to ensure consistency of services.

Dan reminded the group that the Select Board approved the committee's Warrant article requesting \$150,000 at the May town meeting for continuing support of the GoSudbury programs.

Meeting With CTPS/MWRTA: On 6 February (Monday), members of the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Adam, Alice, and Jim Nee (Administrator of the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority) will meet to review the CTPS scope of work. Alice sent a possible "proof-of-concept proposal" for discussion as a first pilot. The proposal emerged because the AARP is offering a Demonstration Grant for transportation projects, \$30,000-\$50,000 for 6 months, funded by Toyota Corporation.

Debra, Ana Cristina, and Alice (in conjunction with Bethany Hadvab, Town Social Worker) reviewed near-term transportation needs, and Debra initiated talks with the Wayland CoA director for possible shared services along Route 20. These would be provided by MWRTA and its CatchConnect service, an app-requested, on-demand, accessible service now offered in Framingham, Wellesley, and soon in Hudson. Alice said that, even if the proposal is not submitted to AARP, discussion during the upcoming meeting should uncover other funding sources for service of this type.

Lisa Kouchakdjian thanked the committee for its work and said she was especially enthusiastic for connecting Wayland and Sudbury by means of service such as the above. She noted the size of the Wayland Oxbow development and the number of Sudbury developments along Route 20 and surmised there would be demand for such a regional initiative. She expected funding sources would be interested in this approach and that it would be good for the Commonwealth in addition to Wayland and Sudbury residents and businesses. Lisa also proposed a name for this initiative: "the Sud-Way service."

Meeting With Carmine Gentile: With regard to Regional Transit Authorities, Dan added that he and Alice had met yesterday (2/2/23) with Carmine Gentile, first to thank him for support of a recently filed motion (pending bill, now Senate Docket #1762) that would increase funding for RTAs. Carmine noted he is a long-time supporter of regional transit and would work to help the bill pass. Alice

brought Carmine up to date with Sudbury's accomplishments—taxi and Uber—and briefly described the upcoming meeting with CTPS/MWRTA. However, she wanted to take the opportunity to ask Carmine for specific help in addressing two systemic issues affecting RTA collaboration (both among themselves and with municipalities). These are (1) performance metrics based on ridership or patronage (i.e., measures of how many riders per unit service, or fare box recovery), and (2) RTA policies emphasizing autonomy. She will send Carmine a brief review of these issues, and Dan emphasized the changes in demographics, etc., that have occurred in MA since the measures and policies were designed. As a result, they are no longer appropriate as stated.

In the discussion about this option and funding, Dan brought up the MPO survey that is seeking ideas for new transportation studies to be included in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and recommend the Committee submit a transportation study work idea by 15 February. Dan will work with Alice to craft a proposed study.

Kay agreed with the recommendation to submit ideas and noted that, in addition to vehicle service, we also needed infrastructure to support residents, such as waiting shelters, benches, sidewalks, signs, etc. Alice said that the shelter in Meadow Walk was one example of what is needed if a Route 20 service is to be effective. Linda Faust added that infrastructure should be designed for accessibility, including voice-reminders of waiting times, destinations, etc., for visually impaired riders.

Policies and Procedures: Changes affecting GoSudbury riders have been updated in the registration form on the Town website. There are a few remaining places that need to be updated as well, and Dan suggested Town staff could do this readily.

Annex Transit: Alice has spoken with Francis Mugo, the owner of Annex, and he agreed to a 24-hour reservation time, to be consistent with CrossTown Connect (CTC) taxi dispatch. Ana Cristina has recruited a few riders to beta test this service, and one person took a ride yesterday and she will seek feedback. Alice reminded the group that Annex is an additional WAV provider when JFK WAV vehicles are in use; it is also the reasonable accommodation for people with a disability—and not simply wheelchair users—for our Uber program.

Bob asked how riders will be qualified for the Annex service, and Ana Cristina responded that she does the screening. Only necessary information on the rider's special needs, such as accompaniment from vehicle to door of destination (door to door, rather than curb to curb), and riders have signed a waiver for sharing such information. This is sent to CTC dispatch and then to the company that will provide the service.

Dan requested that Bob and Kay, with input from Ana Cristina, craft a draft policy to be used for qualifying Annex riders and for communicating that service to residents.

Ride Constraints: Dan shared his screen with material Debra had provided on possible ways to constrain services in support of sustainability. These included use of vouchers, rider co-pays, and limits on rides. Ana Cristina said that voucher use would be complicated, requiring users to send money to the Senior Center and then be sent/pick up vouchers to use as ride payment. Debra stated that ride limits were her preference, in terms of ease of administration.

Kay said that some riders believe the current limits on number of rides is draconian, and now we have the MassDev funds perhaps they could be eased? Alice suggested members review what other towns are doing and said she will resend the document describing some of those policies. Dan recommended we table this for discussion at the next meeting.

Member Updates: Alice noted that she will be presenting a brief overview of Sudbury taxi and Uber services, as well as the MPO technical assistance scope of work, at next week's MAGIC meeting (Tuesday, 7 February). She will send the slides accompanying the overview to the Committee.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be February 17 at 10:30 AM (Zoom).

Minutes: Minutes from 6 January (submitted by Kay Bell) were reviewed. After a few edits were made, Alice moved to accept the minutes as amended, Adam seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous. Next, minutes from 20 January (submitted by Bob Lieberman) were reviewed; Kay moved to accept minutes as amended, Bob seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous.

Adjournment: Dan first listed the topics to be continued at the next meeting:

- Finances
- Ride constraints (copay, vouchers, etc.)
- Annex (beta test and eligibility requirements)
- Update on MPO meeting.

Kay moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:04 PM, Adam seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous.