



# Town of Sudbury

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

## Sudbury Transportation Committee

### Minutes

Friday, October 27, 2023

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Debra Galloway, Bob Lieberman

Core Members Absent: Bessie Struck

Advisory Group Present: Dani- Marini King Town of Sudbury Sustainability Coordinator

Advisory Group Absent: Martha Welsh, Dan Nason, Chief Scott Nix, Carmine Gentile, Silvia Nersessian and Mary Warzynski

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

**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 broadcast live via Zoom and recorded by Sudbury TV. He took roll call, noted a quorum was present, and announced that he was making Debra co-host of the Zoom session.

**Selection of Clerk:** Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

**Review of Last Meeting Topics:** Although not able to be present at this meeting, Adam Burney is the new town planner and, as Dan noted, might either attend the committee meetings or send a representative from his office. Dan will see Adam on 20 November during the Select Board/Planning meeting about MBTA-adjacent-community housing. Related to this, Alice volunteered to re-send the document illustrating links between the Transportation Committee remit and the current Master Plan. Dan reiterated that the committee is forward-looking and will seek input from the Select Board as to priority topics to be considered for the future.

Dan then reviewed the issue with Annex (an outstanding insurance bill) and stated that all is settled, and the bill is paid.

He asked about outreach, a topic emerging from the taxi and Uber surveys distributed and collected by Ana Cristina Oliveira (i.e., some residents either did not know or had misinformation about the transportation programs). Bessie and Ana Cristina will provide communication flyers to Longfellow

Glen; Debra had brought flyers for the Town Meeting. Debra also has improved the clarity of the town's website re: transportation but stated more is to be done. Kay Bell had noted the requirement for accessibility of the website; Dan suggested this will take specific expertise (Kay was not present at the meeting).

With regard to outreach, Ana Cristina said that the residence coordinator at Coolidge 1 and 2 believed all residents were up to date on transportation and did not need flyers. Linda Faust spoke up that some residents were unaware of Annex transportation, and that this accessible option should be beneficial to a number of wheelchair-using residents at Coolidge. This will be followed up by the Senior Center staff.

Dan noted that he will bring flyers to the Housing Authority/Trust, for distribution to residents at single/multi-family homes. Debra will contact the Veterans Coordinator with regard to flyers for these residents. And Dan will talk again with the Town Manager about sending information on transportation with a town-specific mailing to all residents.

In terms of funding mentioned earlier, the MAGIC allocation of \$10,000 (to the towns involved in the Making the Connections initiative) was paid to Sudbury and will be distributed, perhaps on the basis of population, to those collaborating towns. The state allocation is not yet in hand, and we still do not know the time by which it must be spent.

Group emails from the town apparently do not reach every member of the Transportation Committee. Dan will continue to work on determining why.

**Current Finances and Ridership:** Dan shared the latest Excel summary of sources and uses of funds. The taxi expenditures increased in September to a level equivalent to that of about a year ago, probably the result of increasing the cap on rides from 6 one-way rides/month to 10. The reason was a need to spend down the MassDevelopment allocation of \$87,000, so we would not have to send back a very large remainder at the end of the grant period (presumably 31 December 2023). There is some money remaining from the 2022 town allocation and more from the 2023 allocation. Still TBD is the state earmark.

As of September, 247 residents were registered for the GoSudbury taxi program, and 208 for the Uber program. Ana Cristina mentioned that some residents had dropped off the lists because they had moved away, and she had highlighted their names on the material she maintains.

**Potential New Funding:** After a brief overview of MassDevelopment and the state's support for taxi/livery/hackney companies, Dan stated that it appears likely such support will end with this year's grants. Alice noted that MassDev has not, unlike MAPC, announced another round of funding but she will confirm the status of the program with MassDevelopment. The proposed Boston hospital shuttle, focus of a Community Connections grant application by MWRTA for Sudbury and Wayland, will not replace all medical taxi service but will be an important option.

The transition period, between termination of taxi grants and implementation of an RTA shuttle, will be focused on answering a number of questions:

- What taxi service should continue to be supported, and for whom?

- How will the above be funded?
- What co-pays might be involved; and, if vouchers are used (as they are in Weston), how will that be administered?

The Boston hospital shuttle grant application will also contain a community-proposed TNC backup, via an electronic voucher, for riders who might miss a shuttle while in Boston—the equivalent of the “emergency ride home” used by businesses if an employee needs transportation. How a backup would be designed and implemented is not yet determined, but there is a meeting with Sudbury and Wayland, likely next week, to discuss this further. Dan questioned the difference between an electronic voucher and the GoSudbury Uber program; Alice said that two towns would be involved, each with their own policies and procedures for the backup.

The other potential new funding would be an award from the Community Transit grant program for an MWRTA CatchConnect microtransit service along the Route 20 corridor. That would replace the former Sudbury van service which was highly utilized and very well regarded when it ran prior to the pandemic. The grant awards should be publicized in December.

**MAPC Meeting:** The meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup> with Newton and Salem illustrated the use of Via Transport for specialized (e.g., accessible) and general transportation services. Both cities have had favorable experience with the vendor but stated that sustainable funding was an issue for transportation overall. Via had made a presentation to Sudbury earlier, and representatives will be in touch again to answer questions.

**TMA:** CrossTown Connect, formerly a multi-town transportation management association (TMA), exists currently only as dispatch service. However, a clause in the contract between the Cold Brook developer and Sudbury stated that the developer would join the TMA (Sudbury was formerly a member). Dan has talked with the Town Manager about a TMA, and we will continue to consider how we might move forward.

**MWRTA Update:** Debra, a member of the MWRTA Advisory Board, stated that at the most recent meeting a rise in state contract funding was announced. Up to now the authority has received about \$3M in state contracts annually. After intense advocacy emphasizing that MWRTA was underfunded compared with comparable state RTAs, funding was increased to over \$9M. Jim Nee stated this would go towards reducing debt, increasing some fixed route buses, increased driver salaries, new capital purchases (e.g., vans), advertising/outreach, and rider incentives.

**Minutes:** The minutes of October 6 were reviewed. Alice moved to approve with recommendations noted; Debra Galloway seconded the move; approval on roll call was unanimous.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be Thursday, November 16, at 9:30 by Zoom.

**Adjournment:** Dan asked for a motion to adjourn. Bob moved to adjourn this meeting, Debra seconded, approval on roll call was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 AM.