



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, September 6, 2024

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Debra Galloway, Alice Sapienza, Bob Lieberman, Cheryl Wallace, Adam Burney

Core Members Absent:

Advisory Group Present:

Advisory Group Absent: Martha Welsh, Dan Nason, Chief Scott Nix, Carmine Gentile, Maura Carty

Guests: Dani Marini-King (Advisory: Sustainability Coordinator), Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV), Linda Faust and Kay Bell (Sudbury residents)

Confirmation of Quorum: The statutory requirements as to notice having been met, Dan as chair convened the meeting at 10:30 AM. He made an announcement that this was a public meeting, there should be no expectation of privacy, and the meeting was being broadcast live via Zoom and recorded by Sudbury TV. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present. Adam agreed to be co-host.

Selection of Clerk: Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Administrative Updates:

Select Board Goals. Dan stated that, at the 9/5/24 meeting of the Select Board, "Transportation" once again made the top tier of goals (this topic had dropped off the top list last year). Goals included long-term budgeting, town staffing, the Fairbanks Community Center, and vocational education as well as transportation. He continued that we/Transportation Committee are again at a milestone in terms of programs, with grant awards for Catch Connect and the Sudbury-Wayland Boston Hospital shuttle. Thus, we should plan to attend and present an update at a Select Board meeting in the near future.

Sudbury Doing Good. At the upcoming Sudbury Doing Good meeting, Dan recommended that information on transportation programs again be available, and Debra noted that she would be a participant and could have flyers on hand. The group, under the auspices of the Sudbury Foundation, is "an informal affinity group of Sudbury, MA nonprofits, community groups and Town departments" that supports a range of causes. Dan asked if representation from the MWRTA might also be included.

Communications to Transportation. Dan reminded members that he responds to communications (e.g., emails) sent to the town Transportation Committee.

Data Reporting. Alice stated that she and Daniel Fitch (and other MWRTA staff) are working on the general template provided by DOT grants (e.g., for the Catch Connect shuttle) in order to create a specific template for Sudbury.

Community Connections. Adam is following up on a possible grant [Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) program] sent to the Town from Via Transportation. Alice suggested that a request for technical assistance in creating a TMA might be a good first step, prior to applying for the RCP program. Adam will work with Littleton, Acton, Bolton, and Stow to find out their interest.

Boston Region Connectivity Study. Adam had forwarded a request from Marcia Rasmussen (Concord) asking for someone from Sudbury to participate in this study. Dan volunteered to take part and represent the Town. Information about the effort follows:

The Boston Region Connectivity Study Project Management Team (PMT) is continuing one of the first steps the project process: to conduct state/local partner agency interviews. You are receiving this email as Lincoln and Sudbury have been identified as state or local partner agency representatives partly or fully within the Boston Region overseeing planning functions areas that include National Wildlife Refuge locations. The Lincoln/Sudbury interview will be held jointly due to your common interests in the National Wildlife Refuges located in your jurisdiction. The interviews will be used to *identify and catalog specific transportation needs and/or constraints for jurisdictions that currently exist or that may arise in the future* (emphasis added).

Uber Contract Renewal. Adam and others (including Debra Galloway and Alice Sapienza) are involved in the update of the Uber contract, an effort led by Andy Willard of Uber. The company has changed its systems software from the use of “profiles” (i.e., primarily types of employees but used by Sudbury to identify target residents) to “vouchers,” which are electronic labels for rides by—in our case—target riders. The benefit to Sudbury, along with improved software support, is that residents can receive the number of vouchers corresponding to ride caps and see immediately what their cost of ride will be. Currently, Sudbury is operating under an interim contract extension until all issues are resolved about this change. A meeting should take place soon with Andy Willard about the latter.

CrossTown Connect Dispatch. Adam discussed the fact that Acton (DBA CrossTown Connect) will continue to provide dispatch services; however, the annual cost to Sudbury would be \$20,000. In 2023, CTC dispatch (and membership fee for the defunct TMA) was \$9,950. Alice agreed to assess likely cost per ride for taxi services under the new pricing. Debra will follow up with GoGo Transportation about their ability to provide dispatch services.

Municipal Preparedness:

Dan asked Dani Marini-King to discuss the municipal vulnerability preparedness efforts (MVP) underway.

Dani explained that, under an earlier grant from Gov. Baker, a plot group of 32 cities and towns in the state were asked to examine their municipalities in the context of climate change, weather extremes, and the like. Sudbury, one of the municipalities in that group, is being assessed in terms of potential impacts on both the infrastructure and on residents (especially vulnerable residents). There is a core team that includes five residents asked to share their experiences, question, and concerns in a survey being managed by MAPC (the Metropolitan Area Planning Council). Dani noted the clear interest in transportation, both as infrastructure (e.g., the CoA vans) and as resource for residents. There will be a “data walk” held at Lincoln-Sudbury High School and at several housing developments at which residents can learn more about the effort and provide important input. Dan shared examples of the survey questions on his screen, and Dani encouraged members to provide input as well.

Kay Bell (resident) noted that Fairbank has an emergency shelter, which is vital, but she believes a missing component is having an active community response team. Such a group should meet regularly and be provided with relevant training (CPR, mental health issues, etc.).

In addition to the above data walk, Dan stated that opportunities for providing information to and receiving input from residents included a flu clinic for seniors at the Senior Center (10.25), another one for the community at the Curtis Middle School, and flu clinics at affordable housing developments in Town. Dan also emphasized the “Venn diagram” of issues the group has been discussing: transportation, municipal preparedness, housing production plan, etc.

Dani added that the core team looks at the map of the Town and tries to find ways to get other residents to selected destinations. Also, they provide sticky pads that helps people write and post their comments during an event. Dan said it would be important to ensure residents knew about the many programs available to them; Adam agreed that these events provide a great opportunity to let people know about the Catch Connect program and Sudbury-Wayland Boston Hospital shuttle.

Taxi Vouchers:

Continuing a discussion from prior meetings, Dan asked about options for imposing co-pay on the formerly free taxi rides. He admitted that a voucher option is good in principle but may be impossible for Senior Center staff to implement, given their current understaffing. Debra emphasized that it was not a task they could manage at this time and suggested that GoGo Transportation may be a way to handle co-pays. Alice noted that Weston CoA manages discounted vouchers for JFK (a maximum of 10 vouchers/one-way rides per month), and Wayland CoA has a similar program (residents pay \$15 in vouchers for \$25 of meter time), again with JFK.

Dan shared Uber data on his screen and said that, by taking a radius around large medical establishments, he found that a sizable percentage of Uber rides to the Boston area were also to medical establishments served by taxis. He hoped that riders who might be hesitant to use Uber would find the Boston Hospital shuttle beneficial. Like Catch Connect, the shuttle will be fare free for the balance of the fiscal year ending in June 2025. In terms of hospital destinations, a Wayland resident had asked about shuttle transportation to Tufts Medical Center (not currently in the schedule). Dan’s

assessment of months of Uber rides showed that Tufts was a prominent destination. Alice suggested looking at rides to Boston Medical Center (formerly Boston University Medical Center and City Hospital) as well.

Finances:

The committee agreed that the current “burn rate” for subsidized transportation services could not be sustained for long. Although there will still be funds from the state earmark, Dan stated that he was interested in the effect of ride caps on Uber and taxis. On the Uber dashboard, Dan changed the ride caps and imposed “surge pricing” for times when the Catch Connect shuttle was in operation. Adam will check to make sure the changes are correct. Dan will ask Leila from Town staff for a press release on Catch Connect, now that we know it will be fare free for the year. She was hoping to write a “news story” and Dan will follow up. Alice said that MWRTA will be submitting data on Catch Connect, and she will follow up with Daniel Fitch.

Other Items:

Adam will follow up about use of a revolving fund (e.g., for taxi vouchers). Debra said they had very good participation at Coolidge when MWRTA came to talk about the Catch Connect and hospital programs. With regard to community use of the hospital shuttle, Adam will follow up on using Whole Foods parking area (the area is managed not by WF but the management company). Julie Secord from the Wayland CoA was looking into use of Town Center parking.

Dan briefly reviewed items relevant to future meetings:

- Dan will get back to Select Board about a Transportation Committee presentation (perhaps also invite the MWRTA representatives to this meeting).
- Cheryl noted that the Commission on Disability will be holding another accessible Trick or Treat event. There will also be an outreach event in January, and the Commission was informed about Catch Connect. She added that using the Avalon-Sudbury email address could inform more residents about transportation services.

Minutes:

Dan tabled the minutes from 7/26 for review at the next meeting. He shared the minutes from 8/23 and reviewed input. Alice motioned to approve minutes as amended, Adam seconded the motion, roll call was unanimous for acceptance.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is 10:30 AM on September 19th via Zoom.

Adjournment:

Dan asked for a motion to adjourn; Adam responded and Cheryl seconded the motion. Roll call was unanimous, and the meeting ended at 11:52 AM.