

Passenger Transportation Plan - Regional Planning Affiliate 1, UERPC  
Transportation Advisory Group Meeting Minutes  
December 7, 2017, 9:00 a.m. - 325 Washington Street, Decorah, Iowa

Present: Sam Castro (NEICAC Transit), Curt McNew (NEICAC Transit), Michelle Barnes (UERPC), Rachelle Howe (UERPC), Spiff Slifka (Howard Co. Business and Tourism), Jami Schwickerath (Iowa Vocational Rehab Services, IVRS), Mindy Myers (IVRS), Deana Hageman (Choice Employment), and Deanna Heimerdinger (Opportunity Homes)

1. Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.
2. Mobility Manager/Transit Update:
  - Transit participated in the Decorah Christmas Parade, and provided shuttle service for the holiday lights event
  - Attendees had a discussion of involvement of transit in special events
3. McNew opened the topic of changes to Medicaid/MPO services impacting employees and transit riders in the region. McNew has been working on the issue since the topic was raised at the November 17, 2017 TAG meeting. He shared the following:
  - EARL Public transit and other transportation providers are transferring IDS/SAL riders free through December of 2017 to assist.
  - Regional transits are coordinating to put together talking points for the transit association on the issue to share with the media and legislators
  - United Health Care connected with EARL Public Transit to discuss issue of loss of funding for transit by MCOs
  - Disability Rights Iowa may become engaged in Medicaid funding issue. They would like to speak with providers and job servicers regarding affects to employer funding inhibiting legal requirement for executing Individual Service Plans.
  - The week of December 18<sup>th</sup> EARL Public Transit will begin negotiating contracts with providers
  - McNew briefed the NEICAC board on December 5<sup>th</sup> regarding the Medicaid funding issue
  - The Iowa Transit Association will visit with state legislators on January 11-12, 2018, and federal legislators in February of 2018.
  - Transit will continue to look at publicity options for educating the public about this issue

The group discussed the Medicaid/MCO funding issue further, including discussing difficulties surrounding and the future of privatized MCOs, the complexity of getting basic transportation services for Medicaid riders, rates that public transit is allowed to charge (from IME), how employers are perceiving and reacting to the issue of the Medicaid transportation funding cuts, the importance of transportation options for engaging IDSCL riders in the community, etc.

The group planned how to publish an article on the Medicaid/MCO funding issue in the coming months. Slifka offered to help make a connection with the Cresco Times about an article providing information on the issue, as well as describing how workers and families are being impacted. TAG members were encouraged to share information on families being impacted by the Medicaid/MCO funding cuts with transit, to share with the paper.

4. McNew shared that the new NEICAC Executive Director is Trisha Wilkins. He discussed her experience and the transition.
5. Howe shared information regarding the January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission legislative event from 9 – 11am, at the Allamakee-Clayton Rural Electric Cooperative. There will be breakout tables where TAG members could come and share information on the Medicaid funding transportation impacts.

6. Work related to Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP):
  - The group reviewed priorities and goals from the existing PTP.
  - The group discussed new PTP priorities, goals and strategies.
  - Barnes discussed the remainder of the PTP update process.
7. The group discussed having a meeting in January to review the draft 2018 Passenger Transportation Plan. Barnes will follow-up with an email to set that meeting.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.