

**MEETING NOTES  
CAPITAL AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION COMMITTEE (RTCC)  
MEETING**

**Capital Metro Board Room  
2910 E 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas**

**August 11, 2009– 2 PM – 4 PM**

Attendees: Lyle Nelson, Jerry Prestridge, Joe Holland, Meredith Highsmith, Rod Gibbs, Paul Hamilton, Hector Vera, David Bartels, Sean Moran, David Fowler, Sherri Fleming, Joyce Lauck, Ed Collins, Jackie McLaughlin, Stevie Greathouse

**1. Introductions**

Bill Hamilton called the meeting to order at 2:11 PM. Stevie Greathouse stated that a quorum was present. Introductions were made.

**2. Update and discussion of FY 2010-2012 Work Program and State Funding for Regional Transit Coordination**

Bill Hamilton introduced agenda item two and stated that the RTCC 2010-2012 Work Program was a topic of discussion at the RTCC's prior meeting in May. At the meeting, the RTCC gave Stevie Greathouse general guidelines to use for the development of the Work Program to be submitted in an application for State Funding.

Stevie Greathouse provided an update regarding the application status and RTCC 2010-2012 Work Program. In the past the RTCC has developed 1 year plans, but a 3 year plan is required for the application to the State. Obtaining funding in the past has not been competitive: this time it is. It is possible that some regions will not receive funding. In the past the RTCC has received around \$60,000 annually for regional coordination efforts. The RTCC's application asked for more funding this time. Stevie Greathouse informed the Committee that she talked with state officials on a conference call and was encouraged to request less funding. The final requested amount was roughly \$205,000 for the three year period. The work plan was adjusted to match the funding amount and focused on items that the RTCC is mandated to do.

Tables that describe funding amounts by year were provided in meeting handouts.

Bill Hamilton asked about funding for a mobility management position and noted that funding for it had been dropped.

Stevie Greathouse replied that the mobility management position would be discussed later in the meeting. She explained items that would receive funding, e.g., consultant work, technical work, etc. Regarding the Mobility Management position, other sources of funding may be sought. Stevie reminded the Committee Mobility Management was still a priority in the region a commented that the RTCC still wanted to create a one-stop-shop. She added that Rural New Freedom Grant funding may help partially pay for these priority items. Stevie Greathouse stated that she had already notified Dave Marsh from CARTS of the funding change and noted that Mr. Marsh had stated previously that Mobility Management position may be housed at CARTS. She also informed the Committee that by not using state funds for the position, agencies would be relieved of state reporting requirements.

Bill Hamilton explained that new Work Program had been developed by expanding the already established 1 year plan.

Stevie Greathouse explained the refined draft Work Program document. Items highlighted in grey or strikethrough indicated a proposed change. She stated that after she walked through the document with the Committee, she would like to have discussions about individual items and make appropriate changes. She also added that there was not to be an action taken on the document, but action should be taken at the November quarterly meeting.

Ed Collins Joined the meeting at 2:30.

Stevie explained that Focus Area 3 on the draft Work Program had been supplemented with addition language as a result of the conference on coordination and client eligibility. She noted other major changes regarding Focus Area 5. Progress on overcoming jurisdictional boundaries could be made with the Mobility Management position. Stevie Greathouse explained that she was advised during her conference call about which items she should not remove from the Work Program. She explained why Focus Area 4 was deleted.

Joe Holland asked if the deletion of Focus Area 4 would write out the 5310 (elderly and disabled) funding program.

Stevie Greathouse replied the focus area would still be addressed in another area of the Work Program. She explained that tasks aimed to improve services for elderly and disabled population could be completed through the RTCC plan update (by gathering and publishing information) and through the Mobility Management position (improving services).

Vanessa Sarria stated that a lot of what the deleted tasks under focus area 4 were trying to accomplish would essentially lead to full inventory and need assessment.

Stevie Greathouse stated that new tasks to reach these goals could be created and discussion could be held regarding the deletion of focus area 4. Stevie explained that the specifics of new Focus Area 4 would be dependent upon federal authorizations. Stevie Greathouse also explained that the Mobility Management position would be a part of Focus Area 5.

Sean Moran asked if Dave Marsh of CARTS had indicated whether or not CARTS could sustain such a position without federal or state funds.

Lyle Nelson stated that CARTS was using someone now to partially fulfill the role of the Mobility Manager. In the future, CARTS would like to expand that role.

Stevie Greathouse asked for any further comments regarding the revised Work Program before moving on.

Meredith Highsmith asked if the Work Program assumed JARC/New Freedom funding or calls for projects.

Stevie Greathouse explained that 2 calls for projects were assumed but the bottom-line is that these calls are uncertain.

Meredith Highsmith stated that the JARC and New Freedom program was catching on in the region and that entities wanting these funds caused additional paperwork for staff.

Bill Hamilton stated that there were several questions answered regarding these funding programs, e.g., how much will be available, what is the pool of interest, etc.

Stevie Greathouse stated that as soon as funding amounts were known, the Work Program would be updated.

Stevie Greathouse informed the Committee about the minute order that the State issued that allowed the negotiation of funds up to the amount of \$60,000. Negotiations may be complete by September 1<sup>st</sup> but more than likely they will be complete by October 1<sup>st</sup>. In November and December the minute order is likely to be rescinded and full negotiated funding package will be in place.

Bill Hamilton stated that by the time the RTCC meets in November, \$60,000 should already be negotiated for the first fiscal year, and more will be known about the rest of the negotiation.

Joe Holland stated that at this time grant programs are backed up because of the ARRA (stimulus package).

Lyle Nelson stated that training opportunities were presented at the CTAA conference which should be pursued. The Austin region may conduct pilot programs.

Bill Hamilton stated asked for further discussion about focus areas 3 and 4.

Stevie Greathouse suggested that the RTCC remain focused on providing funding for specific tasks.

Ed Collins stated that money used to pay consultants could be used to pay existing staff instead.

Bill Hamilton stated that 15 minutes needed to be reserved for agenda item 6 and that discussion should move on.

Vanessa Sarria spoke to a concern about incorporating work to somehow consider special populations.

### **3. Presentation on CTAA Transportation Coordination Institute**

#### **4. Mobility Management and “One Stop Shop”**

Bill Hamilton asked Stevie Greathouse to brief the Committee on the CTAA Transportation Coordination Institute.

Stevie Greathouse informed the Committee that the Institute started the evening of Monday, August 3, 2009 and ended mid-day Thursday, August 6, 2009. The 9 member team from the Capital Area learned of coordination examples from other regions and developed ideas for potential work tasks. RTCC members that attended the conference included Vanessa Sarria, Meredith Highsmith, Bill Hamilton, Stevie Greathouse, Joe Holland, Don Cabiness, Jeanie Teel, Lyle Nelson, and David Foster.

The team coalesced around notion of training and outreach. The idea was to develop training curriculum for frontline caseworkers and creating mini-mobility managers. There is no intended big academic exercise. Stevie Greathouse and Vanessa Sarria introduced the idea of a “no wrong door”

policy where clients could sign up for needed social service no matter which agency they entered.

Stevie Greathouse stated that a 511 option was also discussed and that in the meantime, a lot of human infrastructure was present to begin to work with.

Bill Hamilton stated that the Capital Area group met 8 or 9 times and a facilitator worked with the group. The facilitator helped the group stay on task and provided accountability

Stevie Greathouse explained that the format of the conference was a blend of sessions for learning and assembling of teams so that discussions could be held. Plenary sessions allowed participants to interact and build on each other's knowledge and ideas. Networking events were also included. At the end of the conference each team performed a skit.

Bill Hamilton commented that the issue of coordination was looked at from every angle and members of the Capital Area were able to meet with participants from other regions. He asked for attendees to provide a testimony about the conference for the RTCC to hear.

Meredith Highsmith testified that the conference was very useful and a lot of information was provided. She stated that the conference forced the Capital Area team to work together. A session on techniques for communicating with elected officials was especially helpful. She stated that copies of materials from the session could be made available for RTCC members to view.

Sherri Fleming testified that two aspects of the conference were helpful: learning of other communities that have had success in coordination and splitting up the Capital Area group to attend sessions so that all were covered.

Bill Hamilton testified that the conference deserved some praise and was successful in getting everyone to fulfill their roles in the coordination process.

Meredith Highsmith commented that the Capital Area focused on specific issues that regions who are new to the coordination process did not face. Other regions were starting the process and did not have troubles as mature as the ones that the RTCC faces. The Capital Area faces agencies who feel burned-out and have lost motivation.

Vanessa Sarria explained the idea of a 'no wrong door' policy. She stated that there are many doors that lead to transportation. She stated that it has become more clear to see the connection between transportation and health and human services. Health and human services are silos without transportation. She cited a useful case study that was presented at the conference which explained how a non-profit agency on Portland, Oregon helped support agencies. She described it as well organized and asked that the RTCC define who in the Capital Region fills the roles of those who work in the Portland, OR non-profit agency.

Bill Hamilton cited another case study that was presented at the conference: a region in Virginia charged an additional \$3 fee for vehicle registration so that transit coordination efforts would be backed by a steady revenue source.

Dave Fowler stated that participants were dedicated to attending the conference and focused on their work there rather than tending to work back in their offices. He commented that a session on alternative modes of transportation was especially useful and highlighted program examples such as employer funded transit services.

Lyle Nelson testified that certain aspects of the RTCC are mature and others are immature. He stated that the RTCC should consider lessons learned from other regions.

Bill Hamilton reminded the Committee of the different problems that arise in rural areas versus urban areas. He stated that CARPO needed to come back into the conversation. Alliances and relationships with agencies and elected officials need to be established.

Lyle Nelson stated that the RTCC needs to recognize and admit to the problems that hinder coordination in the region.

Stevie Greathouse provided an overview of the process that was used to create an action plan and the mile stones that were included in it. She stated that the next step in the process was to get commitments from people to complete tasks. The timeline covered 1 year. During the months of September, October, and November, the RTCC needs to pull together existing information regarding the family of transportation services that are available in the region. Also, the RTCC needs to create a substantial portion of the training curriculum.

In the following months, the RTCC needs to consider performance measures. Specifically, the RTCC needs to decide what can feasibly be measured. Stevie Greathouse explained the idea of a pre-curriculum

survey for case workers would allow the RTCC to assess the knowledge of transportation services that workers hold.

Next, the RTCC should develop curriculum by pulling together information on the family of transportation services in the region and strike a balance between rural and urban needs.

The next step would use a 'train the trainer' approach. After training, the survey would be administered again. The final step of the action plan would establish performance measures to determine the usefulness of the training curriculum.

Stevie Greathouse informed that Committee that the CTAA offers technical assistance in two areas.

1. Operational efficiency performance measures
2. Transportation services coordination

And advantage of the CTAA training is that it comes with a large body of knowledge. Follow up with TxDOT could inform that RTCC of to take advantage of CTAA training.

Bill Hamilton asked about what could be done in the upcoming months.

Vanessa Sarria replied that the RTCC could start working on the 'no wrong door' policy.

Sherri Fleming stated that there may be potential for Travis County and the City of Austin to put CDBG plans on the same cycle. While creating these plans, opportunities for discussion about transportation may be presented.

Bill Hamilton stated that future transportation funding uncertain it was crucial to enhance coordination so that funding would produce best result.

Vanessa Sarria stated that the skit that Capital Area participants performed illustrated the vision of where the region wants to go. The vision was long term and the RTCC needs to identify the steps needed to get there.

Sherry commented that case workers typically talk the most about services that they are most knowledgeable about and comfortable with. The curriculum is needed to get the case workers more comfortable with transportation services so that they will talk about them more.

Jackie McLaughlin asked whether or not 1 ticket that could be used for all services is possible in the Capital Region.

Lyle Nelson replied that currently 1 ticket will not work. Boundary issues still stand in the way.

Sean Moran asked whether or not it was appropriate to say that clients can get to any location using transit or should location choice issues be presented too? He stated that transit and transit funding was a political issue.

Jackie McLaughlin replied that enough information should be provided so that clients could make an informed location decision.

Sherry Fleming stated that transportation adds to quality of life issues and that candor needs to be used when talking about the issue.

Stevie Greathouse reminded the Committee that commitments need to be gathered regarding who could complete tasks in the following months.

Bill Hamilton proposed that the 9 members that attended the conference form an informal executive committee to keep the conference's inertia going and continue work on the action plan.

## **5. Status Report on Out of Area Service Agreements**

Meredith Highsmith provided an overview of the progress that has been made regarding service agreements with communities outside the Capital Metro service boundary.

Sean Moran asked if Capital Metro had developed service prices for communities.

Meredith Highsmith replied that Capital Metro has developed prices based on built-out service plans and cost allocation models for all modes. She explained that there were a lot of variables involved in developing a price estimate.

Bill Hamilton asked for Meredith Highsmith to explain more about the model in at the next quarterly meeting and provide a template.

## **6. Other Business**

Bill Hamilton moved the discussion to other business and stated that Stevie Greathouse has communicated with RTCC members that have not been coming to meeting. He asked the RTCC to think about the Committee composition, representation, and schedules. He stated that he could possibly support more frequent meetings.

Stevie Greathouse stated that she contacted members who have not attended a meeting or only attended 1 meeting in the past 2 years. The CARTPO representative, business representative, and Workforce solution representative were contacted. The Workforce Solutions representative is still interested in being a part of the committee. There were a few representatives that did not provide any feedback.

Meredith Highsmith suggested that the RTCC consider discussion regarding committee membership and think about involving the Clean Air Force.

Bill Hamilton stated that since the next meeting is scheduled on an election day, he would support a decision to reschedule the meeting on Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. No objections were made.

Meredith Highsmith stated that she would update the meeting schedule on the RTCC website.

#### **7. Public Comment**

Community Transportation Services Inc. from Pflugerville...

#### **8. Adjourn.**

**Next Meeting: 2-4pm November 10, 2009, Capital Metro Board Room**

<http://www.capitalareartcc.org>