

Iowa Transportation Coordination Council

May 9, 2018

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

HIRTA Public Transit

2824 104th Street

Urbandale, IA 50322

MEETING NOTES

I. Call to Order

The May 9, 2018, meeting of the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

ITCC Representatives in attendance:

Kristin Haar, Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) Office of Public Transit, Chair

Jeremy Johnson-Miller, Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit

Julie Bergeson, Iowa Department on Aging

Terry Bergen, Iowa Mobility Manager's Network

Carl Lingen, Iowa Public Transit Association

David Mitchell, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Hugh Lively, RIDES

Loren Bawn, Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services

Joe Drahos, Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning

Roxanne Cogil, Epilepsy Foundation Iowa

Mindi Nguyen, Iowa DOT Motor Vehicle Division

Cord Overton, Iowa Department of Corrections

Tony Filippini, Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Scott Anderson, Access2Care

Michelle Meadors, Public Transit Advocate

II. Introductions

Those in attendance introduced themselves.

III. Review of March 14, 2018, Meeting Notes

No comments or revisions were received.

IV. ITCC Member Agency Spotlight – Iowa DHS Bureau of Refugee Services

Loren Bawn gave a presentation on the work of the Bureau of Refugee Services. The Bureau was founded in 1975 after the South Vietnamese sought refuge in the United States. Iowa is a workforce state for refugees, meaning refugees must quickly find work to get off public assistance programs. The federal government support for a single person, no kids, is \$183 a month for up to eight months. The Bureau is the Promise Jobs provider for refugees, a Welfare to Work program.

Every state has a refugee program. In Iowa, the largest group of refugees over the past decade has been the Burmese, but those from the Congo/other central African countries topped Burma in 2016.

In Iowa, there are three non-governmental agencies assisting refugees: Catholic Charities in Des Moines, and the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids.

In addition to the Bureau, located within the Iowa Department of Human Services, the Department of Education also receives funds to assist refugee students with the transition.

Refugees cannot apply to become a United States citizen for 5 years. Public benefits end at seven years, if not a citizen.

The main purpose for the Bureau is to provide employment support for refugees and their employers. The Bureau assists with job applications, job on-boarding, work transportation for new refugees up to 3 months, cultural awareness training, and community outreach and consultation. In FY 17, the Bureau served 3,183 refugees, made 573 job placements with an average wage of \$10.77 an hour.

Carl Lingen asked if there are any gaps where transportation is needed to employers wanting to hire refugees. Mr. Bawn responded stating that in central Iowa, JBS in Marshalltown and TPI in Newton would be areas of opportunity for transportation services.

Mr. Bawn continued stating that after one year, refugees can get their green card, enabling them to receive all the same benefits a native-born citizen can get.

DMACC has an excellent program to take English as a second language classes to employers for on-site learning.

V. ITCC Retreat Recap

ITCC members present were asked for their impressions or takeaways from the Retreat. Terry Bergen stated there is hard but important coordination beyond existing structures and boundaries, shifting to regional solutions.

Mr. Bawn shared that he took away that barriers might be perception versus reality. He wondered if there is political will to work through this? Mr. Bawn suggested that ITCC needs to build our brand and the groundswell will build that political will.

Mr. Lingen suggested scheduling a policy meeting with the Lt. Governor and Governor to help with getting state department representatives to attend.

Mr. Bawn expressed the opinion that this Council might be taken even more seriously if we had a budget.

Tony Filippini suggested the ITCC start reviewing the Passenger Transportation Plans put together by the planning agencies around the state. This would give the ITCC the big picture for needs and planned projects.

Mr. Lingen added that ITCC might want to get on the legislature's Transportation Subcommittee agenda to discuss our work.

Hugh Lively suggested inviting a member of the governor's office to attend to increase the credibility of the group. And, if not the governor's office, Mr. Bawn proposed inviting the Department of Management or Department of Administrative Services.

Mr. Bergen asked if we could be the group that has all the data? Number of rides, health impact, etc.

David Mitchell asked how we make mobility management a strategy to help with the objectives identified during the Retreat? Jeremy Johnson-Miller responded that locals are already funding community outreach and new mobility manager positions. Plans are to invite those persons in those positions to join the Iowa Mobility Manager's Network.

Mr. Bergen echoed that the Council does need to cultivate and encourage mobility management.

Chair Haar reminded the ITCC members of the Goals discussed at the Retreat and the top Objectives identified by the Retreat attendees. At the Retreat, attendees identified Goal 3, Objective 1 as a top priority, "Work on ITCC's 'brand' to define why we exist, our purpose, and objectives." Roxanne Cogil encouraged the group to come up with an "elevator speech" any of us could use to convince new agencies to join the ITCC. The group further discussed the need for a dedicated ITCC meeting or session with a consultant to help define the vision, mission and purpose.

From the discussion today, Chair Haar also thought one of the top Objectives would be Goal 1, Objective 3, "Identify passenger transportation gaps and redundancies." Part of this Goal's work could include reviewing State Transit Assistance Special Project (STA SP) applications the DOT receives from public transit agencies. The ITCC could make funding recommendations and be knowledgeable about the projects being proposed around the state. Michelle Meadors suggested we have the applicant present their STA SP application to the ITCC and give periodic progress reports.

VI. ITCC Report to Easter Seals/NCMM

Chair Haar shared draft report to be submitted to Easter Seals and the National Center for Mobility Management summarizing coordination in Iowa and the ITCC retreat process. This report will be presented at the Passenger Transportation Summit and must be submitted to Easter Seals by the end of May. If any ITCC member has comments, suggestions, or edits to the report, they are invited to submit them in the next week to Chair Haar.

VII. Approved Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 910

Chair Haar informed the group the Iowa Transportation Commission did approve the edits to Iowa Administrative Code 761 Chapter 910 discussed several months ago with the ITCC. This chapter's main edit was changing the ITCC's required meeting schedule from monthly to quarterly, although the Chair does not intend to change the current structure of meeting bi-monthly at this time. The rule's change does offer flexibility in meeting when needed.

VIII. ITCC Member Roundtable

Chair Haar shared two quick items. First, she was pleased the Federal Transit Administration chose Iowa to schedule meetings pertaining to transportation coordination to report back to the federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. The focus group in which the Chair participated was very gratifying, hearing about why ITCC members stay active in the ITCC and what they considered to be ITCC's recent accomplishments.

Secondly, the Chair shared she would be attending the Department of Human Right's sponsored documentary, *Bottom Dollar*, at the State Historical Building that evening. The documentary was to show the effects of paying persons with disabilities sub-minimum wage.

The remainder of this item's discussion was tabled due to lack of time.

IX. IMMN Update

Mr. Bergen reported on the recent work of each of Iowa's mobility managers.

The Region 8 mobility manager has been working to get low income employees from Maquoketa to Davenport to work at Family Dollar. She has also been working on projects to transport kids to after school programs.

The Region 1 mobility manager reported working on shuttle from Postville to Decorah to the free clinic on Thursdays. While that bus is in Decorah, EARL Public Transit is also doing a fixed route to enable college students and the general public to run errands around town. The regional public transit agency is also offering transit services to cultural events, calling it the "Cultural Connection."

The Johnson County mobility manager hosted a Senior transportation forum on May 8. This forum highlighted the services provided for seniors.

The Region 11 mobility manager recently hosted a Beyond the Bus symposium. The HIRTA transit agency is also about to launch a customer portal and app to schedule and pay for rides.

The DART, Des Moines, mobility manager is new so he has been attending training and getting settled into the position.

The Region 13 community outreach coordinator has been working on employment transportation, with SWITA starting routes from Atlantic to Red Oak and a route to Tyson in Council Bluffs. She is also wanting to provide travel training in Council Bluffs/Omaha.

Mr. Bergen himself, as Linn County's mobility coordinator, has been working to find funding for persons who can't afford trips, focusing on medical and essential trips. He has also been working with Cedar Rapids transit on updating their ADA paratransit application and on travel training.

X. Statewide Mobility Manager Update

Mr. Johnson-Miller shared that he has been working with Mindi Nguyen on updating the DOT website to be more inclusive of various modes of transportation and of the different travel needs of the public.

XI. Adjournment/Next Meeting Date and Location

**Passenger Transportation Summit
May 24, 2018
9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
FFA Enrichment Center
DMAcc Campus, Ankeny, IA**

**ITCC
July 11, 2018
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Polk County River Place, Room 3A
2309 Euclid Avenue, Des Moines, IA**

The meeting adjourned at 1:42 p.m.