

Iowa Transportation Coordination Council

July 9, 2014, Meeting

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Polk County River Place, Room 3A

2309 Euclid Avenue

Des Moines, IA 50310

MEETING NOTES

I. Call to Order

The July 9, 2014, meeting of the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

ITCC Representatives in attendance:

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

Ruth Thompson, Iowa Department on Aging

Jeremy Johnson-Miller, Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit

Kay Fisk, Neighborhood Transportation Services

David Mitchell, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Tim Weltzin, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise

Scott Anderson, TMS

Claire Richmond, AARP

Hugh Lively, Regional Transit Authority – RIDES

Jennifer Roberts, Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning

Loren Bawn, Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services

Erin Mullenix, Iowa League of Cities

II. 2014 Passenger Transportation Summit Wrap-Up

Kristin Haar outlined the eight top issues surfacing at the May 15, 2014, Passenger Transportation Summit in Marshalltown. Those issues were:

- Late night hospital discharges
- Communication and availability of services
- Baby Boomer transportation needs
- Senior isolation in rural areas
- Shared use of vehicles
- Transportation to Amana-based employment
- Employment training transportation
- Evening and weekend service (employment/Waiver)

The ITCC members went through each item individually to discuss ways to provide solutions.

Late night hospital discharges – Jeremy Johnson-Miller reported that HIRTA is working with Madison County and nursing homes there to transport residents discharged from the hospital after public transit is closed. Kay Fisk added this is also an issue in Cedar Rapids and her

agency, NTS, may be able to fill the need as the overnight hours are when they operate. Hugh Lively stated that RIDES is awaiting the return of contracts from several hospitals and nursing homes to begin offering this type of overnight service for those discharged from the hospital. RIDES will use on-call drivers willing to work the late hours. No rides have been provided yet, but Hugh offered to provide updates at future ITCC Meetings. Loren Bawn asked if RIDES could capture statistics on this service so savings to the hospitals, nursing homes, and other funders could be shown. Hugh and Kristin Haar both agreed that statistics could be kept and perhaps a general ambulance trip cost or something similar could be used to show the savings.

Communication and availability of services – Kristin stated this is a continual issue. While public transit is available statewide, many still do not know about it despite efforts to make it clear the service is open to the public. Jeremy noted the stigma of public transit, especially in the rural areas, as being only for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Loren believes a one-call/one-click system of information and referral would help with this so persons know their options. Following up on that, Kay added that the Cedar Rapids area has the 363-RIDE telephone number and website for persons seeking transportation information. This was started by the Cedar Rapids mobility manager. Jennifer suggested that urban areas would want to get their systems on Google Transit as that is the resource used by younger passengers. Kristin suggested the Iowa Public Transit Association could apply to the Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit for some marketing funds to make a commercial applicable to the whole state emphasizing public transit is for everyone.

Baby boomer transportation needs and senior isolation in rural areas – Scott Anderson suggested talking to Siouxland Regional Transit about their services offered once a week to communities in the region to ensure seniors and the general public have transportation to appointments and other quality of life services and activities. Claire Richmond stated that AARP through its Age-Friendly Communities initiative is hosting a walkable community workshop in the MLK neighborhood in Des Moines on July 30.

Transportation to Amana-based employment – Kristin stated this item is being addressed in two ways. The Iowa Legislature passed a bill mandating a commuter corridor study of Linn and Johnson Counties, which could branch out to cover Amana; due back to the Legislature in December 2014. Also, the Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit has funds that could be used for providing transportation from Cedar Rapids to Amana but will wait for the results of the study to award them to Region 10. Loren added that Norwalk companies are having the same issues. He has been in talks with Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) about providing transportation for refugees to the employers there. Jennifer suggested looking at the turnover rates at Winnebago since the North Iowa Commuter Express bus started and monetize that number, assuming the rate has dropped. Scott noted that HyVee still transports people from Chariton to West Des Moines and suggested contacting them for data. Tim recalled a Florida State University study, monetizing what having transportation means for various services. He will send a link to the group.

Employment training transportation – Loren believes that Iowa is not facing a worker shortage, it is facing a skills shortage. Kristin noted the Iowa's Information Technology,

Healthcare, Utilities, and Manufacturing (IHUM) Network developed to increase the education and training in those high-growth industries. Iowa Central Community College has contacted the Iowa DOT to assist with wording in the Iowa DOT's application to the Ladders of Opportunity grant on needing vehicles to provide transportation to employment training. Kay added that accessing employment and employment training are the areas she's emphasized when lobbying the Iowa Legislature on the Employment Rides Initiative bill. Hugh stated that public transit regions 3 and 5 are partnering to transport persons from Storm Lake to Iowa Central Community College for employment training.

V. Member Roundtable

The Member Roundtable item was moved up allowing all to share during lunch.

Loren explained that in addition to the Norwalk businesses needing employees, Ames also is facing a worker shortage with an unemployment rate around 2-percent. He is talking with CyRide, DART, and HIRTA about the issue.

Ruth Thompson shared that the Iowa Department on Aging (IDA) is statutorily required to be the No Wrong Door through the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), serving those 18+ with disabilities or those 65+ with no disabilities. IDA is applying for an ADRC planning grant to assist with a 3-year plan including information referral and assistance, independent living (training and transportation), and moving people out of institutional living. IDA is also working with the Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit on integrating mobility coordinators into the No Wrong Door sites to get better state-wide coverage of mobility coordinators. Ruth is also interested in surveying the Area Agencies on Aging about transportation in the regions and would welcome any question ideas the ITCC members would have.

Jennifer continues her work with the refugee service planning group in Polk County. Some issues arising from those meetings include access to affordable driver education, travel training, and those refugees eligible are not using the non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) available to them. For the NEMT, TMS did a training for case managers on using the language assistance line and made cards for assisting in scheduling TMS trips.

Jeremy explained his duties at the Iowa DOT Office of Public Transit as both a Transit Programs Administrator and State-wide Mobility Coordinator, taking over Angie O'Brien's duties after her resignation this spring.

Kay informed that while the focus of their organization, NTS, was nighttime employment transportation while public transit is not operating, they are working on daytime activities as well such as Kids on Course, providing meals to kids needing nutrition during the summer, and a book mobile. In Cedar Rapids, there is a privately-owned trolley from Bettendorf doing charter work, so with NTS' next bus purchase they may do a bus wrap to look like a trolley to providing some competition. Kay has also been working on organizing a bike race fundraiser for NTS and on the Employment Rides Initiative.

Hugh stated in addition to all the other services mentioned during the meeting, RIDES is also working on providing more transportation to the Lakes Corridor between Spencer and the Okoboji area and may do a link with Sioux Falls transit as many medical trips are made from Northwest Iowa to Sioux Falls.

Tim Weltzin updated the group on the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) Request for Information (RFI) on NEMT services. Including the responses from the RFI, a Request for Proposals will be issued this fiscal year for Medicaid NEMT services with the successful bidder starting July 1, 2015. A few of the questions asked in the RFI were about including Medicaid waiver transportation in the NEMT brokerage. Because there is a large difference in trips for NEMT and waiver trips, IME is not going to pursue this idea immediately. Tim also announced that IME Director Jennifer Vermeer resigned, effective August 21, 2014, and Julie Lovelady will serve as interim director.

Scott had no additional TMS updates.

Erin Mullenix informed the group the Iowa League of Cities would be working on a 5-part series on transportation in CityScape magazine.

Claire had no additional AARP updates.

III. Mobility Management in Iowa: Future, Growth, Sustainability

Jeremy highlighted the Iowa mobility coordinator map showing locations around the state. There is a need for sustainability funding for these positions and the idea of asking the state legislature has been suggested. Kay stated she would be happy to carry the message while talking about the Employment Rides Initiative, but would need to start organizing very soon. She emphasized the Iowa DOT and Iowa Public Transit Association lobbyists must be involved and informed, as well. An education process, especially in areas without mobility managers, will need to occur. Kay suggested the human service message won't carry well and other angles of mobility management benefits, such as economic development need to be highlighted. Loren asked if the amount of money saved because of mobility managers could be calculated to assist with the message.

IV. No Wrong Door Project Update

Kristin updated the group on the No Wrong Door/Single Entry Point/One-Call, One-Click information and referral project. The Iowa DOT, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, and Iowa Department on Aging are working together on the statewide network. The system will use the LifeLong Links website and toll-free telephone number, therefore the IDA is updating the LifeLong Links logo and website. A vendor has been selected as the communication system consultant and final details of the contract are being worked out. Database discussions include Iowa Family Caregiver and Iowa COMPASS. It is hoped that Iowa COMPASS can manage the combined database as the University of Iowa-based organization is already under contract to the IME.

VI. IMMN Update

Jeremy provided the Iowa Mobility Managers Network update, stating the group had discussed sustainability funding and wanting to bring the Easter Seals Project Action Travel Training course for small urban and rural areas to Iowa.

VII. Statewide Mobility Manager Update

No further updates.

VIII. Other Items of Interest

None presented.

IX. Adjournment/Next Meeting Date and Location:

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2014, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Polk County River Place, Room 3A, 2309 Euclid Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310.