

Walworth County Board of Supervisors
May 4, 2020 Transportation Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114
100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Russell at 1:30 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present, either in-person or through remote attendance: Chair Nancy Russell, Vice Chair Andrew Kerwin; Health and Human Services (HHS) Board Chair Ken Monroe, HHS Administrative Analyst Lisa Kadlec, and Citizen Members Eric Russow, Michael McKay and Shawn Davenport. A quorum was declared.

Others in Attendance, either in-person or through remote attendance:

County Staff: County Administrator Mark Luberd; Office Supervisor/Mobility Manager Nicole Hill; Senior Accountant Natasha Gantenbein

Members of the Public: Cynthia Simonsen, Executive Director of VIP Services

On motion by Citizen Member Michael McKay, second by Supervisor Ken Monroe, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.

On motion by Supervisor Monroe, second by Vice Chair Andrew Kerwin, the March 2, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

Public Comment – There was none.

New Business

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding for Rural Transit Systems
Office Supervisor/Mobility Manager Nicole Hill said the County received notification that CARES Act funding has allocated 55 million dollars to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for rural transit, which is three times the typical amount of federal funds received. The DOT said they expect these funds will last 2-3 years and will cover 100% of net operating expenses, retroactive to January 20, 2020. She noted we are typically only allocated funding which covers 50-54% of our operating expenses, so this is great news for Walworth County as we were short of funding last year. She said we have received the grant agreement and the County will be reimbursed an amount not to exceed \$1,365,556 for 2020, which matches the amount requested on the grant application. With the additional funding, she does not anticipate needing a budget amendment at the end of the year. Citizen Member McKay asked when the funding will be received and Hill said it is typically received in two payments, one in May or June and another in the fall.

- Ordinance No. 1210-04/20 – Amending Section 30-286 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances Relative to the Fares for Shared-Ride Transit Service (Referral from the County Board of Supervisors)
Chair Russell noted this ordinance was sent back from the County Board due to notification of the CARES Act funding. Administrator Mark Luberd said some guidance is recommended to the County Board, as a deficit may not need to be offset and demand has decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also noted that by not increasing fares at this time, the County could provide some relief to riders. He concluded by saying if the economy bounces back in the future, a fare increase could be considered at that time. **Supervisor Monroe made a motion, second by Citizen Member McKay, to rescind the increase in fares due to the CARES Act funding and leave fares as they are currently, with this decision superseding any previous recommendation to increase fares.** Hill noted the DOT agreed it was a logical step to not increase fares at this time. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- Discussion regarding fundraising options

Vice Chair Andrew Kerwin said prior to COVID-19, he had been looking into fundraising options. He said this discussion could be revisited at a later meeting, as it is not relevant given the current situation.

- Correspondence from Bob Halvorson from Golden Year of Lake Geneva

Hill said she received an email from Bob Halvorson who works at Golden Years expressing concern over employees not being able to make appointments for their residents. Executive Director of VIP Services Cynthia Simonsen said Mr. Halvorson has called VIP and self-disclosed that he is a member of the maintenance staff. She clarified that in the policy related to the Shared-Ride program, it is intended to be for those who can make their own arrangements and if they require assistance, they do not qualify for the Shared-Ride program. Due to HIPPA regulations, VIP was unable to answer Mr. Halvorson's questions at the time of his call. Luberda noted the County would want to be cautious having a third party call to make appointments for residents, due to the issues that could arise from missed calls, and the consequences such as being banned from the service. Luberda recommended we place the correspondence on file and take no further action at this time. **Supervisor Monroe made a motion to place this item on file. No second was made and the motion failed.** Supervisor Monroe said he understands if someone requested assistance from staff, but if a third party makes the request this could cause too many possible issues. Vice Chair Kerwin asked if the request would be acceptable if it was made by the Head of an institution such as Golden Years. Simonsen said they have contracts with a number of nursing homes that are unrelated to this program and each has their own requirements. She said they do have people who are able to call and make their own arrangements who live at an assisted living facility and they are able to use the Shared-Ride. Simonsen added the biggest issue is if a third party makes an appointment for travel for someone who is unable to travel independently and is not aware of the situation. VIP wants to ensure they are transporting everyone safely. Hill said she did respond to Mr. Halvorson and provided him with the call-in information for this meeting, but he did not express his interest in attending. Vice Chair Kerwin said it is difficult to know the answer for Mr. Halvorson as there are not enough details known to the specifics of each situation. **Supervisor Monroe made a motion, second by Chair Russell, to place Halvorson's letter on file.** Chair Russell suggested Hill contact Halvorson and explain what was discussed at the meeting. **Motion carried 7-0.**

[At 2:07 p.m. Citizen Member Russow left the meeting briefly.]

- AARP Community Challenge Grant

Chair Russell said she believes the application process is overly complicated. **Chair Russell made a motion, second by Supervisor Monroe, to place this item on file.** Hill agreed it is a very complex application process and the deadline is May 15th, which does not leave much time to complete it. She suggested reviewing this next year when there is more time. **Motion carried 6-0.**

[At 2:10 p.m. Citizen Member Russow returned to the meeting.]

Transportation Financial Summary

Gantenbein presented the summary included in the packet, which included data from February and March 2020. She noted rides significantly decreased in March, presumably due to COVID-19, and estimated this trend will continue in April. Gantenbein noted there will be a budget amendment required at the end of the year, but it will not be to increase the tax levy amount. Additionally, because the Shared-Ride program will be funded 100%, the portion of the 85.21 grant amount that would have been applied to the Shared-Ride program will need to be placed in a trust.

Monthly Ridership

Hill presented the graphs provided in the meeting packet and noted the decrease in ridership due to COVID-19. Discussion ensued regarding demand patterns. Luberda noted the CARES Act funding provides an opportunity to increase efficiency in the program.

VIP Services report of any “turn down” requests for service

Simonsen said there were no “turn down” requests to report. Chair Russell asked Simonsen if VIP is taking any steps to protect the drivers from COVID-19. Simonsen said they list which vehicles are used for medical transport and which are used for shopping and employment. All drivers are required to wear masks and high-touch areas of the vehicles are sanitized between each passenger. The drivers for medical trips are also required to wear gloves. Their facility has a 360 Clorox machine and it is used to sanitize the vehicles used for medical trips nightly, and the ones used for shopping/employment trips once a week. She said they are in the process of developing plans to further deal with this moving forward. She noted they have a very small supply of N95 masks for drivers and they have ordered thermometers. She added that last week, they purchased plastic shields to assist those clients who do not tolerate wearing a mask well and noted passengers are not required to wear a mask.

Announcements – There were none.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for June 1, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion and second by Supervisor Monroe and Citizen Member Russow, Chair Russell adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.