



Town of Sudbury

<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

Zoom Virtual Meeting
Sudbury Transportation Committee
Minutes
Friday, May 22, 2020
1:30 PM

Please click the link below to join the virtual Sudbury Transportation Committee Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/82562731434>

For audio only, call the number below and enter the Meeting ID on your telephone keypad:

Call In Number: 978-639-3366 or 470-250-9358

Meeting ID: 825-6273-1434

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Sandy Lasky, Alice Sapienza, Adam Duchesneau, Doug Frey, Debra Galloway

Core Members Absent: Dan Nason

Advisory Group Members Present: None

Guests: None

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 1:38 PM.

Selection of Clerk

Debra Galloway volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Making the Connections Pilot Update

Adam Duchesneau reported that the dashboard agreement and waiver went from the Town to Uber about 2 weeks ago, and he should be hearing back from them soon. The multi-municipal Making the Connections pilot project is on hold for the time being, as the focus has been on communities dealing with the COVID-19 outbreak and the opportunity for a special emergency grant from MAP. The Urgent COVID-19 Taxicab, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnership grant offers communities the opportunity to apply for funds to provide needed transportation during the pandemic.

Urgent COVID-19 Taxi-Livery Grant

Adam reported that many communities are interested in this grant that is for collaborations with taxi/Livery companies to provide transportation for passengers or deliveries of groceries or other critical needs. Applications can be sent in now and are being accepted on a rolling basis until June 12. Some communities have already received funds. Alice and Adam believe this grant could be a good test for the “Making the Connections” pilot, which we cannot implement right now due to COVID-19 safety restrictions on the use of TNCs. It was pointed out that working with taxi companies can give more assurance that they will follow the CDC guidelines for safe service as they are working with employees rather than independent contractors.

The grant funds are targeted to serve many of the same populations that we were targeting with the Making the Connections grant (older adults, persons with disabilities, financially vulnerable, veterans). The grant funds would cover 100% of the ride cost as well as cost of cleaning after each ride and do not require any match from the town. Moreover, there is a 5% additional fund available for administrative purposes. The transportation services covered by the grant that the group discussed are: non-COVID, non-emergency medical transportation, grocery shopping, workforce transportation for essential workers, and possibly meal/food pantry/grocery/prescription delivery.

Although Alice and Debra spoke with one of the taxi companies, Tommy’s Taxi, they received different answers about what would be required to collaborate. Tommy’s Taxi Manager JoAnne Thompson told Debra that she would need all ride requests and pertinent information sent to Tommy’s the day before the ride. Alice had the impression from her discussion with Jo-Anne Thompson that we could send a list of approved riders and riders could then call to schedule their own rides. Alice and Debra will plan a conference call with Jo-Anne next week to clarify this procedure as well as other details about how the service would work.

Alice also indicated that there could be save cost savings if some recurring rides or routes are identified and Tommy’s is able to station a taxi somewhere in Sudbury to be ready to respond, thereby eliminating the travel cost from downtown Framingham (\$10).

Both Debra and Alice were impressed with the cleaning protocols shared by Ms. Thompson. In phone conversations, she indicated that she was following CDC guidelines for safety.

Debra shared that Framingham’s Callahan Center is using Tommy’s Taxi for rides. Alice indicated Tommy’s provides transportation for BayPath and SMOC as well.

Adam indicated that the application process is pretty simple and does not require a lot of detail. We may want to have a ride limit, for example, 4-5 rides per month, per person.

JFK transportation would most likely be used mainly for the WAV service (wheelchair accessible vehicles). They charge \$50/hour, with a \$150 minimum.

Alice noted that we need input from Bethany Hadvab, Town Social Worker, as she knows many of the financially vulnerable residents in town. However, due to the pandemic, Bethany is overwhelmed

with work as she is part of the Board of Health. Debra will reach out to her by phone to elicit her input.

Alice mentioned that Charlie Dunn or another representative of the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce might be able to add information about business needs for transportation of employees.

It was acknowledged we may be able to adapt the GoSudbury application to use for registration for this program. We do want to make it simple to use and process.

Due to time and funding limitations, Alice suggested it might make sense to utilize the Transportation committee members to reach out to potential users of this transportation.

The rides will be somewhat costly, as the MAPC grant will pay for cost of ride in addition to time for cleaning, though not for the cleaning supply cost. The higher cost will result in a small number of rides provided. We will try to minimize cost as much as possible. On the other hand, there is a good chance if we spend the funds, we can reapply and get additional funding.

Sandy wondered if the taxi companies take the taxi out of service for cleaning between passengers? This could increase the cost significantly.

We will also need to develop a way to help passengers know how to be safe on these rides. In addition, when discussing the grant we must make it clear that these are emergency stop-gap funds

Debra feels there are some positives to this grant idea, we would be able to start some service sooner rather than later, especially as the Senior Center vans are not able to provide transportation safely right now. The concern about the grant is that it could have a high time demand if staff need to book rides. We also need to get a commitment from the companies about sanitation procedures.

Debra reported that her staff have taken 5 calls requesting medical transportation over the course of the last several weeks. There may be undocumented demand for medical transportation in addition, due to the suspension of FISH volunteer medical transportation service. Sandy reported that she is aware that many medical practices are now opening up again for appointments, which could also spur demand.

JFK Transportation has 2 WAV vans (wheelchair-accessible vehicles). They are in use a lot already, if we are funded JFK will provide us with a schedule of availability. Doug reported that there have been very few requests so far from persons in disability community, at least to the Commission on Disability. There could be requests going to Town Social Worker Bethany, or people could be staying at home due to virus.

The Grant does offer the opportunity to use 5% for administration costs. This is not a lot but could be helpful for the registration process.

The Agreement with taxi companies will need to be reviewed by Town Counsel which could take some time as Counsel is very busy with all of the changes necessary for governmental functions due to COVID-19.

Adam stated that we need realistic cost for taxi ride that includes the cleaning cost, so that we can develop an accurate estimate of the number of rides to be provided, and create an appropriate budget. We also need to make sure the tip is included, to eliminate any handling of money by the passengers for safety reasons.

Adam indicated the Planning office could possibly receive and process applications for this short-term project. Debra also indicated the Senior Center might be location for applications and registration. Adam and Debra agreed to discuss this in a separate meeting.

Adam heard back from Travis Pollack that Sherborn might have a sample agreement with a taxi company to serve as a model for us. We hope to receive this soon so it can be used to develop our agreement.

Action Items

Alice and Debra will talk with Tommy's Taxi re: cost including cleaning, dispatch process.

Doug will report back about any wheelchair transportation.

Motion: Adam made a motion that the Transportation Committee supports submission of the Urgent COVID-19 Taxi/Livery Partnership Grant. Seconded by Sandy Lasky. The motion was supported unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The March 2, 2020 minutes were unanimously approved with minor edits.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2020 at 10:30 AM on the Zoom videoconferencing platform.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made at 2:52 PM, seconded and Committee unanimously agreed.