

Transit Action Group (TAG)
Tuesday, March 4, 2025 11am-1pm
ECIA Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Present: Michelle Schmitt (Hills & Dales), Bill Stumpf, Stacie Scott (RTA), Paula Paider Licht (United Way), Harley Pothoff (DBQ Co Supervisor), Mary Halfill (Goodwill Industries), Margee Woywood (Goodwill Industries), Ann Morris (Crescent Community Healthcare Center), Gail Kuhle(RTA), Jack Studier (ECIA), Stacie Speirs (NEI3A), Ann Pusatari (Unified Therapy), Rachel (Unified Therapy), Jason White (Greater Dubuque), Ann McDonough (DBQ Co Supervisor), Samantha Berglin (MHDS),

Introductions & Agency updates:

Mary Halfill Goodwill – New Recreation Therapist position, works with clients with healthy meal planning and exercise--Tracking data and growth. Bowling League, 8 weeks @ Round2, starting April. Bus trip for baseball game.

- Maree Woywood added, Goodwill will be starting to offer Vocational training to all members of the community. Will be serving Community clients and will be using Transfer Technology. Transfer sells virtual reality headsets-career based. They've put a team together that will be working with individual's w/disabilities and community clients virtual reality career exploration. It covers 9 different industries of work and individuals will be able to go on to get a certificate or AA degree through NICC if it needs a 4 year degree. The other is Smart Living, pursuing technology that they'll be using with their site homes.

Paula Paider Licht (United Way), Fundraiser, Captains of the Cocktail for mixologists or a Mocktail for non alcoholic beverages in April 2025.

Bill Stumpf (Gaurdian/Kyle)—Kyle started using new communication device about 1 year ago and getting speech therapy services through Unified Therapy. He has embraced the new device and is doing extremely well. Device is called Ablenet and it's covered by Medicaid. Kyles duties are loaded on this also and He uses at work.

Rachel (Unified Therapy Services)—

Ann Pusatari (Unified Therapy Services)—Unified is expanding and hiring speech therapists. Seeing an increase of individuals using transportation to get to/from their appointments and they've noticed a big improvement in people arriving and departing in timely manners.

Stacie Spiers (NEIAAA)-1st draft of NEIAAA's big plan just submitted. They've partnered with the Shaloam center that will give breaks/assistance to care givers.

Harley Pothoff, Chair Dbq County Supervisors/ RTA Board Member – mentioned about transportation services picking up from where city services end.

Jason White (Greater Dubuque Development), mentioned of Commuter that the city of DBQ received grant funds to run the service 2 times a day (early in the AM and late in the evening). Scott (RTA), mentioned that RTA picks up individuals from the Simmons business that isn't serviced by the city on a regular basis and that RTA will be meeting with Simmons and will also reach out to Weber Metals.

Ann McDonough (DBQ Co Supervisor)– shared story re Epworth resident needing assistance. Ann stressed that even though Agencies services are listed online doesn't mean that everyone has access to obtaining that information.

Jason White (Greater DBQ Development City of DBQ)—met with 59 employers last quarter, public transportation listed as #17 for barrier for employment. Made mention of Van Pool with Enterprise that RTA has launched.

- Ann McDonough shared University of DBQ is RTA's first Van Pool. Stacie Scott (RTA) shared that RTA matches a portion of funds from UD to pay for that service. RTA accumulates monthly stats. Scott also mentioned that we're hoping to get additional van pools running. To have a van pool it must run outside of the Jule/City transportation services/hours and at least one driver that has a license and passes the background check.
- Margee Woywood asked if we could have a meeting with more details, Scott stated we could set one up.

Samantha Berglin (DBQ Co disability coordinator MHDS)- East Central Region was awarded district 7 in the new map that was created for the new disability access point, still deciphering what this will entail. Iowa PCA will be administrative service organization for the whole state effective July 1st, 2025 (mental health services as well as substance abuse).

Stacie (RTA) – fully staffed with drivers. Please reach out to add services evening/weekend & has started planning for summer transportation. Management is scheduling one-on-one visits.

Agenda item #3: Meeting Date and Times for 2025 Tag meetings (Michelle)

- Tag meeting dates for 2025 (6/3, 9/2, & 12/3)

Agenda item #4: Appointment of Board Chair and Vice Chair (Michelle / Bill)

- Michelle opened discussions about appointing board chair. It was determined that both Michelle Schmitt and Bill Stumpf will continue Board Chair and Vice Chair.

Agenda item #5: PTP update (Jack/Dan)

- PTP update (Jack Studier/ECIA), Feb 1st submitted 1st draft to IDOT and waiting to hear back with comments for changes needed to be made. Jack went over the PTP plan
 - Stumpf mentioned that public transportation can be more difficult for individuals with disabilities due to timings of pick up and drop off windows. This can pose safety concerns.
 - Samantha (MHDS) mentioned making certain signage of transportation services are clearly identified on transit vehicles.

Agenda item # 6: Grant updates (Jack/ECIA)

- Mid-year renewal for United Way grant was completed and waiting to hear status of new funds for upcoming grant cycle. We should hear around the end of April per Paula at United Way.
- Farmers market grant coming to an end in Jackson Co. Requests from tag members regarding upcoming potential sponsors or grant opportunities to fund some of these area project in the DBQ county areas.

Agenda item #7: Evening/Summer transportation needs (Discussion)

- Scott(RTA) mentioned RTA planning for summer transportation needs for agencies
- Margee (Goodwill) mentioned they provide own transportation as their staff works one-on-one. Perhaps RTA could assist with water park transportation –Scott will reach out to get details to see if RTA will be able to provide services.
- Michelle—Hills & Dales-would like to set up a time to meet with Gail/Stacie (RTA)
- Ann McDonough (DBQ CO Sup)-mentioned providing services for camp courageous, RTA will reach out to Hills& Dales to follow up
- Bill Stumpf, mentioned miracle league open gym at Hillcrest—on Saturdays and reach out to Janet Beau (City of DBQ) for more details.
- Margee Woywood mentioned reaching out to Marita Theisen Daycare at Steeple Square to see if they have any transportation needs.

- Ann McDonough mentioned checking into the DBQ Co Fair for potential transportation routes/needs

Agenda item #8: Other Topics for discussion

- Bill Stumpf asked about Iowa City transportation services for medical appointments
 - Scott mentioned in the past RTA offered travel to/from IA City on a rotation, a couple/few days of the month.
 - Ann McDonough mentioned checking into looking for a grant to be able to provide services for this unmet need.
 - Stumpf suggested reaching out to IA city to see if there is a specific day/date that offers more clinics and Ann added to reach out regarding the unmet need to Disabilities Access Point when in place.
- Ann McDonough self care/mental health, find joy in each day. Maybe meet more frequently. Also mentioned to be aware & to be certain take good self-care. Tasks before us may be more with less
- Samantha mentioned handicap parking in the downtown area, city of DBQ, is very limited. Mentioned doing a campaign to bring awareness to the issue.
 - Margee Woywood added that she's on the ARC Advocates board. Margee mentioned free signs are available to have posted on businesses for individuals with disabilities and needs for walkers/lifts.
- Ann Morris (Crescent) added that some of the new Medicare/Medicaid plans are changing transportation. Limiting rides and/or miles so they may not be able to get to IA City or may run out of miles. This is happening so just giving everyone a heads up that this is happening.

*Next Meeting- Tuesday, June 3rd at 11:00am