

Dubuque County Transit Action Group (TAG)
Tuesday, May 4, 2021 11am-1pm
ECIA Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Present: Bill Stumpf (ICIE/Parent Advocate), Carol Gebhart (Opening Doors), Dan McDonald (GDDC), Ann McDonough (Dbq Count Board of Supervisors), Greg Zars (NEIAAA), Jacob Ironside (City of Dbq Jule Transit), Lori Anderson (Dubuque Schools), Margee Woywood (Goodwill Industries), Michelle Schmitt (Hills & Dales), Paula Paider-Licht (United Way), Russ Stecklein (City of Dbq Jule Transit), Ron Axtell (HACAP), Brenda Klepper (Grand River Medical Group), Kelly Heysinger (Unified Therapy), Ann Pusateri (Unified Therapy), Robin Nims (ITP), Samantha Jay (Unified Therapy) & Tricia Wagner (RTA)

Introductions & Agency updates:

Paula Paider-Licht, United Way – just sent out second year allocations to 31 funded partners. Next year will be completely competitive again. 211 is multilingual, 24-7 number to call for referrals. Check to make sure your agency info is accurate and up to date on the website. Helping at the vaccine clinic at the mall.

Bill Stumpf, ICIE/Parent Advocate – congress is drafting HCBS Access Act, and Biden administration is working on finding people who have fallen through the cracks, getting rid of waiting lists and increasing wages for direct support professionals, so as increased access to HCBS happens, those individuals will need more transportation which is good for RTA.

Michelle Schmitt, Hills & Dales – thankful for the IDD grant from IDOT through RTA, its helped to getting those individuals back a normal lifestyle and filling the gap in staffing!

Margee Woywood, Goodwill – Goodwill week, celebrate partnerships, families, people serving and share the story behind the store. What the revenue funds support; send people to Margee and she'd love to share the story.

Ann McDonough, Chair Dbq County Supervisors/ RTA Board – vaccination rate for Dubuque County for 65+ is just under 90% so doing great. Age 16+ vaccination rate is 61%, so exceeding both state and federal level. New administrator at Sunnycrest, Danni Edima from Hawkeye Care.

Carol Gebhart, Opening Doors – back to business as usual. Have been able to place some people in housing programs, and opened room for more people in their program.

Jake Ironside, The Jule – still fare free for all services, and run up until 6:45ish. July 1 looking at going back to charging fares and expanding back to running until 9:00 on week nights if have enough drivers.

Dan McDonald, GDDC – gave his update on search for additional members for our TAG committee, from smaller cities in Dubuque County. See agenda item 6.

Greg Zars, NEIAAA – Vaccine distribution has slowed down. Moving back to hot delivered meals June 1 and hope to have the Senior Centers fully operational shortly after that. Contact Life Long Links for farmers market checks for clients.

Lori Anderson, Dubuque Schools – Seniors last day is May 21, and others June 4. New partnership with Swiss Valley Goodwill Iowa Works program, 8 students employed working 30+ hours at Swiss Valley, and Goodwill picked up the RFP this time.

Russ Stecklein, The Jule – just hired new Director, John Andoh, anticipate him starting first couple weeks of June. Operations Supervisor, Justin Harris Davis is leaving first part of June as well, purchased his own school bus company in SW WI, applications open now until May 10. In middle of triennial review. Two more new minibuses have arrived, will make 7 total new. New camera system being installed, Safety Vision on all 30 buses. Still working on some Wi-Fi downloading things to make that happen. Fares will be same as they were before, except 0-18 will be completely free now with option to have app for smart phone or else will charge \$1 for a swipe card.

Ron Axtell, HACAP – taking applications for Headstart ages 3-5 for next year. More rent and utility assistance coming through IFA at state level soon, staff recently trained.

Brenda Klepper, Grand River Medical Group/Tristate Dialysis – in midst of opening a new dialysis center in Richland Center WI, opening this summer.

Kelly Heysinger (Unified Therapy) – two staff joining us, Samantha Jay and Ann Pusateri who will share the TAG membership. 2 new clinics, one in Crescent Community Health Center building, and seeing both adults and children there, and a part time clinic in Fenimore WI, mostly pediatric at this time.

Robin Nims (ITP) – just returned from traveling around the state filling in for staff shortages. In Dubuque area lot of individuals are getting back to day services and jobs and they are encouraging using RTA. Maquoketa Day Services are back to 100% out into the community, and very excited about that! This is large part due to the IDD grant from IDOT through RTA is a huge help, and so thankful for that grant money. RTA doing 100% of their transportation now including all group homes, helping so much with staff shortages.

Tricia Wagner (RTA) – Tricia was interviewed this morning by KWWL regarding free rides to the COVID clinics. RTA is receiving 3 new buses in September. Looking at updating

our camera system on buses as well, ordered a different system on the 3 new buses, and looking at others as well and possibly retrofit.

Agenda item #1: Service Improvement Project aka “Free & Reduced Rates” update

a. Getting kid from childcare to school is going well, increased our general public ridership numbers. Few timing issues at beginning – worked them out. May continue for Hills & Dales families and a few at the Y in the fall. Looking at doing same type of thing for camps this summer.

c. March 1 - Free rides to COVID clinics – total rides so far: 64 (32 unduplicated riders)

Agenda item #2: Iowa Developmental Disabilities Transportation Grant (Administration for Community Living Grant update), and new AARP Community Challenge Grant

a. IDD awarded full amount requested \$15K (plus \$10K match), ITP, ARC & Hills & Dales. ITP is excited because they’ve been able to secure full day outings/out of town trips and take a lot more individuals on all trips. Hills & Dales has been able to get more clients to more locations/activities. Discussed going to Camp Courageous in Monticello. Going to these camps with the grant funding is not only good for the clients, but also good for the camps that have been impacted by COVID. Can coordinate trips so other agencies and individual consumers can use the service as well. This is exactly what the coordination project is working towards. Agencies will be able use the portal to coordinate, and for these special trips RTA can let TAG know to make sure others are aware of the trips as well. H&D’s is looking at going to Camp Courageous in August. All must be vaccinated. Waiver will also pay for this trip.

b. AARP grant application submitted, requested \$20K to extend service & include Goodwill (July 28-Nov 10) – notification of awards in June

Agenda item #3: Mental Health and Disability Services for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Relief

a. ECR COVID grant funding, contract to provide transportation to outpatient mental health services. \$35K max plus \$5K marketing – spend by June 30th. Tricia gave dispatch a list of qualified providers, and mailed out a marketing piece to these same providers.

Agenda item #4: Hillcrest Family Services; Brain Health Community Services

a. Two-year grant to eliminate barriers to care as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic.

b. Centralized scheduling, Hillcrest will schedule appointments and ride with RTA at same time for clients

c. Some one on one, some group trips to Consumer Advisory Group meetings

Agenda item #5: United Way Funded Partner 2021-22 Renewal

a. Awarded full renewal of \$7,500 – IVRC is planning to do some trips this summer

Agenda item #6: Adding TAG Members: Small Cities (Dan McDonald) – had planned to ask Whitney from Peosta but she moved to Des Moines, so asked if committee approves asking Jackie Rae from Dyersville ED and Deanna McKusker from City of Cascade. Feels they are key locations, with large segments of industry. And would like to bring Peosta in when they get Whitney’s replacement. All approved.

Agenda item #7 Coordination Project: RFP

a. 8-9 month contract with Vendor selected – project completed May 31, 2022

Draft RFP	April 28th
Board approval	May 5th
approval from IADOT	May 21st
Posting RFP	May 24th
Q & A on RFP	June 11th
Receive Proposals	June 25th
First round of Ranking	July 12th to 16th (Meeting to decide on top three)
Second Round	July 19th to 23rd (One day - three presentations)
Board approval for consultant	August 4th meeting (move to negotiations)
Negotiations	August 23rd (Legal and IADOT approval prior to)
Board approval of contract	September 1st

The Ranking Committee consists of five TAG members:

Carolyn Schaeffer, Community Integration Programmer, Imagine the Possibilities (Jackson County)

Michelle Schmitt, HCBS Director, Hills & Dales (Dubuque County)

Ashley Robins, HCBS Program Manager, Hills & Dales (Dubuque County)

Katie Althouse, Abbe Health/Dir Soc Services Penn Center (Delaware County)

Mike Mellon, Associate Regional Executive Director, Imagine the Possibilities (Delaware County)

Shirley Helmricks, Delaware County Supervisor

Agenda item #8 UD Student Volunteers Service Project

- a. Bus Buddy potential for fall and beyond – it went well with the UD students riding along and helping the driver. So looking to do it again in the fall and possibly create a “curriculum” for the students to do more organized activities while riding along.

Agenda item #9 Seniors Survey & Farmers Market: subcommittee update

- a. Sally Davies (Jackson), Bill Stumpf, and Donna Boss & Leann Herman (Delaware)
- b. Decided to combine Seniors/Disabled/Farmers Market into one survey
- c. Format: print with prepaid return envelope
- d. Target:
 - i. Disabled living at home not in group homes, get mailing list from case managers or Denise Juhl/Jeff Lund with MCO's
 - ii. Elderly living at home and assisted living, list from post office website, provide demographics and get a mailing list based on the parameters
 - iii. Will look into the mailing list with Post Office to determine budget

Other Topics for Discussion

- a. August meeting we will schedule both Zoom and reserve large conference room and play it by ear. Discussed offer both options in the future to make it easier to attend.
- b. Add users (rider) of RTA to the committee, and the voice of color. Suggested Multi Cultural Center may have suggestions, and maybe Dream Center, or Fountain of Youth. Bill Stumpf offered to speak at one of their meetings and recruit. Also, VNA has a new Marshallese community connector, might be a good addition. Also discussed an application process for the “rider/consumer” representation to manage it but enable us to really open it up. Our next step in the TAG is to make it more inclusive.

Wrap up by Michelle:

- a. Michelle & Margee will talk and look for client interest in sharing trips
- b. Michelle will email Robin
- c. Michelle will reach out to Rachele/Sue at ARC to encourage participation in TAG meetings. Also regarding adding ARC consumers to committee (Phil)
- d. Greg Zars will talk to Stacie about getting an elderly NEIAAA consumer in the county to join as well
- e. Kelly and Ann will talk to Crescent
- f. Ann will reach out the new VNA contact
- g. Michelle will also reach out to Bill about some of these things

- h. Work to coordinate a trip to the zoo between agencies using the IDD grant, or even hiking in Galena with the goats/campfire, Hurstville Interpretive Center, etc.

Adjourn

Next meeting: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 (Zoom only)