

Delaware County Transit Action Group (TAG)  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8am-10am  
ECIA Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Mike Mellon (ITP), Shirley Helmricks (Delaware County Board of Supervisors), Dawn Sage (DHS), Peggy Petlon (MHDS), Angie Gudenkauf (Abbe Health/Penn Center), Donna Boss (Economic Development), Katie Althouse (Soc Service Penn Center), Leann Herman (RFH), Chandra Ravada (ECIA) & Tricia Wagner (RTA)

**Introductions & Agency updates:**

Peggy Petlon, MHDS – in midst of conversations around a new access center, and will need transportation for that. Dubuque is looking at an access hub, not full access center, where they would have screening and 23-hour beds along with crisis beds. If needed a sub-acute would have to be transported to Johnson or Linn counties. Medicaid will pay for some rides, but where and how can MHDS fill the gap in that transportation funding. CEO of region is coordination those discussions amongst staff/providers. Manchester will have crisis beds at the Penn Center, so not everyone will need to be transported to IC or CR, but need this as an option. These are all willing participants, not violent or committal. Also working on providing direct support staff trainings. Moral is down amongst staff from the decline in mental health of clients.

Mike Mellon, ITP – just finished first CARF audit for G&G. Currently working on returning to community dayhab and how, currently being provided in home. Working to get vaccines for HCBS individuals. Varies by county.

Angie Gudenkauf, Abbe Health/Penn Center – moral is down, residents have only been on car rides over the past year, wearing on everyone. Second vaccine yesterday, 75% residents and 50% staff opted in, so should be able to get back to some normalcy.

Katie Althouse, Soc Service Penn Center – same sentiments as Angie. New person training in Social Work Dept, Tessa, will be a part of our meetings.

Leann Herman, RFH – 1<sup>st</sup> TAG meeting, just started at RFH last year. Seeing a decrease in respiratory clinic and increase in non-respiratory with are both good news. Started administering vaccine to 65+, limited supply at this time. Info on their website to find out when clinics are available, and a COVID line as well. Working on same things as Peggy with access centers and getting people to CR and Iowa City; transportation will be a huge factor.

Donna Boss, Economic Development – Unemployment down but there's a gap in needs for things like groceries, gas, etc. Concerned with what people will do when the COVID funding is gone.

Shirley Helmrichs, Delaware County Supervisor – busy, budget time!

**Agenda item #1:** RTA update on Service Improvement Project – Surveys

Funding still available, rates will continue as is for a while. We agreed that one item Delaware TAG wants to work on is transportation for the elderly and creating a sub-committee. We also discussed to create a survey for all elderly and assisted living facilities in the county to see if using us and if not, why and what can RTA do differently. The same applies to daycare and their families especially with summer coming up, we want them to be aware of RTA services and free for them. Donna Boss volunteered to be on the sub-committee, perfect for her relationship with City Clerks and Superintendents, great opportunity to work together. Tricia will set up a meeting.

**Agenda item #2:** RTA update on United Way Rides for Wellness Grant

IVRS looking to offer some activities this summer after all, and hopefully fall as well. But still have a lot of funding, so we loosened income guidelines and no limit to number of trips using the funding per an individual, to ensure we are using the funding. Allowing more access by more people. Waiting to see if we will receive renewal is approved for 2021-22 cycle.

**Agenda item #3:** Administration for Community Living Grant under HHS through IDOT

\$133,000 available from the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council to the Iowa DOT to provide transportation opportunities and services to persons with disabilities, especially those with developmental disabilities, this year – with projects starting on or after March 1, 2021, and ending on or before September 30, 2021. The local match will be provided by the Iowa DOT with State Transit Assistance (STA) Special Project funds. However, those transit agencies providing additional local match from non-federal sources will be given bonus points in project application scoring, so finding partners to assist in planning and financing these projects will be beneficial. Competitive grant between all Iowa transit agencies.

ITP, H&D and ARC, and Unlimited Services; asked to be partners with RTA on the grant to provide transportation for their clients in group homes who haven't been out in year. Help with agency short staff issues and funding issues. Analyze the service to see if can continue beyond the grant.

**Agenda item #4:** TAG Structure – Reviewed Members/Proxies Attendance Form [draft] – need to determine primary member and names of proxy's to finalize this form. All are

welcome to attend, but only one vote per agency, and ask that we have at least one member present. Question from Donna, can another Board member be her proxy, per Chandra, yes as long as their isn't a conflict of interest.

**Agenda item #5:** Adding TAG Members; Maquoketa Valley CSD, Dialysis, and Pastor Eedy or Pastor Weber

New member: Kristine Bartels, Grand River Medical Group (dialysis)

Maquoketa Valley CSD, Tricia did reach out, and waiting on response

Pastor Eedy (Tricia will reach out, Donna has contact info), Pastor Weber (Peggy did talk to him and will follow up)

**Agenda item #6:** Volunteer Drivers Needed; Doug Tuken and Local Law Enforcement

Doug Tuken – Shirley will get in touch with him

Law enforcement – Donna will send Tricia contacts names and info for both Sherriff John and Chief Hostchild to see if they have any suggestions for other retirees for volunteer drivers. Peggy said Chief Hostchild has joined some of their subcommittees with children, so perhaps would like to be involved in our committee but right now busy with opening new jail.

Could also ask school bus drivers, Peggy suggested Jay Saylow. Peggy will reach out!

Tricia will email everyone the volunteer recruitment flyer.

Peggy suggested a lunch and learn to recruit. Invite only event to keep it manageable. Bring Jack in to give testimonial.

Give the TAG members a deadline to provide names of people to invite, provide names, email, phone and addresses. Set up a meeting with all TAG to discuss. Shoot for April.

Get Easter and COVID out of the way, when people are vaccinated, target later this spring.

Donna said Randy Reeves is wonderful! The kids love him!

**Agenda item #7:** Coordination Project: AIM Selection Committee

2 members from each TAG, plus 1 from RTA board, RTA staff will remain neutral

Shirley Helmricks volunteered as the RTA Board member! Katie Althouse and Mike Mellon also volunteered!

**Agenda item #8:** Manchester and Hopkinton Farmers Markets; subcommittee

Help identify need (surveys, outreach) and grants to apply for. Leann and Donna on subcommittee and suggested we combine the survey with the elderly so people don't get surveyed out. Donna suggested including someone from Iowa State Extension, Healthy Food initiative as well.

**Agenda item #9:** Transportation to COVID Vaccine Clinics (Charity Loecke)

Charity not on today, but Peggy said that the clinics are being set up by various entities.

Leann said they don't get much advance notice of receiving the vaccine, so the clinics are not planned very far ahead either. Have had two clinics at the RFH/RMC so far. Posting clinics on their website and putting on KMCH, hotline number to call is 563-927-7575. People can sign up for text/callbacks when vaccine available to them. First come first serve. Tricia asked to have "call RTA for transportation" to all communication. Tricia will email Leann a short blurb.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, May 11, 2021