

Dubuque County Transit Action Group (TAG)  
Tuesday, February 2, 2021 11am-1pm  
ECIA Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Ann Morris (Crescent Community Healthcare Center), 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), Kara Huss (Hills & Dales), 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) & Tricia Wagner (RTA)

**Introductions & Agency updates: (group requested to continue starting meetings with this)**

Paula Paider-Licht, United Way – 211 Resource & Referral line; seen a tremendous increase in usage. Encourages providers to check the site to make sure information is up to date, and if not contact them directly or Paula. It is a multilingual phone line/site/app.

Bill Stumpf, ICIE/Parent Advocate – optimistic about new administration in DC and the new Secretary of Transportation, also excited about Jeremy Johnson-Miller (formerly IDOT) being in a leadership role at NADTC and will be a great asset to us. Anxious to see the trickle-down affect for persons with diabetes. Anxious for son Kyle to get back to using public transportation again, getting vaccine soon and next step is to get him back on the bus because he loves it.

Michelle Schmitt, Hills & Dales – everyone is getting vaccinated.

Margee Woywood, Goodwill – Pandemic has reminded them how important it is to educate the community they are more than a store, as the County Health Dept. didn't consider Goodwill as a service provider with essential workers, so weren't notified to sign staff up for federal list to get the vaccine along with other providers. Need to re-educate the community so everyone knows what they do. Awarded WIOA grant, so effective Feb 1<sup>st</sup> Goodwill is the WIOA provider for the 20 counties in Iowa.

Ann McDonough, Chair Dbq County Supervisors/ RTA Board Member – Dubuque is entering into the 1B tier for vaccine distribution, as received (supply very small at this time) 50% going to 65+ and half going to teachers oldest to youngest. First vaccines administered are through local providers such as Crescent Community Health Center, and will eventually add site at Kennedy Mall when quantities increase. County in process of hiring new Director of Brain Health and Disability Services (Jody Jansen retired), first rounds of

interviews have been conducted. Will work with TAG to discuss gaps in services for brain health and disabilities service coordination.

Carol Gebhart, Opening Doors – no COVID outbreaks, business as usual.

Kara Huss, Hills & Dales – getting ready for HCBS audit coming up. Wrapping up discovery pilot and moving into the job development. Pushing through COVID.

Ann Morris, Crescent Community Health – hired a social worker, and another community health worker for Marshallese community to assist with translation and other things. Bill recently passed in Congress that documented Marshallese are now approved for Medicaid. Calling 65+ and older population in for vaccine now, will offer to all patients eventually. Honing in on the Hispanic population, so RTA will see an increase in these riders and will use the United Way Rides for Wellness vouchers for these clients. Tricia will send vouchers and the application in Spanish.

Jake Ironside, The Jule – still working to keep everyone safe; sanitizing buses, social distancing, wearing protection etc. Reduced service a little, not running from 7-9 but otherwise all routes still running as normal, and currently completely fare free.

Dan McDonald, GDDC – Working to find a couple more TAG members from small cities in Dubuque.

Greg Zars, NEIAAA – AAA's met with Dpt. Of Health regarding vaccines, and transit came up. Looking for community partners to help get people to the clinics. NEIAAA will provide funding for those 60+. Will work together with RTA to get people to the clinics, particularly at the mall when it opens.

Lori Anderson, Dubuque Schools – Feb 15<sup>th</sup> students are returning to learn full time.

Russ Stecklein, The Jule – acting Director of Transportation until they fill the position, still doing his old job as well. Meeting this afternoon to discuss feasibility of going back to full hours, or permanently do away with 7-9 pm, and if will start charging fares again. Have new fare box on all buses and would like to start using that March 1 if decide to start charging again.

Ron Axtell, HACAP – Monday will start taking paper work for VITA program, and will look at the earned income tax credit. No in person appointments, all drop off. Continue to take applications for LIHEAP program for help with energy assistance, send those in need to HACAP.

Brenda Klepper, Grand River Medical Group – new to our group. Works with dialysis patients.

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

School back in session Feb 15, discussing capacity for 60+ children twice per day five days per week for remainder of school year as more families will be in need. Also looking to do some summer trips, and possibly continuing some of the transportation for the families in the fall for daycare to school trips.

Looking for feedback from seniors at congregate settings and assisted living facilities in county as to what is preventing them from using RTA services. Interested in conducting a survey for the elderly. Maybe form a subcommittee for this.

Discussion followed about Jule reviewing routes and possibly offering later evening routes again, but will need to have the demand. Not yet receiving those rider requests. Will monitor this.

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

IVRS looking to offer the camps this summer after all, and also for fall for school year.

RTA raised the annual household income limit for the application and loosened limits on number of rides per person using the funding to allow for increased access to the grant funding.

Waiting to see if will renewal is approved for 2021-22 cycle.

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

\$133,000 in funding available for transportation for persons with disabilities. RTA is planning to partner with several agencies to apply for the grant. Competitive grant offered to all transit agencies in Iowa.

**Agenda item #4:** TAG Structure – Review Members/Proxies Attendance Form [draft]

As we get more into the technical structure, we'll use these new forms. Michelle leading the meeting today is part of that new structure as well.

Will need to determine which agency member is the primary, and who are the proxies. More than one proxy is fine, and all are encouraged to attend the meetings, but only one member per agency may vote at any meeting.

**Agenda item #5:** Adding TAG Members: Dialysis & Small Cities

New member from Grand River Medical Group: Brenda Klepper

Dan McDonald; is going to reach out to two individuals as potential TAG members, one from Peosta, and one from Dyersville.

**Agenda item #6:** Coordination Project: AIM Selection Committee

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

Michelle Schmitt & Ashley Robins (both of Hills & Dales)

**Agenda item #7:** Dubuque Farmers Market: County Transportation Needs Survey

Summer 2019 Tricia and Farmers Market representative conducted survey at market. Found that only one or two that were there from beyond the city limits, most walked there. So perhaps there is a need to get to the market for those living outside the city limits, including Asbury on out in to the rural areas.

Would like to form a sub-committee – help with survey and outreach at some point

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 (via Zoom)