



1. Call to Order
Ms. Sicks called the meeting to order at 2: p.m.

2. Attendance
Committee Members and Others In Attendance:
Sheila Greuel (East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging) *Virtual*
Darla Heath (Faith in Action) *Virtual*
Betsy Kurtenbach (Homes of Hope) *Virtual*
Erik Zdansky (Marcfirst) *in person*
Conan Calhoun (LIFE-CIL) *Virtual*
Laura Dick (SHOW BUS) *Virtual*
John Corey (Volunteer) *Virtual*
Ray Lai (MCRPC) *in person*
Jennifer Sicks (MCRPC) *in person*
Francesca Lewis (MCRPC) *in person*

3. Public Comment
Ms. Sicks advised that there has been no request for public comment.

Discussion of 2023 Region 6 and MPO Plan Goals

4. Potential Goals
Ms. Sicks noted that the formulation of goals is a joint determination of the participating agencies, generally defined as agencies which have state-granted vehicles or have recently applied under the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement program. Members of the TAC and the Region 6 joint committees are asked to provide a list of their principle goals and the objectives they expect to drive the realization of the goals.

5. Outreach to Ridership Regarding Goals
Ms. Sicks requested that the committee members provide the results of any ridership surveys conducted over the past 5 years.

Items for Discussion

6. IDOT HSTP Program Status Report
 - a. Program Review/Vehicle Inspection Schedule
Ms. Sicks noted that IDOT has created a tentative schedule for the program reviews in Bloomington-Normal and throughout HSTP Region 6. The first agency to go through the review process will be Marcfirst, later in February.
 - b. Consolidated Vehicle Procurement
Ms. Sicks noted that there are ongoing delays in resetting the CVP, particularly with respect to the FY 2022 application cycle results.



7. Urban Area Provider Program Status

a. Connect Transit (CT)

Connect Transit did not have a representative present.

b. Marcfirst

Mr. Zdansky noted that Marcfirst activities continue as normal. Marcfirst has applied for a state capital grant to make alterations to their facilities to better accommodate certain program activities. He noted the upcoming program review on February 15th; Ms. Sicks noted some of the guidelines for the review process, which IDOT staff will clarify during the review.

Mr. Zdansky noted that Marcfirst is co-hosting a business after-hours gathering with the Chamber of Commerce to broaden understanding of their mission and activities, and seeking greater support.

c. Faith in Action (FiA)

Ms. Heath advised that Faith in Action still has more requests for medical transportation than can currently be provided. To date 315 trips have been provided in February.

Ms. Heath noted that Faith in Action is interested in any suggestions to improve volunteer recruitment. She noted that volunteer drivers must be 22 or older, car able to carry someone in back seat. Some COVID precautions are still in place. Drivers select rides that suit their schedules. There is no age ceiling for volunteer drivers.

Mr. Calhoun inquired as to the compensation or mileage reimbursement provided. Ms. Heath noted that such costs are part of the donation by the volunteers. In cases where trips are very long (such as to health care facilities in Chicago or elsewhere outside the immediate region, volunteers are given a gift card for fuel costs.

d. Homes of Hope (HOH)

Ms. Kurtenbach advised that Homes of Hope continues to look at resident assignments to accommodate two new residents, considering the specific requirements of the residents.

Ms. Kurtenbach requested advisement regarding scheduled the Homes of Hope program review and vehicle inspection; Ms. Sicks advised that dates are still tentative, and she will be in touch when the IDOT schedule preferences are in place. She will provide the current documentation to Ms. Kurtenbach.

8. Disability/Aging/Rural Transportation Issues

a. LIFE-CIL

Mr. Calhoun (LIFE-CIL advocacy and advancement director) noted that LIFE-CIL does not have drivers among their personal assistants, but personal assistants are compensated/reimbursed for mileage at \$0.655 per mile.

LIFE-CIL does not provide transportation, but has a federal mandate to ensure that transportation services are available and accessible for populations identified as eligible in



legislation and regulations. This includes the Administration for Community Living (ACL), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. The LIFE-CIL annual plan reinforces the requirements for access to transportation. LIFE-CIL monitors transportation services with regard to proper accessibility. They also refer to the State Plan for Independent Living promulgated by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC).

b. East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging

Ms. Greuel noted that the ECIAAA continues with its projects to reduce social isolation and loneliness. Ms. Gruel noted that ECIAAA is looking forward to the introduction of the Connect Transit micro-transit project, with the hope that it will enable users to interact more easily.

c. SHOW BUS

Ms. Dick advised that there are two drivers pending, and another is returning from medical leave. SHOW BUS continues to stockpile parts.

Ms. Dick noted the demand for medical transportation and medical services generally has reduced the availability of transportation for other purposes. Some services are closing, including some in-hospital services such as psychiatric care. This increases the need for longer and more costly trips for people needing such services and reduces capacity for other trips.

Ms. Dick noted discussions in HSTP Region 8 meetings regarding concerns about the managed care organizations (MCO) operating in Illinois, specifically with respect to badly managed responses to trip requests, failures to arrange trips, and cases where the booked trip simply does not appear. The primary issue is the failure of the state's oversight of the MCOs.

Ms. Greuel asked about services provided by hospitals or others directly to patients, leaving the rural public transit to cover non-medical trips. Ms. Kennedy noted that in Bloomington-Normal the medical organizations are very grateful for the medical trips provided by other organization. She also noted that the practice of medicine is changed its emphasis on virtual provision of care.

Ms. Dick is pleased to have a hospital representative in the discussion. She noted that the increasing use of virtual access to care, but noted that the virtual option is not useful for all patients. This does lessen the need for medical trips, but does not address the needs directly.

Ms. Kennedy noted Ms. Dick's reference to access to food as an important component of health maintenance and more broadly

d. John Corey

Mr. Corey mentioned that persons going outside the Bloomington-Normal who can use public transportation, he may be able to assist, as he has considerable experience. Mr. Lai noted the anticipated micro-transit program, and suggested that people in need of transportation for both medical needs and quality of life trips. He also suggested that we have a Connect Transit representative at the March meeting.



Mr. Corey noted that he has been in touch with David Schafer at IDOT – OIPI. Mr. Schafer indicated that IDOT is looking at reviving the intercity bus program. Ms. Dick was not aware that that was under discussion.

9. Next Meeting – March 8, 2022

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2: 45 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer A. Sicks".

Jennifer Sicks
Senior Transportation Planner
McLean County Regional Planning Commission