

Commission on Elder Affairs

Ad Hoc Senior Center Transportation Committee MINUTES: August 13, 2012

Members Present: Ruth Miller, Robin Bahr-Casey, Steve Greenberg, Theresa Eckstrom
Members Absent: Elaine Wrubel-excused, Tom Cullinane-excused, Ursula Hanus-Excused
Staff Present: Amy Waters, Betsy Connell, Patty Hainsworth
Guests Present: Jacqueline Norton, Herbert Cremer

- I. Robin Bahr-Casey called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm at 128 Providence St. The minutes of the July 30th meeting were approved as mailed (m/s/a).
- II. Amy reported on the Mobility Links conference which she, Elaine, Jacqueline and Herbert attended. She explained that on the North Shore federal funds are being utilized to coordinate (not fund) transportation options. The travel counseling tool kit was circulated for review. Amy reminded members of the WRTA travel training and webinar, both upcoming this week. She also noted that she informed Jayna Turchek, the City's Human Rights and Disabilities Director, that we are working on issues which may concern her constituency.
- III. Amy reported on the van rider survey:
To date, we have 42 responses of which 26 (62%) say they couldn't get to the Senior Center without the ESWA van.
Only 1 says they drive their own car here sometimes; 4 say they still drive.
About half say they know about ADA but only 2 say they currently use it to get here and only 4 say they would use it if the ESWA van was not available.
36 disabilities were listed. 26 said they don't live on a bus line (if they really don't live on a bus line, I don't think they'd be eligible for ADA).
22 (53%) have been coming here more than 4 years.
24 (58%) live alone.
19 speak Vietnamese, 15(37%) English, 5 Spanish, 5 Chinese.
Everyone does more than eat lunch here.
39 (95%) willing to pay at least 75 cents/one-way (16 would pay a dollar).
14 comments re: why they need the van and senior center.

Ruth, Steve, Theresa and Patty will be helping to complete the survey by 8/27.
It was noted that individual assessments will be needed to accurately determine if the riders could use ADA, the fixed route bus or other options instead of the nutrition van.
- IV. Steve is working on scheduling a meeting with the Friends President asap.
Amy reported that their fundraising efforts seem to be going well.
- V. The meeting with the **WRTA** will take place tomorrow. Robin, Steve, Amy and Patty will be meeting with them to address the issues noted in last meeting's minutes. The outcome of this meeting is expected to help

determine the direction of our strategy for maintaining transportation. Meanwhile committee members are conducting preliminary research on potential providers.

Theresa reported on contacts she made with potential providers: Bill Clark of **Yellow Cab** said they would help us in whatever way they can. They charge either per ride or per cab (which would allow for clustering). Kathy Troy of the **Dream Center** said they are willing to partner. As a non-profit, they have 9 vans to transport clients of ADH, Social Daycare and children's programs.

Theresa was not able to reach **Red Cab** and Robin was not able to connect with her assigned providers.

Ruth contacted and referred several providers to Amy for further discussion, as follows:

Tod Gully of **Quality Chair Van** expressed interest in working with us. They generally charge \$18 for a wheel chair trip and \$15 for a walker trip. He is concerned about our budget limitations.

Tim Rassias of **Safeway Luxury Transportation**, while concerned about budget limitations, is interested in working with us. He noted that their insurance cost is very high because they do "door through door" transportation.

Lars **Keisling** and his assistant, John Sullivan are scheduled to meet with Amy next week.

Amy also spoke with Ron Enenwein of **AA Transportation**. While concerned about our budgetary limits, he thinks it may work out if we can utilize school buses before and after their school runs. Amy will look at the buses to try to judge feasibility. She noted that **ESWA** has 3 Ford vans, years 2000, 2006 and 2007. Two of them have capacity to take 1 wheel chair. All three have room for 12-14 passengers, depending on wheel chair space. She also noted that as of today, only one regular rider comes in a wheel chair and there were 2 new riders today, indicating the changing census of participants.

- VI. The next meeting was scheduled for **Monday, August 27th at 4 pm**. The action steps to be taken during the next two weeks were determined to be:
 - Finish the van rider survey;
 - Meet with WRTA;
 - Continue researching potential providers;
 - Revisit budget issues vis a vis January 2013.
- VII. Jacqueline and Herb commented on issues relating to ADA transportation.
- VIII. The meeting adjourned. (m/s/a)