

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, May 21, 2024

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Teams Video Conference

PRESENT: Nicole Davis-Dawald (Winnebago County Aging Resource Supervisor), Adam BellCorelli (Winnebago County Executive's Office), Brian Jacobson and Carrie Check (ADVOCAP), Cameron Miller (Carepool Transportation Coordinator), Lauren Forseth (), Steve Tomasik (GoTransit Operations Manager, City of Oshkosh), Sara Schneider (Valley Transit), Holly Keenan (Lutheran Social Services Make the Ride Happen), Valerie Hoff (Commute with Enterprise)

1. **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS** – **Nicole Davis-Dawald** called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made by those in attendance.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – No public in attendance. Nicole additionally reported there have been no recent calls to the ADRC with issues or questions regarding transportation.

Adam BellCorelli shared an update on the County's vision for countywide transportation. Currently the ADRC provides some specialized transports for residents 60+ or disabled. The County does recognize there are needs beyond this as presently no county department is designated to handle countywide transportation. The County Board would be needed to support the creation and funding of positions/departments so would need to make the connection between housing, economic development, and transportation. Adam additionally stated that the Greater Oshkosh Economic Corporation (GO EDC) should be a partner in this discussion. GO EDC has identified as a starting point that there are opportunities for employment transportation as well as potential funding. Adam stated the best solution he has seen thus far is the Waupaca Catch-a-Ride Program which received grant funding for their transportation model. Larger urban areas have a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) who oversees transportation.

Nicole Davis Dawald attended a State-led ADRC meeting where she found that most other ADRCs handle transports similar to Winnebago ADRC, some differ in that transportation is provided in-house via a county owned van. Nicole stated that a voice and/or stories are needed beyond professionals to advocate issues to elected officials.

Holly Keenan shared that the Waupaca Catch-a-Ride Micro Transit Program has provided 10,000 rides thus far; however, do not have the capacity to meet all needs such as transports in the Fox Cities, a Waupaca employer wanting to do a carpool for workers residing in Oshkosh, and the need to recruit volunteer drivers. Waupaca Economic Development realized the value of starting a transit system to assist struggling employers. Holly additionally shared that the Esther Group met last week who felt it would be a good idea to have a transportation summit to bring people together in the county to increase awareness of the connection between housing and transportation.

Steve Tomasik stated that in order to move forward, the County needs to have vision with support from the top. Agencies providing transportation services are only able to do what is within their corporate limits.

Brian Jacobson reported at times being unable to encompass all the transportation needs. When there are not enough volunteer drivers for transports then Veterans Services, Make Ride Happen, cab services, or relatives/friends may be able to assist, or appointments are sometimes rescheduled. The majority of rides that cannot be accommodated are for recreational purposes.

Valerie Hoff reported that several years back an area Workforce Development Board did a simulation to increase awareness of transportation roadblocks. Holly Keenan expressed an interest in the possibility of conducting such a simulation.

Sarah Schneider shared information on Wisconsin DOT's Rideshare Program which connects people looking for daily rides to a specific location. The website is <https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/travel/road/rideshare/default.aspx>. Milwaukee (CommuteWISE) and Madison (RoundTrip) have both branded this platform.

3. **GO TRANSIT UPDATES:** **Steve Tomasik** reported that ridership with Dial-a-Ride decreased while agency fares have dramatically increased. Go Connect numbers have ticked up after switching over to same-day transports. The City is considering making City Cab an in-house program with the first phase of looking into paratransit software. Paratransit currently runs 24/7; however, overnight hours may need to be cut. **Nicole Davis Dawald** shared that many counties are looking for new paratransit software.
4. **MAKE-A-RIDE HAPPEN AND WINNEBAGO CATCH A RIDE UPDATES:** **Brian Jacobson** reported that he attended a Wisconsin volunteer coordinator's meeting and that everyone is having the same types of issues with volunteer recruitment. Discussion at the meeting entailed wording of requests, materials, and marketing to be short, "non-threatening", and pleasing from a customer point of view.
5. **VALLEY TRANSIT UPDATES:** **Sarah Schneider** reported that bus ridership is up, on demand services have been utilized, Valley Transit II (VT2) ADA services declined slightly with providing required Medicaid-funded transports for skilled nursing homes. Sarah reported a crisis with the shortage of drivers.
6. **NEXT MEETING DATE** – 08/27/2024 at 1:30 p.m.
7. **ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nicole-Davis-Dawald, Human Services Department