

Annual Membership Meeting

Minutes – November 1, 2017 - 9:00am,

McConnell Center, Dover

Members Present: Debbie Bartley (Lamprey Health Care), Scott Bogle (RPC), Elaine Dunton (Homemakers), Carol Gulla (TASC), Tory Jennison (Region 6 Integrated Delivery Network), Colin Lentz (SRPC), Margie Longus (Ready Rides), Rad Nichols (COAST), Meriam Pereira (COAST), Debra Perou (RNMoW), Sharon Reynolds (citizen member), Cheryl Robicheau (Strafford CAP), Meri Schmalz (Ready Rides), Pamela Thyng (Community Partners)

Guests Present: Jeff Donald (COAST), Marcia Golembeski (Statewide Independent Living Council), Melissa Silver (Constellation Homecare and Hospice)

1) **Welcome and Introductions**

2) **Approval of Meeting Minutes (7-12-2017 meeting) {VOTE}**

S. Bogle made a motion to accept the minutes from July 2017; seconded by T. Jennison
Vote: unanimous in favor. There was no quorum for the September meeting and so no minutes to approve.

3) **Election for Chair and Secretary {VOTE}**

J. Donald explained that Rad Nichols, Executive Director of COAST, had been nominated for Chair of the ACT board, and that Colin Lentz of Strafford Regional Planning Commission had been nominated as the recording secretary for ACT meetings.

C. Gulla made a motion to accept the slate of candidates as presented for committee Chair and Secretary; seconded by C. Robicheau.

Vote: unanimous in favor

4) **Annual Meeting – Working Together**

J. Donald said he wanted to discuss how ACT could move forward in 2018, noting that COAST had recently completed a full-scale strategic planning effort, and that he had recently participated in a facilitation training. He said he wanted to ensure ACT meetings were valuable for members, were well attended, and helped the region improve transportation services and fulfill the mandate of the regional coordinating council. J. Donald read the definition of “coordination” that was recently agreed upon by the members of the State Coordinating Council:

Successful coordination improves transportation access and quality of life through organizations working collaboratively to improve the efficient and effective use of existing transportation resources, and jointly developing new resources.

J. Donald said that with this definition in mind, he presented a draft working agreement for meetings to ensure meetings are valuable for members and discussion is leading to better coordination and fulfillment of the RCC’s mandate. He explained that he intended the working agreement to act as guidelines for meeting conduct, not as a strict set of rules. He reviewed the working agreement, identifying several key points.

General meeting etiquette examples:

- Start on-time and end on-time;
- Don’t interrupt;
- Make sure everyone has a chance to contribute to the conversation;
- No questions are stupid questions
- No judgment of others’ comments

Group norms examples:

- Participate fully
- Undivided attention and active participation
- Ensure that ACT meetings are supportive of your agency and let the group know if they are not
- Use clear “I” language
- Be brief and use specific examples
- Share all relevant information and data
- Make statements and check for understanding
- Don’t be afraid to discuss the un-discussible
- Accept conflict as a natural and productive part of group discussion

J. Donald asked for the group’s input on the working agreement.

Several members said they liked the agreement and would like to bring them to the boards of their organizations. T. Jennison asked J. Donald how he foresaw the agreement informing the group regularly. J. Donald said he didn’t expect anything like an annual signing of the agreement, but perhaps an annual review of the agreement and discussion of its terms.

R. Nichols noted that COAST had a similar set of terms up on the wall during their strategic planning exercise, and participants regularly referred to them during discussion. He said it really helped a collaborative atmosphere.

D. Perou asked if the chair should be granted latitude to “enforce” the working agreement by calling out conduct that conflicted with it. R. Nichols said that COAST’s strategic planning consultant called out instances of conflicting conduct, but for the most part participants were able to self-correct when needed. J. Donald noted that people should be willing to state their views (putting a stake in the ground), but also be willing to listen to others’ input and adjust their original opinion (move their stakes).

M. Schmalz asked where the working agreement came from. J. Donald responded that he adapted it from the version provided by consultant who led COAST’s strategic planning exercise. S. Bogle noted that the working agreement was consistent with ground rules established at other collaborative groups he had participated on.

J. Donald re-read the SCC coordination definition and said he thought the definition implied that an effective coordination process will result in occasional changes to transportation services provided by ACT members. He noted that trust and candor between members will be required in order to make meaningful changes that improve coordination and transportation access, and meet the needs of clients. J. Donald referred members to the ACT workplan as a set of goals and objectives, noting that he wanted to know how ACT was helping member agencies to grow and improve. He asked for thoughts from each member about how ACT was helping their agency, what ACT could be doing to help their agency, or what ACT should be trying to achieve in the future.

- M. Schmalz said the TripLink call center staff are indispensable for Ready Rides.
- M Longus said she enjoyed coming to ACT meetings and hearing others’ points of view that were different from hers and helped her think outside the box.
- D. Bartley noted that Lamprey Health Care is not a contract member of ACT, and that as volunteer driver programs and other providers have grown, ridership has shifted away from Lamprey. J. Donald asked what ACT should be doing to help Lamprey with the problem of ridership loss. D. Bartley responded that when ACT started volunteer driver programs she had hoped that they would help cover long-distance trips and leave local trips for existing providers like Lamprey Health Care. She added that when ACT voted on introducing volunteer driver programs, she had asked if they would impact funding sources

available to Lamprey and spread into their service area, and that she had been told they wouldn't.

D. Bartley said Lamprey is not in a good place as a result of these issues and wasn't sure if Lamprey should be a member of ACT – emphasizing that she came intending to make that statement.

- C. Gulla noted that she was still reviewing the current contract with the TASC board. She said one of the biggest concerns for her in Rockingham County was that the same three primary providers had been in place for a long time [TASC, RNMOW, and Lamprey] and that provider diversity had never developed. She hoped more services could be offered in the county to improve coordination between existing providers.
- C. Lentz said he had been trying to think of ways SRPC could help ACT plan for and improve coordination. He noted that SRPC had recently developed an online map that allowed anyone to examine diverse information about the region (including transportation infrastructure and improvement projects, flood hazard areas, and local zoning information). C. Lentz said it would be fairly easy to include provider service areas on this map and link it to the ACT website and the provider directory.
- T. Jennison said she was in a similar situation to SRPC in thinking about how the Integrated Delivery Network (whose role is to improve how people on Medicaid experience their healthcare) could provide technical assistance to ACT. She described a recent experience where a patient was unable to find a ride home after calling TripLink and other sources, and said she thought ACT could help define the problem-solving and troubleshooting process.
- D. Perou said joining TripLink had helped RNMOW. But she noted that clients get nervous when they call TripLink, have to leave a message, and don't get an immediate call-back. J. Donald asked what ACT could do to help the problem. D. Perou said it would be great to have two people answer calls for TripLink so clients could have a better chance of talking to a real person. J. Donald said he had recently talked to TripLink staff to make sure calls were being returned quickly. He said sometimes there are no calls for a long time, then there will suddenly be multiple calls at once. He said he would be working on improving the system for responding to multiple calls. Members discussed the challenges of working with clients who call many times because they're nervous about their ride showing up. D. Perou said it was great to go around the table [at the ACT meeting] to get feedback from members, especially from members who don't speak regularly.
- C. Robicheau said Strafford County is still lacking transportation services. She said she wondered who needs to be included in ACT efforts in order to improve services, identify service gaps, and find coordination solutions.
- M. Silver said she sees a strong need in Strafford County for service for low-income seniors (especially in the tri-city area).
- S. Bogle said ACT was a valuable forum for regional discussion around transportation coordination. He noted that RPC had identified service gaps in several communities along NH125, and proposed working with existing providers (e.g. TASC, Lamprey, and Ready Rides) to fill those gaps. S. Bogle said he hoped ACT could continue as a forum for resolving the challenges expressed by Lamprey with regard to trip loss and funding impacts.
- R. Nichols said ACT and COAST have complimentary roles and missions for serving transportation needs in the region. He noted COAST's and ACT's investments in innovative services approaches and technologies. R. Nichols said COAST sees demand-response service as an area for growth, and that would benefit ACT as well.

5) **FY 18 Year End Budget**

J. Donald briefly reviewed the FY17 year-end budget which was presented at the previous ACT meeting (a quorum was not present at the previous meeting so a vote was not possible). J. Donald

noted some slight changes to the previous budget. He explained that the budget was short approximately \$8,000 in matching funds to support POS and Admin, and that he was in the process of applying for matching funds through multiple foundation grants. J. Donald explained current funding supports ACT through May of CY2018.

S. Bogle made a motion to accept the FY18 budget as presented

Seconded by M. Schmalz

Vote: Unanimous in favor

6) Update to Service Standards {VOTE}

J. Donald noted two proposed changes to the draft service standards (or service parameters). He explained that the previous service standards were written for the Community Rides program, but the updated standards were broadened to incorporate other ACT members providing service through POS. J. Donald explained that the service standards were intended to be template language that could be included in service contracts with individual agencies that participate in POS and administrative operations (e.g. Rockingham Planning Commission acting as the POS lead agency).

T. Jennison asked if there were parts of the services standards that might not apply to single service providers. J. Donald said the service standards were flexible parameters for future contracts and could be adapted to specific needs of diverse providers.

J. Donald reviewed updated language in the service standards related to sexual assault, abuse, and molestation. Several members noted that they were currently working with their insurance providers to finalize stipulations related to sexual assault, abuse, and molestation in their coverage.

C. Gulla said she was uncomfortable finalizing language in the service standards related to sexual assault, abuse, and molestation before insurance agreements were finalized. J. Donald said it was possible to accept the draft service standards without the section on sexual assault, abuse, and molestation (Section IIIe).

C. Gulla made a motion to accept the draft service standards, excluding Section IIIe until providers could finalize insurance agreements.

D. Perou seconded the motion

R. Nichols asked that providers finalize their insurance agreements in time to vote on the full service standards at the January meeting.

Vote: unanimous in favor

7) FY17 Year-End Income Statement

J. Donald noted that ACT finished FY2017 under budget and briefly reviewed the income statement.

8) Updates & Statistics

J. Donald covered some trip data from FY2017, noting that the most recent quarter was not finished so data were unavailable. He said that in July Triplink processed 3,000 trips and 3,100 in August.

9) SCC Report

J. Donald explained that the most recent SCC rules currently make it more difficult to purchase smaller accessible vehicles (e.g. minivans) through FTA 3510 capital funds. He noted that the RCCs were in the process of communicating with NHDOT and the SCC to recommend they enable RCCs to purchase small accessible vehicles through FTA5310.

J. Donald noted that CTS (Coordinated Transportation Systems) had recently hired Luanne VanBrocklin to recruit volunteers to provide Medicaid-eligible transportation throughout NH. He said the goal was to distribute volunteers to regional providers after six months of recruiting.

10) Information Exchange

J. Donald introduced Melissa Silver who will be helping COAST develop a new volunteer driver program to fill service gaps in Dover, Rochester, and Somersworth. He said Melissa would be working with a committee from the cities to identify ways to fill the service gaps.

J. Donald noted that he participated in the Hand in Hand program run by Dover Housing Authority and Wentworth-Douglass Hospital. He said the Dover Housing Authority's transportation program was ending but they realized all of their properties are along a COAST fixed route. J Donald said he was working with them to visit all the sites to conduct travel training.

11) **Clients in Need**

M. Schmalz noted that she had received a large volume of calls from people looking for rides in Rochester. She said she referred them to TripLink but wanted to point out the unusual volume.

R. Nichols said COAST was continuing to work with the City of Portsmouth to provide transportation for local seniors.

D. Perou said she was dealing with a special-needs client who called RNMOW and several other agencies multiple times regarding her trips. She requested that ACT have a focused discussion in the future about working with disruptive clients and clients with special needs.

12) **Public Comment**

13) **Adjournment**

M. Schmalz made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by M. Longus

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32