



**Tri-Valley Transit
Orange/N. Windsor E&D Partner Meeting
Sept. 28, 2021 – 1:30pm to 3:30pm
TVT Randolph Offices and via Zoom
DRAFT MINUTES**

Attendees – Jim Moulton, Tri-Valley Transit, Jade McClallen, Tri-Valley Transit; Mike Reiderer, Tri-Valley Transit; Rita Seto, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission; Jeanne Kern, Central Vermont Council on Aging; Wendi Germain, Senior Solutions; Amanda Smith, MAHHC; Tim Bradshaw, VTrans.

Regrets – Gifford Adult Day; Upper Valley Services; Scotland House Adult Day, Mark Bradley, Bugbee Senior Center, Deanna Jones, Thompson Senior Center; Gretchen Pembroke, Clara Martin Center.

Meeting Minutes

1. Introductions

Rita called meeting at 1:33pm and roll called those present.

2. COVID update –

Jim reported that the delta variant is reversing many lifted restrictions. The Federal mask mandate for transit is still in place. TVT has maintained general protocols in vehicles (sanitizers, masks, barriers between seats). TVT has resumed screening questions (see attached) for Dial-a-ride services driven by Medicaid and E&D program.

3. Microtransit update –

Jim reported that TVT applied for VTrans funds for microtransit feasibility planning for 3 areas in TVT area (Bradford, 89Ner to Barre/Montpelier, Woodstock). TVT had planned for 4th area in Middlebury however, SEVT who was preparing a similar scope, bid out for consultants and received only 1 bid at twice the price. VTrans redrafted the RFP scope for a statewide consultant for improved consistency and better pricing. The RFP was released last week and began taking initial questions with proposals in hand.

4. Volunteer shortage

Jade reported similar to last quarterly meeting on the volunteer shortage challenges – lots of vacation time after the Covid restriction lift. Now numbers are declining with TVT losing 2 5-day drivers. TVT is constantly advertising recruitment – currently 1 perspective resulting from a Valley News advertisement. This volunteer driver shortage is evident statewide as everyone is also struggling.

5. Employee shortage

Jade also reported that although dispatchers are staying full staff level, the recently hired field supervisor lasted a year and has left. The field supervisor was a game changer for support for drivers. TVT currently down 6 employees, 3 retirees, and some seasonal drivers. With the critical shortages, TVT is prioritizing performing services and trying to have the least impact to riders. Like the volunteer drivers, TVT is working on full effort trying to recruit drivers and being innovation/creative. If you know anyone slightly interested - \$1000 signing bonus post probation period. TVT has outreach on Facebook. TVT will train people on CDL as we try to minimize service disruptions.

6. Wheelchair ramp updates –

Jim reported that riders that need transportation wheelchair ramps assistance at their home has spurred a new initiative. TVT staff conducting background research on specifics for legal requirements for drivers so that they can evaluate the client's house. TVT can try to identify potential funding sources for riders. This has made a difference on how driver can service rider with improved safety for both parties and service expectations. TVT will share resources to E&D group on wheelchair access checklist.

7. Plan for dementia training -

The E&D group work plan included addressing dementia training, especially with drivers. TVT reported an internal decision to deal with situation-by-situation basis for now. Drivers are brought up to speed and will be offered training. TVT is prioritizing training just a handful of drivers that most likely will encounter that situation for now.

8. Updates from VTrans

Tim updated that he is working on mini amendments with transit providers. The mid-year adjustments are to reflect the current Covid situation. Tim reported that if an E&D client is visiting an adult day site for the first time (considered initial site visit) to check things out, that trip can be billed to Medicaid program. After the initial site visit, if the individual does not want to seek services, then use E&D transportation funds. Staff and Tim will review the E&D funding for end of year finalization.

Jade noted ridership is steady and the E&D group does not anticipate going over in rides. Tim enjoyed the TVT UVCTC facility ribbon cutting last week.

9. Bradford Bus Barn

Jim reported the Bus Barn has completed construction and held the ribbon cutting ceremony last week. Jim noted the project was successful and a great addition to



the drivers and operations. TVT Bradford is providing excess power from solar so they are transferring excess to Randolph and Middlebury site so this makes TVT become a net zero operations. There is incoming 4 LONO electric buses (from recent FTA grant that was awarded). TVT is waiting for manufacturing to be like the TVT buses which are cut away sizes – subject to computer chip shortages. This new facility translates to an additional of 1500hrs of driver service once we find drivers.

Jade reported that she and Mike have a planned meeting with the new Upper Valley Services ED in a few weeks at the Bus Barn.

Tracy from Sullivan County NH who attended was interested in viewing facility. Marble Valley in Rutland doing similar facility building.

Jade reported that TVT is looking at the Randolph site for the next big project.

10. Other Business:

CVCOA

Jeanne reported that the bus continues to provide Chelsea with meal delivery. We've advertised bus service available for meal sites but no one has taken it.

Senior Solutions

Wendi reported haven't heard much on transportation but same issues with volunteer drivers. Meal sites are open.

MAHHC

Amanda replaced Anna Caputo. Meal sites have opened back up in April but most drivers deliver Meals on Wheels. Challenges – staying to what the hospital wants vs. what drivers need (e.g. cannot ask are you vaccinated? This is a barrier for volunteer drivers. Right now, they are offering PPEs and safety glasses, and improved airflow in vehicles.) With Delta variant, drivers are scared. We continue to offer masks and glasses. Drivers have to self-attest no symptoms. After Nov. 12 volunteers need to be vaccinated but no information on drivers who aren't. We are trying to keep that trust and keep the need to balance. We still need rides for prescription pick-ups and medical rides.

TRORC

Rita reported that we mailed 273 hardcopies of the VTrans E&D survey results as well as a copy of the TVT E&D Ride Guide. In addition, we hand delivered hardcopies to each of the E&D partners for their site distribution to clients. We will look at the workplan for this year's group project.



11. Next Meetings

December 2021/January 2022 – Rita will send Doodle poll for December/January.

Jim reported TVT/TRORC/ACRPC will plan a joint E&D meeting in Spring and discuss joint agenda topics.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35pm.

Submitted by: Rita Seto, TRORC