

## **Draft Addison County E&D Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

*January 17, 2023*

The Addison County E&D Committee provides oversight and guidance for Tri-Valley Transit's programs to assist elders and persons with disabilities in Addison County. Programs supported by the committee get users out of their homes to medical appointments, to local adult day-care, to senior meal sites and for essential shopping. These services supplement regular transit services in the area, filling in gaps left by programs like Medicaid.

### **Attendees:**

Mary-Claire Croghan (TVT), Maureen Conrad (ACHHH), Bill Cunningham (TVT), Dan Currier (VTrans), Michelle Eastman (Age Well), Erika Marks (Age Well), Jim Moulton (TVT), Mike Winslow (ACRPC)

### **Agenda:**

1. Amendments to the Agenda
2. New E&D Partner Guidance
  - a. Jim led the discussion. Orange Co. has had a request for a new partner which triggered the discussion. Admission of new partners would affect grant funding for existing partners. They are exploring guidance for inviting new partners. Example guidance from [Green Mountain Transit](#) was developed to address the issue and includes a two-tier approach based on service provision and funding.
  - b. Mary Claire shared the organization chart for the E&D Committee. Jim reviewed it, and discussed some of the challenges of fitting a new partner into the structure.
  - c. Dan discussed potential access to resources. Each year during the funding application process, VTrans looks to TVT to set budgets. Early spring is the best time to bring in new partners because of the funding cycle and budget planning process. If existing funds are available in TVT's budget, VTrans would look to TVT to use them, however there is limited funding that could be brought in with new partners if necessary. Partners need to consider how existing funding is allocated and whether there's capacity. VTrans would expect new partners to provide some match funding.
  - d. Erika - would this mean less service for Age Well clients? Jim - ideally no, but that's a key question. Would be more about figuring out how to expand. Decisions should be about the needs of the client community.

- e. Dan asked if there is a need that the existing structure isn't meeting, e.g. job access. Jim identified Turning Point Center and VT Adult Learning as having expressed interest previously.
  - f. Michelle identified the shortage of volunteer and paid drivers and vehicles as a limitation. Jim noted that the capacity to provide services could change with the addition of partners, but these questions would need to be evaluated if a new partner would be added. Bill noted that the number of drivers has increased, so more demand is being met. Yet, demand does change over time. Jim said TVT has not advertised for clients in the past to avoid services being flooded. This was a big risk pre-Covid in particular.
  - g. Maureen would like to invite Bill to Middlebury Rotary to recruit volunteer drivers
  - h. Maureen asked if match funding was expected from existing partners, and if so, how much would be an appropriate amount? ACHHH is already facing an 8% decrease in Medicare reimbursement. Further, there are numerous multi-million dollar projects being kicked around in Addison County which may affect fundraising ability for social services region-wide. Jim said at this moment, there is no request for additional funding from partners.
  - i. This will be an on-going discussion. TVT and VTrans are looking for feedback from regions in regard to establishing a standardized document. The process will require some structured work moving forward, and the topic will be an on-going agenda item. Dan said VTrans believes conversion of E&D committees to mobility committees is an important future goal. There are additional players that can come under the umbrella. Jim asked how would the broader umbrella be related to funding which is tied to E&D? Dan identified Washington Counties attempt to move in this direction as an experiment to watch for guidance.
3. VTrans
- a. E&D trip cancellation/denials - VTrans is looking for better information on types of number of denials, and requesting monthly reporting. They've received 50 reports up to September. Bill responded that rather than denial VTrans should refer to inability to find a driver. There were 46-51 incidences per month in summer, and 25-33 in the fall months. The improvement was attributed to increased number of drivers, use of staff drivers, increase in shared rides, and increased rider and driver comfort coming out of Covid. Michelle asked if TVT distinguishes between cancellations and denials (due to lack of availability or otherwise). Bill said they will work on refining reporting. He did note that TVT also sees clients canceling at the last minute which prevents reallocation of drivers. Dan asked if VTrans should provide categories into which reporting can

be squeezed. Bill will talk with Stephanie, but thinks it's a good idea. Maureen would also be interested in learning about the extent to which clients cancel. Social workers may be able to intervene. Bill said TVT does track habitual offenders, but the issue seems to be growing. Maureen reported that ACHH had only a small number of cancellations from TVT during the holiday period which was very promising.

#### 4. Partner Roundtable

##### a. VTrans

- i. The community driver campaign launched this week. VTrans is hyping the program to bring in volunteers, and promote volunteers.
- ii. VTrans is starting to plan a virtual E&D summit for June

##### b. TVT

- i. TVT provided 12 vaccination trips this fiscal year two in August, four in October, and six in December.

##### c. Age Well

- i. The Vergennes meal site is starting to grow. They are hoping to get more bus ridership. They are also recruiting at 45 Armory Lane for clients that might be interested in senior meals. Michelle has experienced problems with people canceling their trips but not telling TVT.
- ii. Age Well is looking to start a meal program in the Bridport area in the spring that might require a bus once or twice a month
- iii. First Friday VFW meals are ramping up, which may lead to ride requests.

##### d. ACHHH

- i. They have finished vaccination clinics for the year.
- ii. They are starting an in-person bereavement group in Middlebury. This has not yet led to transportation requests.
- iii. They have opened an Outpatient physical therapy clinic at their clinic on Route 7 - a much needed service.

Next Meeting April 18, 2023 at 2PM