

## **Addison County E&D Committee Quarterly Meeting Agenda**

*April 18, 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:**

Jill Brady (Age Well), Mary Claire Crogan (TVT), Maureen Conrad (ACHHH), Bill Cunningham (TVT), Dan Currier (VTrans), Michelle Eastman (Age Well), Jim Moulton (TVT), Lea Richards (CSAC), Stephanie Stearns (TVT), Mike Winslow (ACRPC)

### **Agenda:**

1. Amendments to the Agenda
  - a. Jim Moulton asked to discuss requests for rides to marijuana dispensaries. Added under Other Business.
2. E&D Summit
  - a. June 9 from 9:30-11:30 - virtual event. Dan noted that the total length might be a half hour longer to add a break between sessions.
  - b. Thoughts on agenda items? (see page 2)
    - i. Jim suggested the marijuana discussion (dispensaries) should be statewide
    - ii. What are different regions doing about adding partners fairly and equitably?
3. Partner Roundtable - a chance to share useful insights about the programs
  - a. VTrans - E&D summit
  - b. TVT
    - i. Volunteer recruitment update - have gone from 19 to 21 with two more in process of undergoing background check.
    - ii. Ridership update - uptick in total E&D rides over the last four months. Number of denials has continued to drop. January and February were still high. Have been complementing volunteers with staff drivers to reduce denials. Number of riders will increase when Elderly Services numbers are added in; those are not yet available.
    - iii. Microtransit update - still need a software vendor. Meeting with VTrans to discuss the cost of software. Planning to implement in the new fiscal year

in the Middlebury area. TVT expects it to reduce burdens on E&D trips and volunteers by using microtransit to meet short distance needs of riders. Microtransit will also give riders more independence and options.

- c. Age Well - A second meal site is opening in Vergennes starting June 1 at Armory Lane on Thursdays. TVT has funds for the end of FY23, but needs to confirm a bus and driver. The extra site will lead to an increased funding request on TVT's part for their VTrans grant. New riders have been joining to attend the Congregational Church site in Vergennes. Age Well is looking to open a site in Bristol at Pleasant Hills Senior housing and a site to be determined. Other events: June 20 Basin Harbor boat cruise, July 20 summer picnic, August 11 Spirit of Ethan Allen Cruise, August 29 Champlain Valley Fair.
    - i. The Helen Porter Center requested a TVT bus for a First Friday event. Their bus holds four and they were hoping for two busloads (8 in wheelchairs plus however many could be seated). For such requests, Helen Porter should be in contact with TVT two weeks in advance of an event. Michelle will communicate that to Helen Porter.
  - d. CSAC - no update
  - e. ACHHH - everything is going well. Nothing but positive reviews. Requested that TVT share any incidences of patients canceling. Bill noted that the cancellations have decreased since the winter.
4. New E&D Partner Guidance – review draft document and questions on partners service needs (see attachments)
- a. Dial A Ride Guidance - put together by TVT for partners. Jim asked for questions, concerns, or clarifications. There were none. Bill pointed out that the 20% match had not been asked for consistently. The Guidance document makes it clear that is the policy. It also makes clear what types of trips are eligible and which need to be funded otherwise. TVT's primary goal was to create a consistent understanding of how the program works.
  - b. Partner Service Guidelines are meant to clarify how entities can become partners and what steps they'd need to take. For example, the Special Olympics has not been listed as a formal partner.
    - i. Overall demand for services would exceed funding available. Because of that reality, TVT has not marketed the program to prospective partners, but they would like to be responsive to requests if they come in. Mary Claire noted that in the ONW region the question has been more acute with entities requesting trips.
    - ii. VTrans wants the guidance there in case a well matched entity does come in, but agrees that the 20% match from any new partner is imperative.

- VTrans wants the guidance to help launch E&D committees toward Mobility committees. Mobility committees are more grounded in Central Vermont and will be a topic at the Summit.
- iii. Maureen expressed her concern that any new partners could potentially affect ACHHH's ability to meet its clients needs. Dan suggested additions would lead to additional funds, not just redistribution of existing funds.
  - iv. Dan suggested another partnership level in the guidance; one-off partners that receive resources as they are available. They would still be subject to Dial a Ride guidance. Mary Claire identified these entities as Qualified Service Organizations (QSO). Mary Claire expressed the importance of keeping a formalized framework for decision making.
  - v. With the addition of a new partnership level, the sense of the group was that the guidance fits the committee's needs.
5. VTrans Grant Application - will be submitted 4/19. TVT has been in discussions with partners and is building their budget to meet expected needs. VTrans will review over the next few weeks and match to the legislature's budget. Award decisions will be based on negotiations based on the approved budget and should occur in late May or early June. If those negotiations have an impact on partner participation TVT will reach back out to partners to discuss.
6. Other Business
- a. Marijuana - In January, TVT received requests for trips to marijuana dispensaries, and wondered if such costs are an eligible expense under this program. TVT doesn't have the capacity or authority to differentiate between medical and recreational purchases. Maureen pointed out that it should be treated the same as requests to go to the liquor store. From VTrans perspective, such trips are not allowed; they do not count as a wellness trip. The program is funded by federal dollars and marijuana is still illegal, even for medical purposes, on a federal level. Dan will see if the Summit can invite someone from the Cannabis Control Board to the Summit. The takeaway is that front line staff need a message that is consistent statewide when they receive such requests.
  - b. Middlebury is pursuing dementia friendly town status. The Middlebury Partnership is pulling together training materials for distribution at local businesses.
  - c. Clients in Middlebury, Vergennes, and Ferrisburgh will have access to mid-day bus service to Burlington starting Tuesday May 2nd.

Next Meeting E&D Summit June 9, 2023