



Town of Sudbury

<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, September 18, 2020

10:00 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Sandy Lasky, Debra Galloway, Adam Duchesneau, Alice Sapienza, Dan Nason, Kay Bell (representing Commission on Disability for Doug Frey)

Core Members Absent: Doug Frey

Advisory Group Present: Lisa Kouchakdjian (from approximately 10:45 to adjournment)

Advisory Group Absent: Charlie Dunn, Scott Nix, Beth Suedmeyer, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab, Ellen Joachim

Guests: Linda Faust

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 10:06 am. After a few technical difficulties, a quorum was confirmed, roll call was taken, and Dan made an announcement that this was a public meeting and the meeting was being broadcast and recorded via Zoom.

Selection of Clerk

Debra volunteered to take meeting minutes.

MAPC COVID-19 Taxicab, Livery, Hackney Transportation Partnership Grant and Taxi Program a.k.a. the "Go Sudbury! Taxi Rides Program"

Debra reported that, as of this morning, there are 17 applicants for the Go Sudbury! Taxi Rides program. Dan noted that we were able to provide Linda with a taxi ride to Town Meeting last Saturday, which is our first ride and a success. Adam confirmed that MAPC has signed the contract for this program and are processing the fund request.

Dan offered that there is a question about how the MAPC funds are allocated between the two taxi companies (Tommy's Taxi and JFK Transportation, Inc.). Alice shared that the grant proposal allocated \$15,000 of MAPC grant funding to Tommy's and \$5,000 to JFK. The MAPC grant proposal language stipulates that funding for JFK will be for WAV* only. However, the Committee's supplemental funding of \$5,000 of mitigation funds and \$3,000 of BayPath Elder Services CARES Act funds is

available to pay for rides with either taxi company, and for WAV* or sedan rides. Since the JFK sedan taxi rides are less expensive than the Tommy's Taxi sedan rides, there is an opportunity to utilize some of these funds more efficiently.

(*Note: WAV is wheelchair accessible vehicles)

Adam and Debra will review the first and subsequent invoices and ensure allocation of the costs are made to the appropriate fund accounts.

The discussion then moved to ride expenses. It was noted that one of the initial ride requests is for an expensive medical ride to Boston (within 25 miles from Sudbury, one way). The Transportation Committee decided to monitor costs on a monthly basis as invoices will be received monthly; the committee will monitor numbers of rides and ride destinations on a bi-weekly basis. This will enable the Committee to monitor expenditures and ride data and provide an opportunity to change or limit ride destinations if needed. In the Committee's "Making the Connection" grant proposal to fund on-demand Uber rides, the Committee designated a geofence (geographical distance) limit of 25 miles from Sudbury for Uber rides. We believe the same limit should apply to this grant program, with the caveat that requests for rides that exceed the 25-mile limit would be considered on a case by case basis.

Dan screen-shared the Go Sudbury! Taxi Ride Program online application for the committee's review. Adam revised the JFK taxi service hours yesterday in the online application to be more specific about the blocks of time that WAV vehicles are available. JFK sedans are available during JFK's entire operating hours of 5:30 AM- 8:00 PM; whereas JFK WAV are available during the week from 5:30-7:00 AM, 9:30-1:30, and 4:00-8:00 PM. There are no constraints on weekend WAV hours. While Adam was editing the online application, the application introduction was inadvertently erased. Dan will copy the introduction back into the application with edits to reflect the 25-mile radius limit, and the fact that riders may use JFK WAV or sedan taxis (not just WAV).

Linda asked for clarification of the taxi operating hours as well as allowable destinations from a rider's standpoint. Adam noted that overall the sedan taxi hours are from 5:00 AM – 1:00 AM (as Tommy's Taxi operation hours are longer than JFK taxi operation hours).

The Committee recognized a need to further clarify what are allowable ride destinations within the program. The "Making the Connection" Uber grant proposal is slightly different from the MAPC Urgent Taxi (Go Sudbury!) proposal, possibly causing confusion. The MAPC Urgent Taxi program (Go Sudbury! Taxi program) proposal identified ride destinations as follows: non-COVID, non-urgent medical rides, grocery and other essential shopping trips, and workforce transportation for essential workers. The Community Compact grant identifies "transportation services to health and community resources as well as economic opportunities," a slightly broader category.

It was acknowledged that it is difficult for the Committee to determine what a resident's definition of an essential trip is. After discussion, it was agreed that the "grocery and other essential shopping" definitions will be left open to the riders' interpretation of what is essential to them for now. The hope is that riders will be considerate that there is limited funding and that the money is needed for

many residents. As the program is utilized, the Committee will be monitoring ride destinations and fund use to determine if the guidelines for ride destinations need to be changed.

Kay questioned whether visually impaired residents will be able to access the Go Sudbury! Online application form for themselves via a screen reader. The application is not currently accessible via screen reader, but the Town IT department is working on developing a method for items listed on the website to be usable with screen readers. Dan mentioned that calling in for registration is certainly an option too.

Making the Connection – Uber Program

Adam reported that the Uber dashboard and waiver language have been finalized. The documents are expected to be signed perhaps next week. Adam will be establishing a credit card for the payments to Uber. The town is using Transportation Mitigation funds to pay for the Uber program. The initial allotment was \$20,000; however, \$5,000 of those funds are now available to fund the Taxi program, leaving \$15,000 to be used toward the Uber program. (Note that there will be another \$10,000 of mitigation funds for transportation from the Coolidge 2 development.)

The Committee acknowledged that Uber is a different kind of transportation and relies on individual drivers to maintain COVID safety protocols. Both the Uber and Taxi program waiver language includes acknowledgement of the potential for risk of COVID exposure. Although there are concerns that persons with higher risk and/or vulnerability to COVID infection may need to pay heed, it is incumbent on each individual to make a choice as to whether to use either the Taxi program or the Uber rides program, weighing the need for the ride with the possible risk to their health. Alice suggested that it might make sense to review the program and procedures with the Board of Health Director. Dan will be in touch with Health Director Bill Murphy about the two programs. The Committee agreed to discuss the issue further at the next Transportation Committee meeting.

Both Adam and Alice will be talking with Uber next week. Adam will be scheduling a “Making the Connection” steering committee meeting with the 6 town representatives for mid-October. They hope to bring the Project Management company Nelson-Nygaard to the meeting for planning and discussion. Given the MAPC funding as well as challenges of procuring WAV services that we have experienced in Sudbury, this is an appropriate time for the *Making the Connections* Steering Committee and the Program Manager to discuss moving forward across the towns.

Town Meeting Transportation

Debra reported that Ana Cristina, Senior Center Outreach Specialist, was pleased with the Tommy’s Taxi service, as she met the taxi driver who brought a rider to the Saturday Town Meeting. The Taxi was very clean, the driver was professional and courteous, and there was a plexiglass barrier between the driver and rider. The rider noted that GPS accessibility was difficult at the L-S site.

Administrative Items

Dan reported that he will remain as the Transportation Committee Liaison from the Select Board for the next year. He also shared that he will be liaison to the MBTA. Janie Dretler will be the new Select

Board Chair and will be the liaison to the MAGIC committee (Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Communication – a regional planning group).

Review of Previous Action Items

Debra sent out the press release on the new Taxi service. Her staff is contacting all of the residents who requested transportation services from the Senior Center over the last few months to inform them about the Taxi service and how to apply. The taxi ride to Town meeting was a success. Dan, Debra and Adam have come up with a method for ensuring that transportation staff can access rider information on the Google registration forms. Adam ensured that MAPC received the Taxi program weblinks.

Action Items

- Dan will update the Go Sudbury! Online application with the modified language discussed regarding ride distance and destinations.
- Dan will be in contact with Health Director Bill Murphy regarding the safety protocols for the Uber rides program.
- Adam will share a summary ride report from the Taxi program at the next Transportation Committee meeting.
- Dan will check with Sudbury TV to see if meetings can be recorded

Approval of Minutes

Dan shared the draft minutes (with two edits) for the September 11th meeting. Sandy moved to approve the minutes as edited. Dan seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously via roll call, with Kay Bell and Alice Sapienza abstaining from the vote.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for 2 October 2020 at 10:30 AM via the town Zoom service.

Motion to Adjourn

Alice made the move to adjourn at 10:58 AM and Adam seconded; the motion was unanimously accepted via a roll call vote.