



November 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes for the Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council

The Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council (Coordinating Council) meeting was held in RIPTA's board room, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, and was called to order at 2:04 PM. An attendance sheet is attached to these minutes.

Joelle Kanter, RIPTA planner, began by announcing the Council's vision: accessible, coordinated statewide mobility for all Rhode Islanders. Tina Pedersen motioned to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2022 Coordinating Council meeting. Laurie Diorio seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Sarah Ingle, RIPTA's director of long range planning, then introduced the low-income pilot program which RIPTA's board of directors approved in October. Six hundred Wave cards will be distributed through a network of partners, offering participants unlimited free travel for 6 months. To qualify, people must have incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and should not qualify for existing transportation benefit programs.

Estephany Matrilie, RI Association of Community Action Agencies, described her organization's role. The state's 7 CAP agencies have agreed to identify clients in their catchment areas who meet the criteria and assist them with completing applications. Several other organizations including Crossroads Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness, and Mathewson Street Church are assisting with applications as well.

During a discussion, questions were asked about the data collected through the application form, such as address and race/ethnicity, and about program promotion, which is being managed directly through the partner organizations. Jay Burdick suggested that United Way/2-1-1 would be able to assist with screening pilot program participants if needed.

Sarah recommended forming a Coordinating Council working group to continue focusing on the pilot every other month between regularly scheduled meetings. As the program continues, it will also be important to document the CAP agencies' processes and analyze participant card usage.

Other project updates:



- RI Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Coordinated Plan: This plan determines priority transportation projects that utilize FTA Section 5310 funds and complementary resources to support older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income groups. The draft plan is almost ready for review but is slightly behind schedule.
- Paratransit expansion study: The RI General Assembly has asked RIPTA to study paratransit service, which currently operates within ¾ mile of fixed-route bus service, and to design a statewide program addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities traveling outside the paratransit service area. Two public meetings were held in September, and two additional meetings are scheduled on November 16th and 17th to share study findings and seek additional public input to incorporate into the final report.
- Community transportation webpages: New pages on RIPTA's website are still in development and have been populated with content about transportation services offered in each municipality. Once the final review is complete, the pages will go live.
- Flex on Demand pilot project: RIPTA is developing a pilot on demand rideshare program within the West Warwick/Coventry Flex zone. When it launches, riders will be able to use an app to book rides, pay fare, and track trips.

Member agencies and organizations shared additional updates:

- Nicole Arias said that the RI Office of Healthy Aging (OHA) is working on a new pocket manual for older adults and people with disabilities. OHA is also getting ready to announce a partnership with GetSetUp, an online learning platform that offers live classes for free to all Rhode Islanders age 55+.
- Jason Lyon shared an update on the procurement process for the state's Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program, with the state preparing to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Sara Harrison is now the Program Director for MTM, the current NEMT vendor in Rhode Island.
- Laurie Diorio, RI Office of Rehabilitation Services, assists clients with paying for transportation and wants to ensure accessibility of the new community transportation pages and Flex on Demand app.
- Jennifer Marquis-Carusio announced that the RI Office of Veterans Services is opening two education centers in Woonsocket and Westerly. She also manages the Vet Pass program.

Other discussion items:

- Heidi Ross asked about the length of time it takes for clients who apply for RIPTA's senior/disabled bus pass program to receive passes, which may be up to 21 business days.



- Grant Dulgarian asked questions about Kennedy Plaza building hours and mentioned that screens that provide rider information have been fixed. He also noted that printed bus schedules are no longer displayed on racks.

The next meeting is scheduled on Monday, January 9, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 3:14 PM.



**Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council
November 14, 2022 Attendance List**

Council Members	Organization
Nicole Arias	RI Office of Healthy Aging
Laurie Diorio	RI Office of Rehabilitation Services
Sarah Ingle	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Joelle Kanter	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Anne Leclerc	Rhode Island Dept. of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals
Jennifer Marquis-Caruso	RI Office of Veterans Services
Lauren Nocera	Rhode Island Department of Health
Jason Lyon	RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services

Others Present

Name	Organization
Bob Robillard	RI Senior Center Directors Association
Jay Burdick	United Way/2-1-1
Grant Dulgarian	RIPTA rider
Estephany Matrille	RI Association of Community Action Agencies
Tina Pedersen	RAMP
Sister Mary Pendergast	Sisters of Mercy/RI Housing Justice
J. Adrian Phillips	Mathewson Street Church
Pamela Poniatowski	RI Poor People's Campaign/Mathewson Street Church
Kevin Simon	Mathewson Street Church
Katherine Tennett	East Bay Community Action Association
Nathan Watchous	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority