



May 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes for the Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council

The Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council (Coordinating Council) meeting was held at Edward King House, 35 King Street, Newport, and called to order at 2:00 PM. An attendance sheet is attached to these minutes, indicating that some participants met in person and others joined online through Teams.

Joelle Kanter, RIPTA planner, began by announcing the Coordinating Council's vision: accessible, coordinated statewide mobility for all Rhode Islanders. Maureen Maigret then motioned to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2023 Coordinating Council meeting. Jean Bousquet seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Jane Mahoney, training and technical assistance specialist for the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, followed with an overview of NADTC's 2022 Equity and Accessibility Implementation Grants Program which funded the vehicle sharing project led by Age-Friendly Rhode Island. The Equity and Accessibility planning phase started with 9 grantees over a 6-month period ending in August 2022 and continued with 7 projects in the implementation phase. Information is available on [NADTC's website](#), and Jane also encouraged meeting participants to sign up for the NADTC mailing list, participate in courses, and check out publications, videos, and other resources.

Age-Friendly RI Executive Director Jim Connell then shared lessons from the local vehicle sharing pilot project. In the planning phase, Age-Friendly RI partnered with RIPTA to lead focus groups looking for an organization willing to serve additional clients with one of their vehicles. Once nonprofit agency Looking Upwards came on board, the project focused on filling transportation gaps in Newport County, particularly for low-income older adults and people with disabilities.

In practice, the pilot serves residents at three Newport hubs: Donovan Manor, AHEPA, and the Paramount Building. Early on, the planning team learned a valuable lesson when they designed routes for the vehicle that didn't meet community needs, and they quickly pivoted to create an on-demand service. Since March, the on-demand pilot has provided 241 trips to 50 unique riders.

Jim shared several lessons from the pilot, and other team members added their insight as well. He stressed the importance of meeting people where they are, listening actively and empathetically, and earning credibility with



riders. Tommy Sheehan, Donovan Manor, added that residents want their independence and appreciate that they can call Ricardo, the Looking Upwards driver and scheduler, whenever they need to go somewhere.

Valory McHugh, Looking Upwards, said that her agency recognized the value in operating the pilot program through this partnership, and since it launched, other organizations have expressed interest in establishing similar pilots in their own communities. When the NADTC pilot program ends in June, Looking Upwards plans to use other funds to keep it going for at least another month. The team is also creating a video to share with potential funders and other organizations.

After the project update, Catherine Taylor announced free talks by urban innovator and planner Gil Penalosa, founder of 8 80 Cities, hosted by AARP Rhode Island. [Online registration](#) is open for sessions at 5 PM on Wednesday, July 19th at Providence Public Library and on Thursday, July 20th at Salve Regina University in Newport.

The meeting adjourned at 3:33 PM.



**Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council
May 8, 2023 Attendance List (in person and Teams)**

Council Members	Organization
Nicole Arias	RI Office of Healthy Aging
Benny Bergantino	RI Division of Statewide Planning
Jean Bousquet	RI Office of Rehabilitation Services (Teams)
Julia Evelyn	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Sarah Ingle	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Joelle Kanter	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Kim Rauch	RI Department of Human Services
Mario Olivieri	RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services (Teams)

Others Present

Name	Organization
Rebecca Allen	Newport Housing Authority
Cristina Amedeo	United Way/2-1-1
Deb Burton	RI Elder Info
Lynn Ceglie	Newport City Council
Jim Connell	Age-Friendly RI
Molly Faerber	RI Office of Rehabilitation Services (Teams)
John Garrahan	United Way/2-1-1
Carmela Geer	Edward King House
Barbara Henry	ATAC
Jane Mahoney	National Aging & Disability Transportation Center
Maureen Maigret	Senior Agenda Coalition (Teams)
Estephany Matrilie	RI Association of Community Action Agencies (Teams)
Valory McHugh	Looking Upwards
Janice Musco	ATAC
Jack Narron	Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (Teams)
Lorna Oinonen	AARP volunteer
Beth Pinkham	OSCIL



Bob Robillard	Coventry Senior Services/RI Senior Center Directors Assoc. (Teams)
Mireille Sayaf	OSCIL
Tommy Sheehan	Newport Housing Authority
Maria Sol Cuesta	The Point/United Way of RI
Catherine Taylor	AARP Rhode Island