



## **November 16, 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 in the RIPTA board room, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, and was called to order at 1:05 PM. An attendance sheet is attached to these minutes indicating that some participants met in person and others joined online.

Joelle Kanter, RIPTA planner, began by announcing the Coordinating Council's vision: accessible, coordinated statewide mobility for all Rhode Islanders. Mario Olivieri then motioned to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023 Coordinating Council meeting. Holly Snyder seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Joelle described Coordinating Council plans for 2024, starting with onboarding new representatives from member agencies. Sarah Ingle, RIPTA's executive director of planning, added that RIPTA has invited partners from other sectors, such as housing and labor, to broaden the discussion around statewide mobility.

Participating agencies then shared several updates:

- Mario Olivieri said that the NEMT program continues to transport people to dialysis, adult daycare, substance abuse facilities, and other appointments. EOHHS staff is now going out into communities, talking to managers at assisted living facilities and nursing homes about how residents can participate in the program. This public-facing approach is now happening at a larger scale, and it dovetails nicely with RIPTA's travel training work.
- Pete Joly, RI Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, works with state social workers to assist youth in transition with getting housing, employment, and transportation after they graduate. He wants to assist with making travel information easy to understand, and he offered opportunities to share updates in the DD newsletter and website. He recommends sharing digital files of transportation-related brochures and maps for printing and including in packets, using consistent visuals, large fonts, and simple language.

The next update focused on Phase 2 of RIPTA's low-income pilot program. All participants enrolled in the first phase had their photo ID Wave cards activated through the end of January 2024. From February 1<sup>st</sup> through the



end of April 2024, RIPTA will continue to fund the program, but card management will shift to partner organizations through new Wave accounts. RIPTA is matching cards with the organizations that enrolled them initially and encouraging those organizations to contact their clients directly about reenrollment in Phase 2. Two of the partner organizations—East Bay Community Action Program and Mathewson Street Church—described the pilot program’s impact on their clients and the importance of finding funding to sustain it.

Questions followed about how to direct qualifying applicants to RIPTA’s free reduced fare bus pass program. The group also discussed opportunities to enroll new participants in the pilot, recognizing that needs have changed over the past year. Wendy Boudreau, West Warwick HEZ, noted that the homeless population in the area has grown significantly, and transportation to and from shelters continues to be an issue.

Joelle also mentioned work on preparing for RIPTA’s paratransit expansion pilot which will begin in 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.



**Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council  
November 16, 2023 Attendance List (in person and Teams)**

<b>Council Members</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Benny Bergantino	RI Division of Statewide Planning
Sarah Ingle	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Peter Joly	RI Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals
Amethys Nieves	RI Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals
Joelle Kanter	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Mario Olivieri	RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services

**Others Present**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Wendy Boudreau	West Warwick Health Equity Zone
Pam Jennings	Mathewson Street Church
David Schultz	Senate Fiscal Office
Holly Snyder	AARP volunteer
Katherine Tennett	East Bay Community Action Program