



Transportation Subcommittee
 Meeting Minutes
 March 23, 2021
 8:30am – 10:00am

Facilitator:	Sue Sefton, Dave Bulkowski		
Meeting Attendees:	Aruna Kamara, Bill Kirk, Bob Barnes, Brianne Robach, Dave Bulkowski, Debbi Coleman, Debbie Jones, Emily Madsen, Gordie Moeller, Jason Prescott, Joan Konyndyk, Ken Miguel-Cipriano, Kendrick Heinlein, Miguel Velasco, Monica Light, Pat Draper, Rachel Kunnath, Sue Sefton, Taylor Hartson, Taylor VanderLaan, Tiffany Pearson, Wafa Haddad, Wende Randall <i>(List may not be complete- please contact Brianne if you were on the call but are not listed here.)</i>		
Time Convened:	8:33	Time Adjourned:	9:55

Introductions	
Discussion	
Dave and Sue are looking for additional subcommittee members to step in to the leadership/co-chair roles for the subcommittee. Staff did not receive any nominations prior to the meeting. Ken Miguel-Cipriano and Tiffany Pearson both indicated interest in serving as a co-chairs. All members of the committee voted to appoint Ken and Tiffany as co-chairs.	
Transportation and COVID-19 Vaccinations	
Discussion	
<p>Kent County Health Department and a smaller group has been working to ensure that transportation is not a barrier for folks going to and from vaccine sites. They have submitted a request for funds through the Board of Commissioners to support these efforts and are looking into private funding sources. Private funds would be held by Baxter Community Center as the fiduciary. KCHD will hold contracts with each of the partners who are looking for reimbursements. Reimbursement would be for rider donation amount. In addition, the group is asking for agencies to be flexible in offering rides to community member outside of their typical clients, at the full reimbursement rate. KCHD may be able to back-date reimbursements to March 1st. There is a push to get folks registered for transportation services now so they are set once they have an appointment scheduled. KCHD will be sending a survey to agencies to develop a Kent County specific transportation guide for community members.</p> <p>The Rapid has been internally discussing how to support access to vaccine sites for fixed routes including ways to provide zero-fare rides to and from vaccine sites or running a shuttle to and from DeVos Place.</p> <p>Smaller workgroup meets Wednesday mornings, connect with Wende (wrandall@hwmuw.org) and Pat (patricia.draper@kentcountymi.gov) if you are interested in attending.</p>	
County-Wide Mobility Update	
Discussion	
Dave shared that this October is the 25 th anniversary of the Kent County Commission voting against on county-wide transit. Ten years ago, the Kent County Transit Needs Assessment (view the executive summary here) was presented to GVMC and County Commission. The report proposed expansion of	





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service throughout the county. Over the past few months, a smaller group has been discussing steps needed to get county-wide mobility, likely through a millage.

Dave shared a strategy chart with that outlines the aspects to consider in community organizing. Later this week, a small group will be meeting with County Commission Chair and County Administrator to give a high-level overview. The hope is to have the County Commission create a task force to study county-wide mobility and develop a report. A report could inform a millage added to the ballot in 2022 (county-wide elections are only on even years). Pat suggested a special interest story highlighting these anniversaries to raise awareness.

Those outside of the 6 cities will be integral in raising awareness to this effort as folks living in those areas often struggle to access the core six cities without a personal car. It is important to set expectation that this is not a county-wide millage for The Rapid, instead it could be more like the senior millage that would fund multiple mobility options to best meet needs. Anticipate creating a Steering committee for this effort in the next few months.

Citizen's Agenda

Discussion

The Rapid: At their meeting tomorrow, the board will be considering, with potential for approval, the preferred scenario from the comprehensive operations analysis with service changes to begin this fall. Division United project will be releasing recommendations soon. Board of directors meeting link: <https://www.ridetherapid.org/about-the-rapid/board-of-directors>. Ridership is down 60-70% which is in line with national trends. They are starting to see slow increases.

RideLink: looking towards EcoLane implementation in about 40 days. Senior millage renewal is likely slated for November 2022.

Wheels to Work: beginning to work with companies who have employees coming back, anticipating growth as more folks are vaccinated

Kent County Community Transit: adding new registrations and have folks returning to the service. AMR no longer providing paratransit service.

Community Partner Updates

Discussion

Disability Advocates - hiring a community organizer and volunteer coordinator. Please share!: [Community Organizer/Volunteer & Intern Coordinator – Disability Advocates \(dakc.us\)](https://www.dakc.us) Also hiring a part-time (20 hrs/week) communications staff for social media and outreach

Mobile GR – anyone with questions about the Scooter pilot in Grand Rapids can reach out to Ken directly at kmcpriano@grand-rapids.mi.us

A HUGE thank you to Dave and Sue for their leadership with the subcommittee over the past 20 years!!

