

**CONNECT-ABILITY**  
**Transportation Workgroup**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**October 17, 2007**

**Present:** Cathy Ludlum, Robin Wood, Lisa Rivers, Carlos Pascoa, Glendine Henry

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m.

**1. Approval of Meeting Summary**

The workgroup approved the summary from the September 19 meeting.

**2. Workplan**

The group reviewed the current workplan and will continue working on the following activities in 2008:

- Create a document about What's Going On in Connecticut, current programs and development. Use Lisa's Transportation in Connecticut as a base to build upon.
- The Getting On Board guides are terrific, but there is nothing about local transportation providers for people with disabilities. Suggest creating localized inserts.
- There should be a document such as How to Plan for Transportation in the Individual Planning Process. No such thing currently exists.
- DSS has three transportation brokers for medical appointments only. This program has saved the state millions of dollars. Can it be expanded or replicated for nonmedical uses – like work?
- We have been talking about accessible taxis. Let's look into incentives (federal, state, local) and also the Tech Act.
- Standardize ADA applications for paratransit/Dial-A-Ride. The applications are currently inconsistent and unavailable electronically in most transit districts.
- Provide commute benefits information to Human Resources staff – could be used for new hire orientations and other staff updates/paycheck stuffers, various websites (corporate employers and state agencies)

**3. Disability Navigators**

Massachusetts no longer has disability navigators. Lisa reported that the disability navigator's system in Massachusetts cannot be replicated in Connecticut because of how the transit system currently operates here. Massachusetts has transit authorities, which covers cities and towns by county. CT has transit districts that may only include one or two towns – like Meriden/Wallingford transit district only covers those two towns.

#### **4. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation & Transportation to Work Models**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) provides non-emergency medical transportation to doctor appointments throughout the state for people on Medicaid who have no other means of transportation. DSS also provides grant funding for the administration of Transportation to Work Programs for TFA and TANF eligible clients. Glendine will contact DSS regarding the non-emergency medical transportation and the TFA/TANF transportation programs to see how they are funded, operated and how we can utilize these programs to address the transportation barriers and increase transportation options for individuals with disabilities.

#### **5. Standardization of ADA Application**

Lisa believes that the ADA application standardization may be on DOT's radar. She will check and let the workgroup know if there is a workgroup already working on the ADA application issues.

#### **6. Funding for Getting on Board Guide**

The workgroup discussed the feasibility of Connect-Ability providing funding for the development, printing and distribution of the Getting on Board Guide. Robin Wood reiterated the need for the guide and would like all of the current guides to be placed on various websites including her agency, Department of Disability Services and Connect-Ability. The Guides contain information about:

- Travel training
- Basic transit information,
- ADA paratransit information
- Information to help plan a trip before you ride
- Where to purchase tickets and bus passes
- Information about PCAs
- Service Animals, Parking, resources
- Vehicle modifications, driver assessments
- Ride sharing, commute benefits
- Advocacy/assistance.

Lisa provided clarification regarding funding for the previous 3 Guides. Job Access and Transportation Demand Management (FTA) provided one-time funding to develop and print the current guides. Metropool and Rideworks were responsible for developing the content of the Guides. For the North Central region, Rideshare is responsible for providing the content. Lisa will provide the contact information for Rideshare.

The Guides do not need frequent updates since they were designed to provide general/basic information that generally does not change. Any changes in information can be inserted in the back of the guides and updated on the websites. It would take approximately 6-8 months for the guides to be developed, printed and distributed. Lisa provided a budget estimate based on the Eastern/Southeastern cost estimates, which would be the same for North Central.

## **7. Seed Grants for Accessible Taxis**

The provision of seed grants for accessible taxis as a pilot was discussed. The Taxi Association President was unable to attend the meeting. Concerns were raised regarding individuals with disabilities who may want to use vanpool, but unable to get to the park and ride lot. While there are no rules as to where the riders are picked up and dropped off, the vanpool group decides the actual route and the fares are based on the round trip mileage the van travels per day. Typically groups like to condense the trip, which equates to less travel time and lower fares. The workgroup felt that taxis could fill this need.

Funding for accessible rideshare vans is provided through the 5310 grant funds through DOT. The 5310 grant funds are for non-profit entities only. Therefore taxi companies would not qualify for this funding. Seed grants would only pay for the cost differential of the accessible taxi. The taxi company would have to provide a share of the cost. For example, if a non-accessible taxi costs \$10,000 and an accessible taxi costs \$20,000, seed grants could fund the difference of \$10,000.

## **8. Recommendations to Steering Committee for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2008**

1. Standardize ADA applications for paratransit/Dial-A-Ride. The applications are currently inconsistent and unavailable electronically in most transit districts.
2. Develop/provide commute benefits information to employees and employers. Human Resources staff – could be used for new hire orientations and other staff updates/paycheck stuffers, various websites.
3. Develop/provide website content for transportation section on Connect-Ability website.

## **9. Other**

Transit for CT is holding listening sessions (public hearings) across the state to talk about the unserved needs for public transportation. The next listening session will be held on October 23 at the North End Senior Center in Hartford, 9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The event is free.

Meeting adjourned at noon.

**Next meeting: To Be Determined.**