

**MORRIS AREA PARATRANSIT SYSTEM
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Via Zoom

**MINUTES
September 10, 2020**

Members Present:

Marc Molde
Matt Putts
Maria Isaza

Staff Present:

Janet Ackerson Jefferson DAR
Christine Hellyer Director of Special Transportation
Louis Hoffman NJ TIP RUTGERS
Marcy Merola, SR Transportation, Mt. Olive
Pat Petrillo Aging
Patricia Rogalsky MAPS
Isabel Rojas NJ Transit
Laura Sostak Tritown 55 plus
Michelle Woehle Jefferson DAR

Guest

Freeholder Kathryn DeFillippo

I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am by Christine Hellyer, via ZOOM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from June 4, 2020 were accepted and approved after one correction.

Motion: Marc Molde / Maria Isaza

III. Staff Report-Christine Hellyer MAPS

Vehicle barriers were delivered this week, and installation has begun. This will increase our current capacity from 50% maybe to 75%. We do have ongoing subscriptions still on hold: *Employment Horizons, Adult Day Care and Nutrition Sites*, due to closures.

Our *CARES 5311* allotment provides the barriers for vehicles ,updating our technology, our sanitizing(foggers, spray) needs for staff and vehicles.

All *MAPS* drivers wear masks, have gloves, sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer on hand. And in between rides/clients, drivers sanitize vehicles in addition to the daily sanitizing.

MAPS does not provide service for *COVID* testing.

MAPS has not had any *COVID issues* with the ridership.

MAPS is still hiring, must have a CDL license.

In *August*, we launched our grocery shopping trips. It is a limited capacity *Monday thru Friday 10am-1pm*. Although we didn't change the policy at this time we do accommodate additional times if someone calls outside the venue if we have availability, because our closed programs reopen we might not be able to do that.

Chester and Mendham are utilizing our service more so than some other areas, because their DAR has stopped providing service or limited capacity of service. We received our *2021 SCDRTAP* application, which means I will be scheduling our Public Hearing on a digital platform *ZOOM* or *CISCO*. I will let you know soon. I request if all of you could make an effort to attend, so we can have your feedback and support.

Isabel Rojas added the advertising is thirty days for a *Public Hearing*.

If you are going to use *Zoom*, *Michael Viera*, from *Essex County* used *Zoom* for his *Public Hearing* in *July*, you can reach out to him.

Morris County is doing a nice job providing the services as life as what is going *normal with the services we provide*.

once *Employment Horizons* and *Adult Day Care* open up, we will see a new normal. And, so far we haven't had any *COVID* related issues.

Atlantic Private Care has a transportation program funded by Aging, Disabilities and Community Programming *Morris County*, for seniors/disabled. They offer nights, weekends and out of *County* service, for seniors or disabled. This is not for everyday dialysis, maybe a specialist appointment. This is not subscription ridership, and they only provide two trips per client, and they offer ambulate, (wheel chair accessible vehicle), ride share (lyft) and ambulance service. The client will be assessed by a nurse prior to receiving services.

It is not next day or same day service.

Maybe they can provide transportation for COVID testing, they work with Atlantic Health.

Their number is **973-540-9000**.

Freeholder DeFillippo acknowledged that during this difficult time we are still providing the transporting services to the community, keeping their lives stable during this time. *Morris County* has *COVID* numbers low, our unemployment average is lower than the *State of New Jersey*, and are average with the nation. This is all due to the staff and everybody working together.

Also, *Morris County* received *CARES* funding and are in the process of setting up another *COVID* testing place.

Also, please encourage the public to get the flu shot this year in September and October, because flu and cold symptoms are similar to *COVID*.

NJ Transit Isabel Rojas

The *Cares Agreement* federal funding *NJ Transit* received is being currently being routed and sent out soon, (funded due to *COVID*) specifically for *Counties* in rural areas and is 100% federal.

2021 SCDRTAP and *5311 Applications* just went out to the *Counties* last Friday, and they will start holding their *Public Hearings*.

Also the 5310 applications that were put out for 2018 and 2019, at this time no letters (inclusion/non-inclusion) are going out at this time. The manufacturing plants were closed during this time, and have been slowly reopening for the procurement of vehicles; delivery will probably be in 2021.

New Business- Christine Hellyer

We are in the midst of upgrading our technology with *Ecolane* system.

Especially during *COVID* having a web- based system was priceless.

Due to the fact that we had to vacate the *MAPS* staff at the nursing home, and had to relocate staff in a conference room in another building and some working from home.

We are expanding our system with our *5311* funds purchasing *IVR*(*interactive voice response*) and *SMS* (short message service) text messaging: calls made the night before and mass floodgate messages. This will allow more riders to receive the messages.

Our staff usually makes these calls, so I am now looking to see if the MAPS office staff can now work directly with LYFT (let you find transportation), Go-Go Grandparent.

Old Business- DAR Updates

Marcy- Mt. Olive- *not using our buses, only vehicles with one passenger for shopping and medical appointments. Scheduling has had issues because of different protocols at physician's offices. Sanitizing vehicles daily and weekly. We have been busy since medical offices opened, five new clients signed on for our program in August.*

Michele- Jefferson- *a bit of an increase:booking appointments, and now all we take all medicals, but no recreational shopping (Rockaway Mall, Wal-Mart), no hair or nail appointments.*

We are using one bus with four seats being used,(the rest are taped) but getting to the point of using our 2nd bus for transporting.

In July we had 75 trips

We don't go to the Shop Rite Wal-Mart area.

In August we had 61 trips 24 grocery

Our entire part time staff still on unemployment

We have three full time employees.

We have a question about the barriers (sneeze guards) for the vehicles: do you need permission for installation if it is State funded vehicle if it's not permanent and removable?

Michele we only have one vehicle

Christine we run everything by NJ Transit to be careful.

Our clients load and unload their own groceries on wheel chair ramp.

Isabel if it's one of our (NJ Transit) vehicles you definitely need to think about it.

The vehicles now being procured have the partitions.

Laura –Tri-Town- Our 2 Senior buses have not been running; Madison Senior Center is also closed and remain closed for the foreseeable future, and I see an increase in seniors using Go-Go Grandparent. We had 150 shopping trips and now it is down to four.

Laura asked Christine: I would like to know if you could elaborate how you are using the Go-Go Grandparent. We want to bring that service to more people in our community.

Christine: We have not yet partnered with a Go-go Grandparent or EZ Ride, at this time. When I first applied for the application T&C grant that was what I was anticipating. We didn't think at that time our office could handle on demand trips, and we wanted that option through UBER/LYFT. That is how the application was written, and if that is how I have to move forward that's fine,

but now with new use of IVR technology, I may have staff able to do that now. It is an option I will speak to Isabel. I still have the contact information, but we don't have the funding right now so I can't move forward at this time.

Essex County has been very successful with their use of LYFT service with EZ ride during COVID. Their structure is different, they partner with a company that provides their transportation, and they contract with EZ-Ride who contracts with LYFT.

Marc Molde –DAWNcil

We are hoping to reopen our office on September 21, with a staggered schedule. We have been working remotely from home during COVID, with various Counties Providing services for our clients.

Matt Putts -Employment Horizons

All of our programs are up and running except for *Extended Employment* workshop. We are trying to force the State's hand for our workshop reopening.

There currently is a video campaign out with some other workshops of our clients and family members sitting home discussing their situation of sitting home and the discriminatory aspect of the type of employer we are not because of the risk of what we do but whom we hire.

Although the *Governor* announced last week that workshops were re-open, we did not receive word of from *DVR (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services)* or *Department of Labor*.

The letter we received last spring from the *Commissioner of Labor* is still in effect closing us.

We did send a letter to the *Department of Labor* yesterday, that we are pleased that our *Governor* re- announced our re-opening, date of September 21 as is day programs. If I don't get a response by tomorrow, we will be moving ahead and reopen on September 21.

Christine asked *Matt* to touch base with me on this matter next week.

Matt Putts asked if training is available for MV1 wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Training was available years ago, but my new staff is in need of it. Although we do it rarely, we want to do it safely.

Marcy added there is an online video that is easy and helpful

Christine offered to send an experienced *MAPS* driver to assist your staff real time after you and your staff watch the video.

Marcy sent these 2 links: <http://qstraint.com/enna/training-downloads-2>
JenDanforth@AllianceBusGroup.com

Isabel offered to ask NJ Transit about training or assisting you, but it has to be a *MV1* NJ transit vehicle.

Louis it sounds like a *NJ Transit bus demonstration* where a driver comes out with a regional supervisor and go through the list.

Louis announced NJ Trip is currently operating virtual training for traveling by bus, train for schools, senior population, and whoever needs training. We are going to start in person training for essential trips for employment, school, etc. We also offer virtual trips/tours to New York City, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and museums via what program you are comfortable with.

Our next meeting will be digital.

Next year's meetings I hope to provide a Hybrid option. We will also resume our presentations to the meetings because I feel they added value to our meetings.

Matt offered his Zoom for future meetings.

Adjournment : 10:45am

Motion: Maria Isaza/Matt Putts

Next meeting November 5, 2020.