

**MORRIS AREA PARATRANSIT SYSTEM
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Human Services Building
340 West Hanover Avenue
Ground Floor Conference Room
Morris Township, New Jersey
February 13, 2020

MINUTES

Members Present:

Marc Molde
Jeannette Perlman
Matt Putts
Maria Isaza

Staff Present:

Jeff Bash HSAC
Christine Hellyer Director of Special Transportation
Marcy Merola, SR Transportation, Mt. Olive
Georgia Pease Jefferson DAR
Pat Petrillo Aging
Patricia Rogalsky MAPS
Julie Reich Chatham Senior Center
Isabel Rojas NJ Transit
Laura Sostak Tritown 55 plus
Michelle Woehle Jefferson DAR
Rhea Young Nutrition

Guests

Louis Hoffman NJTIP
Denis Kelleher

I. *Call to Order* – The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Christine Hellyer.

II. Presentation-TransOptions-Denis Kelleher

- ❖ TransOptions is a Transportation Management Association (TMA) that delivers programs to improve mobility, the environment and overall quality of life in northwestern New Jersey.
 - ✓ Helping older adults stay safe and mobile
 - ✓ Walking Safety Programs
Be Safe, Be Seen, Be Aware
 - ✓ Driving Safety Programs
Latest New Jersey driving laws to keep seniors driving longer and safely

- ❖ TransOptions provides older adult pedestrian and driving safety programs at no cost to your group or organization.

Maria asked if it is bilingual instructions.

Denis said yes.

III. Christine introduced Rhea Young, she will be Senior Community Worker in the Nutrition Dept. Members and staff introduced themselves.

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from November 14, 2019 were accepted and approved after two corrections.

Motion: Matt Putts / Maria Isaza

III. Staff Report-Christine Hellyer

- 2016 5310 Contract is signed by Freeholders and will be mailed to NJ Transit next week, this is the operating dollars for 2020.
- We currently have three vacancies for MAPS drivers.
- Ecolane has been successful since launch in December 2019.
One negative complaint that was easy to substantiate: rider said we abandoned them. *Ecolane* made it possible to look and see the vehicle was there on time and waited, but had to move on after 5 minutes, and another vehicle was dispatched after complaint call was made. Previously it would rely on the drivers record of trip.
- Trish has been a real credit to MAPS they are doing a fantastic job.
- **Maria asked if rider can cancel their ride themselves?**
- **Christine** As of now no, but **yes said by the end of 2020**, I have several goals for mid-year that will happen before that.
- We now average about 200 rides per day, before we did 180-190 per day, although we are still short 3 drivers. There was a change in obtaining CDL licenses by the State, applicants will need CDL license when applying.
- **Morris County Human Services Transportation Plan (MCHSTP)** is due this year with our extension being granted, a draft copy of survey will be sent to you by February 29th. The reason is the Census data changes will be more comprehensive for the next report, so this plan will be more of an update. We are looking at Providers &
- I was requested to serve on the **Tri-town Transportation Committee** Madison/Chatham last month. **One thing was public awareness of what already exists:**
 - MAPS is not under-utilized and is at capacity and some of the community doesn't know it exists.
 - What and where public transportation is available
 - Are DAR are wheelchair accessible, does your town have DAR, public transportation.

Jeff What is the objective of that meeting?

Laura It's a communication task force and its initiative is to implement initiatives in communities on how to foster and support those who want to age in place and improve housing and transportation and our next meeting is Feb. 26
Morris County Human Services Transportation Plan Coordination Plan

Laura Communication is the key and attending these meetings is one way to reach the public.

Christine said attendees included NJ. Transit, local DAR, Trans Options, MAPS.

IV. NJ. Transit-Isabel Rojas

- We received 2020 Casino Revenue and 5311 area grant application from Morris County and they have been approved and funding will be available soon.
- Under section 5310 we put out 2 competitive grants last year for seniors and disabled population for fiscal year **2018 & 2019, almost 50 million was requested for vehicle, mobility management and operating costs**, we are current and up to date. We received 160 applications State-wide transportation providers. I saw more municipalities applied. They already been reviewed by NJ Transit staff and on Feb 24 we will meet with the State review committee to review the applications that meet the thresholds benefit of proof.
Morris County, Mt. Olive, Twp. of Jefferson, and Twp. of Pequannock were among the applications. Letters of inclusion will go out sometime in April, if you were approved.
- The Morris County 2017 grant applications were awarded will receive confirmation for their match from me by next week, and the agreements will follow.
- We are hoping to put out 2020 application by the end of this year.
- I want to clarify Paratransit: **Means transportation system that shadows fixed bus routes.**

VI. Old Business

- **Ecolane** software and NJ Transit helped us provide rural rides more accurately with the use of maps, and the area is smaller than we thought. We have a truer idea if the rural address is SCDRTAP or 5311. We can input address first in our Google maps before booking rider to see if it qualifies with the help of map coded on top of scheduling system.
- If not in rural area and not senior/disabled not eligible, if in rural area we can book them.
- Prior to using **Ecolane**, we were misreporting rural rider categories, although we were providing more rural rides than we reported it was incorrect, the report was from 2013.
- The latter part of 2020 we will have outreach for rural areas and appropriately advertise our service, ensuring we are meeting the grant requirements.
- Rural non -senior & non- disabled riders will not be denied.

Isabel said our issues before were vehicle capacity. Diversifying your fleet to vehicles that accommodates more riders. I know it is a change from taxi like limo service to bus capacity, how much time on vehicle, but in the long run more individuals will be served. The service is for seniors, disabled and residents of rural areas to utilize.

We want to open up our services the first quarter of this year. The main priorities of our transportation service now are: medical, sheltered workshops, non-competitive employment, competitive employment, education, social services, adult day, and expand nutritional services to grocery shopping. I would like to expand it by March/April 2020.

I have researched how other Counties do this service. Some have deviated fixed routes, **Morristown to Shop Rite** only, and certain days, but I want to stay away from that. **MAPS** works well with *demand response*, so Trish and I decided on doing shopping in your local municipality, except when there is no grocery store or if it's Kings (unaffordable for most), we will go out of your municipality. I feel that is vague enough.

I would like your input on our ideas.

Jeff asked if we are overlapping **DAR** with this service?

Christine replied the staff called local **DAR** and asked them how they provide their service: where/when, who they service and who take wheelchair accessible, needs a lift, disabled riders. We don't want to duplicate service.

Isabel suggested doing this 2 days a week to start.

Matt was is the time limit at the store?

Christine Yes one hour and we have to limit the number of bags per person and weight limit, who will carry their bags.

The other Counties allow 2-3 bags. I think we should start with 2 bags per person. We are **curb to curb** service the driver will help you and the bags **on** the vehicle and **off** the vehicle.

Michelle suggested their metal shopping carts to be left home.

Isabel you must be careful with the American Disabilities Act (**ADA**) reasonable accommodations.

Christine The individual must request reasonable accommodations.

Maria asked would we service a **Mt. Olive** resident to **Denville**? Is this what you have to serve?

Christine We don't have that capacity, but we have to do nutrition trips, so it will be locally.

Right now, I am focusing on getting residents food locally and maximizing the capacity of our system and not stretch our system farther than we need to.

We are currently working on policies for grocery shopping: where, how many bags, weight limit, who will carry bags, days, times:

- The clients will be asked to call their **DAR** first.
- The policy will say **MAPS** will provide service for local grocery store.
- *Monday-Friday* from 9:30a-1p.

- Two bags per person. If they can lift it to carry bags to vehicle that will determine weight limit and if they will receive assistance.
- Work on the verbiage: what is considered groceries
- One hour limit to shop.
- Driver will assist rider **on** and **off** with bags to curb only.
- If rider needs additional help they will have to have someone ride with them.

Christine will also check with County Risk Management if there is a weight limits for our staff.

I will send you a draft of this policy before our meeting in April.

Jeff also asked if the MAPS types of rides expanded? And are the rides are not restricted to seniors/disabled?

Christine We should have been providing these services and it's our compliance to the rules.

Isabel stated:

- **5310 grant & Casino** revenue funding is specifically for seniors/disabled population.
- **5311 grant** is for rural residents regardless of age and if senior/disabled.

Municipality and **MAPS** services are determined by the funding stream of the specific grant.

Jeff is **MAPS** transportation available to homeless, low income individuals that have limited transportation options.

Christine No but the County has other grants that might be of help in that area.

VII. Announcements

Tom Pappas has announced his resignation sue to health reasons from this committee and ACDV. So I am recruiting members, please let me know. If you are interested, I will send the biographical information to you. Before our next meeting I will research the By-Laws for this committee, to determine if it has to be amended. I think if we had a rider on this committee it would be beneficial.

IX. Adjournment 11:20am

Motion: Maria Isaza/Matt Putts