

East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council

January 12, 2023

ECRTCC Advisory Board Meeting 9:am – 11am

9:00 **Call to order:**

9:05 **Introductions:**

9:15 **MnDOT – RTCCs and MCOTA updates:**

Michelle Lichtig

9:30 **Presentation by Micah McGuiness, Enterprise Holdings**

Commute with Enterprise (shared vehicle for employment transportation)

9:50 **Service Provider Updates:**

(please include information about current volunteer driver program services)

Rhonda Torgerson – Tri-CAP Public Transit

Helen Pieper – Timber Trails

Brandon Nurmi – Arrowhead Transit

10:05 **ECRTCC Updates:**

1. Penny Simonsen – Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) Representative for Region 7E
2. Bob Voss – Update on SafeRide program, now run through the ECRDC/ECRTCC
3. DOTS investigation and development subcommittee meeting
Small DOTS = Transfer Stations
DOTS = Destination or Transfer Stations
 - a. *Develop survey to verify need.*
Extend ask to veteran services, senior facilities, county Facebook pages.
 - b. *Share NLX station locations*
<https://northernlightsexpress.org/future-stations>
4. Exploration of Shared Vehicles subcommittee meeting
 1. a. *Ask Advisory Board (also will ask ECSN and connections) to look over list, make edits, who would be the best contact. Letter of talking points could be used as background information before b.*
 1. b. *We accompany you to speak with your contact.*
 2. *Enterprise discussion*
LWAH grant => Seniors
 3. *Emergency Preparedness Operations – Many of the County’s plans are currently being updated.*
Have recently contacted all of our region’s Management Directors:
Scott Sellman – Chisago County (responded and discussed)
Andy Beckstrom – Mille Lacs County (responded)
Monte Fronk – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (responded)
Captain John Elder – Isanti County (responded – but conversation didn’t track)
Kanabec County – Kelly Schmidt
Pine County – Denise Anderson

10:30 Group Discussion

10:50 Adjourn:

2022 – 2023 Upcoming ECRTCC Advisory Board Meeting Schedule:

Second Thursday months listed below. 9am to 11am

March 9th

May 11th

Virtual via Zoom.

Tri-CAP Update:

For year 2023, MnDOT underfunded our Operating Grant request by approximately \$1,000,000 which means we needed to make significant revisions to our service plan/staffing structure, etc.

1. Elimination of the Functional Route (St. Cloud to Buffalo to Functional Ind. Elk River Middy)
2. Elimination of the Sauk Centre to Alexandria Route
3. Elimination of the Onamia Route
4. Elimination of the Little Falls to Royalton Route
5. Elimination of the St. Cloud to Foley Route
6. Elimination of the Sauk Centre to St. Cloud Route

We Reinstated Saturday Service 8 am – 5 pm in Little Falls and Sauk Centre (to coincide with the new service funding

Tri-CAP also applied for a separate source of funding called New Service Grant that aligns with our state 10 year transit plan which includes the following:

1. Creation of 3 new Service Segments including:
 - a. New Melrose/Sauk Centre Fluid Route Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
 - b. New Sherburne Route (Elk River, Big Lake, Monticello Fluid Route) Monday – Friday 6 am – 6 pm and Saturday 8 am – 5 pm
 - c. New Mille Lacs Route (Milaca, Princeton, Zimmerman, Elk River Fluid Route) Monday – Friday 6 am – 6 pm and Saturday 8 am – 5 pm

The funding for these new service segments is separate from our Operation fund and will be utilized to fund new Bus Driver, Dispatcher positions as well as other general operating expenses, especially marketing and outreach costs. By applying and receiving these funds, it helps fill the gaps of our reduced regular operating deficit.

For 2022 Rider ship increased. We have now exceeded pre-Covid ridership. So we are growing fast.

Buses- **We have not received any 2020/2021 buses.** It sounds like we could possibly start receiving some at the **end of 2023.** We are making it work with our current fleet by making sure the buses are in the best shape even though getting a bus repaired takes anywhere from 1-3 weeks per bus due to vendors not having enough staff or a **hard time getting parts.**

Possible discussion about the percentage of American Parts required in building of service vehicles – FORD is not able to keep up with bus requirements, utilizing the same parts for their big F-150 expensive pick ups which they'd rather sell. Where is MnDOT in the plan to lessen the restrictions on the use of American Parts so that FORD can have competition from Chevy or GM?

TOM...Helen