

Rural Transit Advisory Group

February 25, 2015

Committee Members Present: Leslie Stanberry, Alissa Dozier, Emily Dobson (arrived @ 2:33 p.m.), Andrea Shaffer, Gary Minich, Diane Drew, Mark Wicklund, Marilyn Piasecki

Others Present:

SHOWBUS Representative – Laura Dick, Becky Gillum – Health Department, Bruce Bird – County Highway Department, Theresa Churchill – Herald & Review

Committee Members

Absent:

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 514 County Board Room, County Office Building.

Diane Drew made a motion to approve the minutes from the prior meeting, seconded by Leslie Stanberry and the motion carried 7-0.

There were no public comments to be heard.

SHOWBUS Update –

Laura Dick reported that the numbers were down a bit from December due to the weather. There were not that many closures, except New Years. The buses were run, but they were a lot less full because people tend to stay in when it's cold. There were some people in Macon who had done quite a bit of shopping and non-medical trips in December and it dropped off in January. Mark Wicklund asked how the numbers from this December and January compared to last year's. Laura said they are much higher. Mark asked if it was a monthly trend to stay above last year's. Laura said yes. Alissa Dozier asked if the numbers included St. Mary's. Laura said it does and Alissa asked if there were any way to separate the numbers. Laura said yes. She said St. Mary's mostly impacts Mt. Zion and Decatur, but more and more incidentals are occurring in Decatur too.

Laura said that the interpretation of the Governor's budget was an issue. She said it is really hard at this point to even try to formulate a budget. There have been negative impacts on most of the programs from the Federal level and secondary impacts are being seen, such as Medicaid, where reimbursement has now dropped permanently 15% for transportation before the new cuts. All of those have a cascading effect that has to be factored into the budget. The big elements that are impacting transportation are changes to the percentage of reimbursement, the actual amount of the appropriation and cuts to the funding stream by 1/3. The funding stream was going to run out of money within 2 years anyway. It is difficult to do a budget that reflects those in a reasonable manner. Mark asked if Laura had a timeline of when she might have some better figures. She said no and it might be 5 months into the budget and then the problem will be how adjustments are made. Laura said their changes would require changes in the Statute. The cuts are so severe that it would take years and years to recover the trust of the people. Mark asked if the numbers were already locked in on the federal side and wanted to know if Laura knew how those

would affect her. Laura said the transportation federal side is locked in and if anything, will probably go up. She said her trouble is with discretionary money given to IDOT to be apportioned out in the form of grants from the Federal Government and they've chosen to defund all those grants, or most of them, and roll the money into purchase of vehicles stating they don't have the personnel to oversee grants. That cost us another \$30,000 which doesn't sound like that much, but it was critical match. So, it helped pull down State money. Anything that comes into the State that has the discretionary element, even if it comes from the Federal Government, is open to interpretation at this time. The same is true with Medicaid. There has already been a 15% cut and it's not clear how big a cut will be beyond that.

HSTP Update – Emily Dobson said that Eileen was unable to make it to the meeting. The Public Service Transportation Service Plan was sent out via email.

According to Eileen, the CVP for 2015 should be coming out next week. That is new vehicle procurement. She also said that the vehicles that have already been approved are on hold by the Governor at this point. The mini vans & light duties in particular. Anyone that received information that they would be getting a vehicle, will not be getting it for a while.

The Region 8 HSTP meeting will be in Decatur on March 19 at the Macon Resources Training Room from 10 a.m. until noon and everybody from this group is welcome to attend. They will be working on updating the 3 year plan.

OTHER UPDATES –

Mark announced that he is still working on the grey area, but had nothing to report. There have been some changes in the cab services in Decatur in the last 6 months to a year and he said he is trying to figure out what is going on with that. Emily said that she & Eileen had spoken about the grey area and Eileen said that she has growing concerns that the DOAP money from Decatur Public Transit that had been discussed will not be available to help fund the grey area because so much of it has been left for such a long time that it is likely to be pulled and that funding will not be available. In addition to having a moving target as far as transportation suppliers, it looks like funding might become an issue again as well.

NEW BUSINESS -

Mark said that there had been discussion last month during his absence to change the meeting frequency. He said he had intended to suggest changing the meetings from monthly to quarterly. He said he would make sure it goes on the agenda for next month and the meetings would go to quarterly from then on as long as the committee was ok with it. Nobody expressed concerns and everybody said they were good with the time.

Mark reported that he had received a letter from Marilyn Piasecki today that she is leaving the committee due to taking a new job in Springfield. Mark thanked her for her service to the board.

Motion to adjourn was made by Gary Minich, seconded by Emily Dobson, motion carried 8-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham.