

Rural Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes – April 28, 2020

Participants: Jim Collins (Chair), Dave Norman, Sophie Shulman, Jean Nofles, Troy Larson, Sarah Curtis, Moira Moon, Lisa Streisfeld, Susan Maxfield, TJ Burr, Zoe Devito, and Jarett Hughes

Action Items:

- Jarett Hughes to consult with Executive Committee about drafting committee memo to Joint Budget Committee regarding NEMT brokerage expansion

Key Takeaways and Notes:

Committee Overview

- Jim Collins and Jarett Hughes briefly covered goals of the Rural Transportation Committee. The plan is for committee work to result in recommendations which will be presented to the full Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging for inclusion in the 2020 Action Plan Update. The goal is for committee work to wrap up around August. It is possible that further revisions and editing may be needed by committee members and this can be done electronically.
- Jim Collins noted that the Northeastern part of the state should be a focal point

NEMT Brokerage Expansion Update

- Ann Rajewski, Executive Director at the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) provided an update related to the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's (HCPF) expansion of their NEMT brokerage system.
 - o Background: HCPF is set to expand its NEMT brokerage model statewide on July 1, 2020. Local transit providers and the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies have been left out of the decision-making process and are concerned about the expansion. CDOT and CASTA are coordinating with HCPF to set-up a meeting to discuss these issues.
 - o CASTA has been actively working to gather input from HCPF on what this rollout will look like, but communication has been poor. Local transit providers are concerned about the expansion and CASTA would prefer implementation be delayed, allow for opt-in or opt-out, or halted altogether. HCPF released a Request for Proposals and was supposed to make announcements on decisions on 4/1 but nothing has been released – with everything surrounding COVID-19 it is likely things have been delayed
 - o CASTA, and the transit providers they represent, view this brokerage expansion as an urban solution for rural Colorado

Update from Transit Provider Related to COVID-19

- Sarah Curtis, Executive Director of All Points Transit (APT) based out of Montrose, provided a brief update on service provision. Pre-COVID, APT was able to effectively



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blend payer sources on rides which is effective for administration of transportation services, this has all changed as a result of COVID-19. Currently, they are not doing fixed route bus or van services and everything must be booked in advance and riders cannot be grouped together. Sarah noted that they are using about three times the normal resources for less rides – efficiency in providing trips is gone. They will have to focus on retraining and retooling for a prolonged COVID-19 scenario as ride grouping concerns become a new normal. On the positive side of things, current events have led to creative partnerships and they have been able to pivot services in collaboration with the Region 10 Area Agency on Aging.

- Jim Collins noted that we cannot solely focus on Medicaid trips as their many other riders that require support.
- Zoe Devito, with Via Mobility, shared that their paratransit trips have declined significantly - Via has also waived fees for certain rides. Via operates as a social enterprise model – revenues generated by contracts offset operating losses of paratransit, travel training, and other mobility options. But, because transit has come to a halt Via's social enterprise contracts are down 80-90%.