

**Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (RTCC) Meeting**  
**Monday, April 1, 2019 at 2:00 PM at CDTC**  
**Meeting Notes**



1. **Welcome/Introductions** – present were Ken Harris, Albany Guardian Society; Donna Stressel, Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital; Diane Conroy-LaCivita, Colonie Senior Service Centers; Renee Markle, Schenectady Senior and Long-Term Care; Greg Giuliano, Captain/Community Human Services; Kevin White, Schenectady ARC; Mark Castiglione, CDRPC; Marlene Hildenbrandt, Catholic Charities Senior and Caregiver Support Services; Maryellen Casey Usis, NNORC; Bryan Baszczuk, Acces-VR; Peggy Osborne, Town of Bethlehem Senior Services; Tina Mead, Stratton VAMC; Lois Celeste, Saratoga Senior Center; Bailey Hutchin, Saratoga Senior Center; Lucas Rogers, County of Albany; Mike Barry, CFDS; Don Csaposs, Town of Guilderland; Carrie Ward, CDTC; Rima Shamieh, CDTC

The New York State Transportation Network Company Task Force report and a newspaper article about funding for ambulance services being at risk from the state budget are circulated. Introductions were made around the table.

2. **Review/Acceptance of January 7, 2019 meeting notes** – accepted as written.

3. **Accessible Ridesharing Report**

As part of the legislation that allowed for Uber and Lyft to operate outside of New York City, the State Legislature also required the creation of a task force to consider accessibility. The Task Force held a series of listening sessions and the task force report was recently released. Carrie Ward attended a listening session and the meeting when the task force presented and approved its recommendations for submission to the Legislature. Some of the major recommendations include:

- Encourage TNCs to incorporate accessible vehicles into their fleets, and incentivize privately owned vehicles for TNC use.
- A driver education program around accessibility
- Establishing a complaint mechanism and identify the entity to receive complaints
- Examine the payment system, since not everyone has a credit card

Peggy asked whether someone could come to speak about TNCs to a workshop for seniors? Carrie Ward responded that she intends to speak to the Guardian Society about their Senior Transportation Guide and about how to use TNC's, and how they can be used on behalf of a senior, such as by a family member or service provider. Lois Celeste commented that a while ago she tried to get someone from Uber to come talk to seniors but due to staffing shortages it didn't happen. Maybe a coordinated effort of multiple organizations would be more effective in getting someone here.

4. **Disposal/Transfer of 5310-funded vehicles**

A few agencies had understood that they must destroy their vehicles once they were past their useful life, rather than giving them to another agency. This is not true. The NYS Vehicle/Equipment Disposition Policy states agencies can transfer vehicles and there is a clearinghouse to facilitate this. Carrie Ward investigated the clearinghouse and found it to be somewhat functional. There is a list of vehicles available for transfer and wanted for purchase, and it is updated upon request. Agencies may contact Ed Sawicki at NYSDOT at 518-417-6602 or [edward.sawicki@dot.ny.gov](mailto:edward.sawicki@dot.ny.gov) to list their vehicle or their need for a vehicle. The list's purpose is to help agencies both sell and purchase vehicles. One attendee advised that in most cases, when his agency retires a vehicle, it is so run down it is not suitable for service.

5. **Coordinated Plan**

- a. **Progress to date.** The group indicated that Carrie Ward should send the plan to the RTCC for a 2-week review before the Planning Committee meeting in May. After that, it will go to the Policy board in June and then it will be opened for public comments in the summer. RTCC members could still submit comments and suggestions after the initial 2 weeks is over.
- b. **Provider and public surveys are closed!** Provider survey was sent to 346 human service providers, although some don't provide transportation. Received 58 surveys back. Received about 250 senior surveys, and 113 surveys for people who have a disability.
- c. **Provider survey numbers.** Carrie Ward summarized the survey results. The group commented that the survey conclusions were reasonable, and they that have observed that insurance rates are indeed increasing.
- d. **Senior/People with a Disability survey numbers.** Carrie Ward summarized the survey results. The group suggested that it would be helpful to add a question next time about how many ride requests were made by a user but denied by a service provider, and break down that information by county.

**Proposed Strategies and Actions:**

- Additionally reach out to the State Office for the Aging, the NYS Commissioner for the Blind, NABA, Office of Alcoholic and Substance Abuse Services, NY Connects
  - 211 vs. 511NY vs. NY Connects: The group advised to reach out to all three to ensure that information is accurate.
  - The group considers Smart Growth to be an important component that should remain
  - The group determined that it is also important to explore opportunities for cooperation. Providers need to increase efficiencies because the size of the aging population is increasing
  - The next provider survey should include a question for the number of agency and personal vehicle miles travelled in the last year while providing rides to clients.
- e. **CDTC Presentation – RTCC presenter?** Donna and Diane offered to help present to the Planning Committee, as long as they have a script.
  - f. **Common Carrier (what is the issue?)** In the past the RTCC indicated there was a problem with providers acting as Common Carriers, but the problem is unclear. No one in our group is interested in doing this, so Carrie Ward will remove it from the new draft plan.

**6. Guardian Society Senior Transportation Guide status**

Ken Harris introduced himself and explained a little about the Albany Guardian Society, including the Capital Region Villages Collaborative, which coordinate access to affordable services to assist aging in place. The Society currently has two guides, the Housing Directory and a guide to Adult Day Services. These are quite comprehensive and take a lot of time and effort to update. Thousands of copies are printed and distributed.

Transportation information for seniors is lacking. A few years ago the Society partnered with the Siena College Sage Program, which began research into senior transportation options. The guide will cover all the major categories of transportation options and will focus on the four-county capital region. The Society recently hired a web designer who is formatting the document. The Society aims to have it online this summer and printed this fall, with several thousand copies.

**7. 5310 Solicitation**

No change. The solicitation is expected out “soon.”

**8. Transit Research & Accessibility Center (TRAC) Project status**

The [instructional videos](#) are complete and available online, and the application is also complete for the pilot phase. The project staff need more testers. Once viewing the videos, people can sign up to download the app and then participate by evaluating transit rides on CDTA.

**9. News from around the table: Other issues for group consideration/ideas?**

Carrie Ward drew the group’s attention to the Times Union article about the proposed budget’s cut in Medicaid reimbursement rates and the effect that could have on the ambulance industry.

Mark Castiglione reminded the group that the 2020 Census is exactly one year away and that RTCC constituents are important to count because it will affect funding.

Maryellen Casey Usis shared that NNORC has expanded its service area to at least another 3,000 seniors. Everyone in the area that is 60 years and older received a letter. Some people were surprised that there were so many seniors in the new area.

Lois Celeste shared news about the Saratoga Senior Center including the matching program, which pairs seniors with volunteers, and its expanding transportation services. In January, 2019, the Center began transporting people in its second vehicle using a paid part-time driver, mostly to the Center. Golub Corporation provided a small grant to help people access Price Chopper, in lieu of providing the service themselves. There is clearly a big need there, with 60+ people using the Price Chopper shuttle, which operates every other week. The Senior Center also works closely with partner programs to cover the entire county without duplicating services.

**10. Next meeting – July 15, 2 pm**