

Joint SSAC-DSAC Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 6, 2015

SSAC Members Present: Suzette Boydston, Chair; Catherine Skiens, Vice Chair; Lee Strandberg, Mark McNabb, Doris Lamb, Kimberly Kimball, Dewey Konopa and Margaret Wells.

DSAC Members Present: Mike Volpe, Chair; Terry Brown, Lee Lazaro, Jann Glenn, and Rusty Burton.

Guests: Mitzi Naucler, Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald, Cathy Savage, Dani Marlow, Teri Jefferson, Suzanne Lazaro and Bob Daley.

Members Absent: Bill Hall, Commissioner; Suzanne Brean, Vice Chair; Bill Turner, Anne Brett, Chris Barnes, Sherry Rocha, Pete Rickey, Edythe James, Fawn Metcalf, Mark Frederic, and Janet Shinner.

Staff: Lisa Bennett, Mary Kay Fitzmorris, Ann Johnson, Sarah Ballini-Ross and Terri Sharpe.

1. Mike Volpe called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.
 - Introductions were made including guests.
2. Approval of Joint SSAC-DSAC September 1, 2015 Minutes:
 - **ACTION:** Suzette Boydston moved to approve the September 1, 2015 SSAC/DSAC Joint minutes as written. Lee Strandberg seconded. Motion carried.
3. State of the Region Summit (Catherine Skiens):
 - Catherine Skiens gave an overview of the State of the Region Summit that was put on by OCWCOG last month. The Summit was held in Lebanon at the Samaritan Conference Center with many city, county and state officials in attendance. COG compiled a report that included information on housing, demographics, food, economics and geography in our three counties. The information is available to cities and counties that otherwise might not be able to compile it on their own. Executive Director, Fred Abousleman will give a more detailed presentation on the Summit at the November Advisory Council Meeting.
 - Lee Strandberg worked with Executive Director Abousleman in identifying the health, communication, food and transportation needs of the three county area. The next step will be to look into whether there are research grants available to develop projects in addressing the needs. The projects will be taken on by professors from

both OSU and U of O. Lee S. suggested sending copies of the State of the Region Report to all the Chambers of Commerce.

- Suzette requested that a copy of the report be made available to all Advisory Council members. Lisa stated that the report is on the website *StateoftheRegion.org* which she will send out before next meeting and will have hard copies available for those who request them.

4. Presentation – Hearing Loss Association of America, Oregon Chapter (Karen Brockett, Vice President):

- Tabled to a future meeting.

5. Savvy Caregiver Classes (Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald, North End Senior Solutions (NESS) Club):

- Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald gave an overview on the Savvy Caregiver Class; an evidence-based program that improves the lives of caregivers for family members of dementia and Alzheimers patients. Caregivers are taught what and what not to do as a caregiver. The goal of the class is to show the caregiver how to be contently involved with a person with dementia. They are taught to distance themselves from a situation by stepping back and not over-caring, thus letting the person with dementia become involved and giving them purpose. Caregivers are taught how to deal with family and technical skills. The Savvy Class is free of charge, limited to eight and runs for 6 weeks.
- Mary Kay stated that this is one of the evidence-based programs at COG and they will soon be presenting the program around Lincoln County with more classes becoming available. Suzette requested that Senior Companion caregivers be trained. Lee Lazaro would also like to have his Dial-a-Bus operators trained with possibly pulling together a group of transportation providers for a onetime 2 -3 hour training session. Mary Kay will consider this and speak with Nannette Bengel, possibly to bring a proposal back to the Councils at the December meeting. Lee L. stated they would give a contribution to the NESS Club to make it worth their while.

6. Lunch Break and Networking

7. Presentation: Benton County Transportation (Lee Lazaro, Special Transportation Coordinator and DSAC Member):

- Lee Lazaro gave an overview of the Special and Rural Transportation Program that serves Benton County and the City of Corvallis. Their mission is to provide transportation to seniors, people with disabilities and low income and rural citizens. The Program manages Federal Administration and State of Oregon transit grants, providing dedicated funding for senior and persons with disabilities, rural and low-

income or minority populations. They have an operating budget of \$1.15 million and their fleet is made up of 30 small to medium-size buses, minivans and sedans; traveling about 450,000 miles per year. They went from just under 11,000 rides in 2004-05 to just over 73,000 rides in 2013-14, experiencing about 13% growth overall.

- Dial-a-Bus of Benton County is a non-profit agency and has been around for over 30 years, providing rides for both seniors and people with disabilities as well as regional transportation routes. They have about 50 active volunteers which help keep the costs down.
- Special Transportation Services provide rides for seniors, age 60 and over, and for individuals with disabilities of any age throughout Benton County and some rides into Albany. They have a contract with Linn County that requires advance notice with fares ranging from \$2.50 - \$5.00 per ride. Benton County Dial-a-Bus has a contract with the school district to provide rides for homeless kids to school. They also provide mandated ADA rides for Corvallis Transit System which are free of charge with a Doctor's prescription.
- Trip destinations include medical trips, appointments, shopping, banking, dining and social outings.
- Rural Transportation Services include: 99 Express that operates between Adair Village and Corvallis, Coast-to-Valley Express that operates between Corvallis and Newport, and NW Connector Network linking transit to Willamette Valley and the Oregon Coast communities.
- The Linn Benton Loop serves Albany and Corvallis with 60% of their riders being students at OSU, LBCC as well as HP, Samaritan Health Services and the Corvallis Transit Center.
- Northwest Connector Network serves five Counties; Benton, Lincoln, Tillamook, Clatsop and Columbia along with two tribes, the Siletz and the Grand Ronde. There is unlimited bus service available; a three day pass costs \$25 and a seven day pass costs \$30.
- Besides receiving grants, Benton County Transportation allocates grants that range from \$3,000 to \$22,000 per year. For the year 2015 around \$118,000 was allocated through the Partners Small Grant Program that includes: the City of Corvallis, where they are providing funding to improve five ADA ramps at bus stops; Linn Benton Loop, for services for disabled students; Grace Center, where funding is provided for training drivers who transport people with Alzheimers; and Seniors and Disability

Services, where they assist with mileage reimbursement. Other partners include Albany Call-a-Ride, City of Adair Village, Janus House and Samaritan Senior Companion.

- They are working with ODOT and a contractor to update the Linn-Benton-Lincoln Human Services-Transportation Plan.
- They helped celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act working with Access Benton County.
- Title VI Plan is a Federal mandate, for non-discrimination in transportation services, and includes policies, instructions for filing complaints, and public participation.
- There are challenges ahead with Federal funding cutbacks and the increasing demands from retiring baby-boomers and a growing population of individuals with physical and mental disabilities.
- Lee L. stated that besides Federal funding, Oregon has an excellent program called the Special Transportation Fund that allocates funds of \$22 million statewide, with the largest source coming from the cigarette tax.
- Mitzi inquired if the Transportation System a part of the Emergency Evacuation Plan. Lee L. stated that they are not required to be but he is making them a part of it.
- Terry inquired about families taking advantage of the Dial-a-Bus rides. Lee stated that a person with a disability can have another family member ride with them for no additional charge but anyone after that would have to pay the fare.
- Doris inquired about the different grants they obtain. Lee stated that in addition to the Federal grants and the special State grant they do go after capital grants to buy buses. With the American Recovery Act they were able to replace a lot of their fleet but they are aging.

8. Homecare Worker Policy Changes Update (Mary Kay Fitzmorris, Senior and Disability Services Program Manager):

- Mary Kay Fitzmorris gave an update on the Homecare Worker Policy changes. The Department of Labor won their appeal in the courts and the exemption of homecare workers to the Fair Labor Act was lifted. The State of Oregon implemented the new rules in August where there will be a 50 hour cap on homecare workers per week and they are looking at new ways to record their time. Homecare workers will be paid overtime after working 40 hours per week and paid for mileage driven between consumers but this will not go into effect until January of 2016. SEIU is the homecare workers union and have increased the hourly rate of a homecare worker from \$13.75 per hour to \$14 per hour in January. This will go to \$14.50 per hour in February with

the possibility of a \$.50 per hour training bonus, bringing the total wage per hour to \$15.00 by the end of February.

- The new voucher system is starting up with some areas as a pilot. The vouchers required more in depth documentation on tasks they perform which will make the turn-around time for payment going from two days to eight days. There will be two pay dates per month; the fifteenth of the month and the last day of the month. Homecare workers will have a three day grace period to get their voucher in for payment otherwise they will have to wait until the next pay period.
- Homecare workers will be required to go through the Homecare Commission website and update their information within a time frame. There will be more responsibility going back to homecare workers but there is dedicated staff to help.
- Change for consumers involve the live-in rules and hourly rules. Live-in workers can no longer be paid stand by hours and can only be paid 19 hours per day but they have to be doing tasks during every hour. In Lincoln County the live-in rule has not affected them.
- Mike stated that it will be hard for homecare workers to get their vouchers in within three days. Mary Kay stated they are allowed to fax them in and that is what they encourage them to do.

9. Announcements:

- Catherine was advised by the Governor's Commission of a public hearing, regarding Oregon Project Independence (OPI), to fix the language to include the temporary funding they were awarded. The hearing will take place on November 18th at 3:00 p.m. in the Barbara Roberts Human Services building in Salem.
- Mike inquired why the State was not expanding the OPI for younger people with disabilities across the state for another two years. Lisa stated that it was deemed to not be politically feasible at this time, however it would be something they advocate for during the next session. Also, they are taking public comments at the hearing if Mike wanted to make a statement there.
- Lisa announced that next month the new schedule will go into effect with meeting times as follows:
SSAC – 11:00 – 11:30
Lunch – 11:30 – 12:00
Joint – 12:00 – 1:30
DSAC – 1:30 – 2:00
- Lisa announced that Terry Brown will be resigning as of today and wanted to thank him for his 15 years of service to DSAC.

10. Adjournment:

- The SSAC/DSAC Joint Meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.
- The Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.
- The next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 3, 2015.