



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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MINUTES

Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

February 25, 2010

Caltrans District 9 Offices, 500 S. Main St., Bishop, CA

Attendees:

Selma Calnan	IMACA
Jane McDonald	IMACA
Adelina Rico	IMAH
Jean Turner	Inyo Co HHS / IMAAA
Rick Franz	Caltrans
Edie Schrader	Inyo Co HHS
Jill Batchelder	ESTA
John Helm	ESTA
Courtney Smith	Inyo Co LTC
Linda Baffrey	Inyo Co LTC

Courtney Smith opened the meeting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) at 10:00 a.m.

He noted that the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council is an advisory committee to the Local Transportation Commission (LTC) addressing all transportation issues, including the transit needs of transit dependent and transit disadvantaged persons. The SSTAC assists the LTC in identifying unmet transit needs.

“An Unmet Transit Need exists if an individual or individuals of any age or physical condition are unable to transport themselves from one location to another. An Unmet Transit Need is, at a minimum, those public transportation or specialized transportation services that are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and that have not been implemented or funded.

A documented Unmet Transit Need is reasonable to meet if a service can be provided which meets a minimum fare box ratio of 10% of operating costs; and

- a) It is transit service for essential intra-county purposes which are defined as medical or dental services, shopping, employment, personal business, or social service appointments; or,**
- b) It is a transit service for essential inter-county purposes which are defined as medical or dental services or social service appointments not available in this county or the out-of-county destination is the closest location where the services are available to the origin of the trip; and, The origin and/or designation of the trip is within two miles of the established area of operation of cohesive community.”**

Mr. Smith encouraged everyone at the meeting to express their thoughts and concerns.

Jean Turner of HHS/IMAAA said she was there to represent the general social service needs of seniors. She said IMAAA is expecting to see a large increase in demands for services for seniors as the County’s population ages. IMAAA recently conducted a Needs Assessment Study. In every focus group, a concern was raised over transportation out of the area for specialty medical care. Ms Turner stated that she appreciated ESTA’s responsiveness to the transit needs of the elderly. Ms Turner indicated there is a need for public transit from Tecopa and Shoshone to Pahrump and Las Vegas.

Jill Batchelder of ESTA said that there is a Tecopa to Pahrump bus route once weekly, with usually only 2 – 8 passengers. This route has been in existence 10 or 15 years.

Ms Turner said that Pahrump has grown, and people are traveling there for specialty medical services. Selma Calnan asked if dental were included. Jean replied that it is, but the service they provide is mostly for medical.

Jill Batchelder noted that people can now travel from Lone Pine to Bishop, and make a connection to Reno for medical appointments, only needing to spend one night in Reno before returning home Ms Turner asked about affordability, and Jill said that Veterans’ Services has been good about assisting with this.

Mr. Smith asked if the budget had affected IMAAA’s ability to purchase bus passes from ESTA. Ms Turner said so far, no, that the budget hits were predominantly in the administrative sector.

Ms Batchelder said the ESTA Board of Directors is considering a bulk rate for bus passes. Purchases of \$5000 or more would receive a 10% discount. ESTA is also considering imposing a one-year time limit on the passes.

Rick Franz inquired about the possibility of sharing vehicles among various agencies. Jill Batchelder said it had been discussed, but nothing had materialized. Courtney Smith noted that it had been stalled by “institutional barriers”.

Jill Batchelder said that ESTA doesn’t anticipate adding any new services because of the budget, but can adjust service if necessary. She said that the gas tax would likely be taken away, so there may be no vehicle replacement. It appears that the sales tax will be okay.

Selma Calnan asked if the Paiute Tribe had transportation available. Mr. Smith said they had applied for a 5310 grant, but had not been successful. Toiyabe Indian Health Project provides transit for tribal members.

Edie Schrader presented several questions from members of her department:

1) Are annual bus passes available?

Ms Batchelder said they only sell monthly passes. The cost is \$90, or \$72 for disabled riders. She said they are for zones 1 & 2. There is no limit on the number of monthly passes available.

2) Is there any way to get a better connection to the VA Hospital in Reno?

Jill replied that they stop at the bus station and the airport. Riders can get to the VA Hospital by bus or cab. Patients may be able to get a ride from the Veterans’ Administration if they are contacted ahead of time.

3) Is there Dial-a-Ride from the Alabama Hills?

It is the regular Lone Pine bus.

4) Is there bus service to Cerro Coso College?

There is, but not at night. The last call is at 5:30 p.m.

5) What about bus service in the Round Valley/Rovana area?

The Mammoth Express bus can coordinate service.

6) Is there mid-day service to Mammoth?

The Mammoth Express route leaves Bishop for Mammoth at 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. Return trips are at 2:05p.m. and 5:15 p.m.

7) Is there any chance of getting Sunday service to Wilkerson?

There is not at this time.

Adelina Rico of IMAH said that they have two buses. They go from Bishop to Lone Pine at 6:45a.m. and 9:30a.m., and return at 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Courtney

Smith noted that IMAH will receive a 5310 bus. Their application tied for first place statewide.

Jane McDonald of IMACA asked if the LTC is required to hold public hearings for transit needs. Courtney Smith explained that if no funds are being allocated for local streets and roads, formal hearings are not required. However, the LTC has chosen to continue the process with informal workshops.

Selma Calnan asked about tours for senior and disabled groups. Jill said they could no longer provide private charters. They need to post notification beforehand to the 139 transit providers on the federal register, and if any one of them responds, ESTA can't do it. She noted that most providers would not come to this area. If they should be able to provide the service, the cost is \$450 for the first four hours, and \$80 for each hour above that. When the vehicle is on "stand-by" time, the cost is \$25 per hour. ESTA may be able to arrange a discount for senior groups.

Jean Turner said she would provide a copy of the Needs Assessment to those who requested it.

Courtney Smith thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.