

McHenry County Transit Plan Implementation Task Force

Agenda

McHenry County Transit Plan
Implementation Task Force

DATE: November 17, 2010

TIME: 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: McHenry County Administration Building, Conference Room A
667 Ware Road, Woodstock, IL 60098

1. Call to Order – Sarah Chadderdon (McHenry County DOT)

2. Public Participation/Open Comment Period

3. Program Updates

Transit Grant Program – Jason Osborn (McHenry County DOT)

- **ACTION NEEDED:** Vote to recommend the continuation of the Transit Grant Program

RTA Funding Programs – Jason Osborn (McHenry County DOT)

- JARC/NF meeting with Pace
- Subregional Planning Grant meeting with the RTA

4. Transit Grant Program Progress Report – Sarah Chadderdon (McHenry County DOT)

- Algonquin Township – Anna May Miller (Algonquin Township Road District)
- City of Marengo – Josh Blakemore (City of Marengo)
- Faith in Action of McHenry County – Howard Rigsby (FIAMC)
- Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association – Jim Wiseman (NISRA)
- Veterans Assistance Commission – Mike Iwanicki (VAC)
- McHenry County / Pilot program – Jason Osborn (McHenry County DOT)

5. Other Business

6. Next ITF Bimonthly Meetings

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 26, 2011, 2:00 p.m.

Following meeting: Wednesday, March 23, 2011, 2:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment

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Minutes

McHenry County Transit Plan Implementation Task Force

DATE: November 17, 2010

TIME: 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.

LOCATION: McHenry County Administration Building
667 Ware Road, Woodstock
Conference Room A

Action Items

1. Bring Year 2 Transit Grant Program forward to County Board – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon
2. Continue work towards initiating RTA Subregional Planning Grant – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon
3. Continue work towards coordinated contract for pilot program – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon
4. Evaluate pilot program – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon
5. Explore options for pilot program name – Jason Osborn
6. Find out whether hold music is played on phones at Pace call center – Pace staff
7. Meet with school districts' Transition group to promote dial-a-ride – Pace staff
8. Analyze capacity and denial issues on the pilot program – Sarah Chadderdon

Attendees

Algonquin Township Road District/County Board: Anna May Miller

City of Crystal Lake: Brad Mitchell

City of Woodstock: Roscoe Stelford

District 155 Cary-Grove: Barb Goeske, Lisa Sterne

Dorr Township: Bob Pierce

Faith in Action of McHenry County: Rhonda Anderson

Grafton Township: Pam Fender

McHenry County Staff: Jason Osborn, Sarah Chadderdon, John Labaj

McHenry Township: Frank DeVita

Pace: Mary Donner, Brad Logan, Dan Dembinski

Pioneer Center: Tom Riley, Irene Jagla

Senior Services Associates: Bee Rettinger

TranSystems: Larry Deeter

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Jason Osborn from the McHenry County Division of Transportation called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. The attendees all introduced themselves. Mr. Osborn noted that there were no members of the public present to provide public participation.

Turning to program updates, Mr. Osborn opened the discussion concerning continuation of the Transit Grant Program for a second year of funding. Sarah Chadderdon from the Division of Transportation described the services currently recommended for a second year of funding, as summarized in the table below.

Transit Grant Recommendations – Year 2

Service	Year 1 Award	Year 1 Completion (Expected)	Year 2 Recommendation	Notes
Pilot Program (& Marengo)	\$275,000	72%	\$308,600	Year 1 covered 9 months of service; Year 2 to be combined with Marengo to reflect contract structure
FIAMC	\$29,268	100%	\$38,000	Funds anticipated to be fully expended; Additional appropriation recommended
Marengo	\$33,600	--	See Pilot Program	Service start delayed by contractual issues
Algonquin Township Road District	\$20,940	45%	\$13,000	Revised cost estimate for additional hour of service and data collection
NISRA	\$8,500	93%	--	Requested no Year 2 funding
VAC	\$5,038	56%	\$3,640	

Pam Fender from Grafton Township inquired if there was a call for projects issued for year 2 of the program. Mr. Osborn explained how the Implementation Task Force had indicated that the program should continue as is to see how current initiatives play out. There were no further questions or comments brought forward regarding the year 2 recommendation. Mr. Osborn received concurrence on the program as presented. The next steps are to bring the program forward to the Transportation Committee of the County Board, the Finance & Audit Committee of the County Board, and then the County Board as a whole.

Several committee members inquired concerning the next call for projects. Ms. Chadderdon indicated that the possibility of a future call was unknown but that the Implementation Task Force would be notified of any call for projects in the Transit Grant Program. Ms. Fender inquired about the relationship between the Transit Grant Program initiative and the transit needs between McHenry and Kane County and other regional travel. Mr. Osborn discussed how that issue is one of several to be addressed with

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the Subregional Planning Study grant award from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). County staff will meet with RTA staff soon to discuss getting that project up and running. Also, County staff will meet with RTA staff regarding the JARC/NF program and the Federal Transit Administration requirements of it.

Mr. Osborn reported that County staff held preliminary meeting with staff at the Cities of Crystal Lake, McHenry, and Woodstock to discuss the coordination and integration of those services. Also, County Board Chairman Koehler sent a letter inviting the Mayors of those Cities to a meeting to discuss some policy issues of coordination, including potential fare structures and transfer policies. The Senior Services Grant Fund award to the Division of Transportation will also be integrated into the single contract. Pending agreements, staff hopes the single contract will be in place by June or July of 2011.

Anna May Miller from the County Board and the Algonquin Township Road District commented that it's important to know what you're getting for your money with all transit services. Mr. Osborn referred to the service summary for the Transit Grant Program (handout provided at meeting), where one measure of what is provided is the total monthly ridership that approached 14,000 on all services in the month of July.

Ms. Fender pointed out that unless more locations and more services are provided, it is tough to see where people want to travel. Mr. Osborn agreed that this particularly evident in portions of the County that have seen extensive growth in the past 10-15 years. It is also one of the larger questions about Pace services to be addressed in the Subregional Planning Grant process. On November 15, the County attended a meeting with Pace to discuss the Subregional Planning Grant. Ms. Fender said that in Grafton Township and Huntley area dial-a-ride improvements would be the priority because the Del Webb population presents a somewhat unique circumstance.

Mr. Osborn described how Pace's individual community negotiations for service contracts have led to a wide variety of agreements, and the challenge will be to define what relationships and commitments will be needed for services in the future. Ms. Miller inquired as to the status of consolidating the contracts. Brad Mitchell from Crystal Lake and Roscoe Stelford from Woodstock confirmed that the city staff and elected leaders have a good understanding of where the process stands and where it will be headed. Mr. Osborn noted that City of McHenry staff was not present, but that a similar process had been followed with staff there.

Regarding service consolidation, Mr. Osborn confirmed that for McHenry Township, the call-ahead policies and scheduling would remain the same under the consolidated service. Frank De Vita from McHenry Township reported that the system is now working well for the Township. The Township has been finding that it's best to cap trips at 30-35 a day, which is about the maximum that the drivers can handle in a day.

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Ms. Miller reported that some concerns about problems with dispatch and service were brought up during a County Board meeting. She explained that the issues raised were likely a combination of internal (staffing and contract execution) and external (customer service). Dan Dembinski from Pace explained that some customers are reluctant to complain through the official channels because they fear reprisals from drivers or call center staff. However, Pace always encourages people to lodge these complaints so that they can be addressed appropriately. Mr. De Vita shared that in tracking complaints at the Township, the majority of them have dropped off, and those that are still experienced are more typical of the type they were experiencing prior to joining centralized dispatch. Ms. Chadderdon reported that there have been very few complaints recently reported to the County. When complaints are received, Ms. Chadderdon strongly encourages riders to report them to Pace's Customer Relations so that they can be resolved through the formal process. This helps Pace ensure that the contractor is meeting performance requirements. In addition, Ms. Chadderdon often follows up with the County's Pace contract liaison so that any issues that don't get reported can still be investigated to some extent.

Mr. Osborn brought up the idea that to measure success, we need to establish our expectations and see if they are being met. Larry Deeter from TranSystems explained that to measure this, the priorities for transportation should be established because there are many ways to measure outcomes, including traditional productivity measures (passengers per revenue mile, etc), number of trips, and stories from clients. Ms. Miller thought that for the pilot program, now is the time to measure outcomes. Rhonda Anderson from Faith in Action shared that for their program, they often share rider "thank you" to show service successes.

For the pilot program, Mr. Stelford from Woodstock indicated that they had not been receiving many complaints recently. In the past, the Woodstock dial-a-ride didn't receive many complaints except when fares increased and when Sunday service was discontinued. Ms. Fender suggested that the pilot program needs a new name. Mr. De Vita explained that the centralized dispatch was now working well, easing the scheduling process, which used to be very labor-intensive for the Township.

Ms. Fender provided an update from Grafton Township. The Township had raised the fares from \$1.00 to \$2.00 for local rides and from \$4.00 to \$5.00 for trips outside of the Township. Because their ridership dropped dramatically, they reduced the fares back to their starting levels. While ridership was down, other senior transportation programs such as Faith in Action and Senior Services Associates may have seen an uptick in ridership. The Township is working on convening a Senior Committee to explore issues important to seniors in the Township such as transportation.

Lisa Sterne from District 155 noted that the dial-a-ride services have improved over the last two months. Some clients are unsure about when they're being put on hold because there is no hold music – some may interpret this as being hung up on. She also noted that while the phone number for customer service is posted on the Pace vehicles, their students are very unlikely to call that number themselves to register a complaint. Mary Donner from Pace suggested that Pace could work with the District to

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educate the families of the clients about the process. Pace will look into the issues of hold music for the call center.

Barb Goeske from District 155 wanted to commend the Pace drivers on their kindness to the students. The District is also hoping to work with Pace on ways to encourage the students to use the dial-a-ride, possibly through a presentation or meeting with the school district Transition group that meets regularly. One thing to be cognizant of in any future outreach or marketing efforts is the effect on ridership. Registration drives also increase trip requests. Brad Logan from Pace pointed out that capacity denials have increased for the pilot program.

Ms. Chadderdon provided the group with two updates. First, the RTA is beginning a region-wide discussion of mobility management. They hosted an introductory webinar on November 10 titled "Exploring the Concept of Mobility Management in Northeastern Illinois." As the County learns more, updates will be provided to the ITF. Second, the County worked with Pace to institute a referral system for seniors who call to schedule trips but do not find transportation meeting their needs. Pace call takers are encouraged to refer these seniors to Bee Rettinger, Transportation Coordinator at Senior Services Associates. Ms. Donner also shared that the Lake County Coordinated Transportation Services Commission is continuing to promote the connection to McHenry County services through the Fox Lake Metra station.

The next meeting of the Implementation Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, February 2, 2011 at 2:00 p.m., at the County Administration Building – Conference Room A [*NOTE: This meeting was originally scheduled for January 26 but has been rescheduled*]. The following meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Osborn adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Action Items From September 2010 Meeting

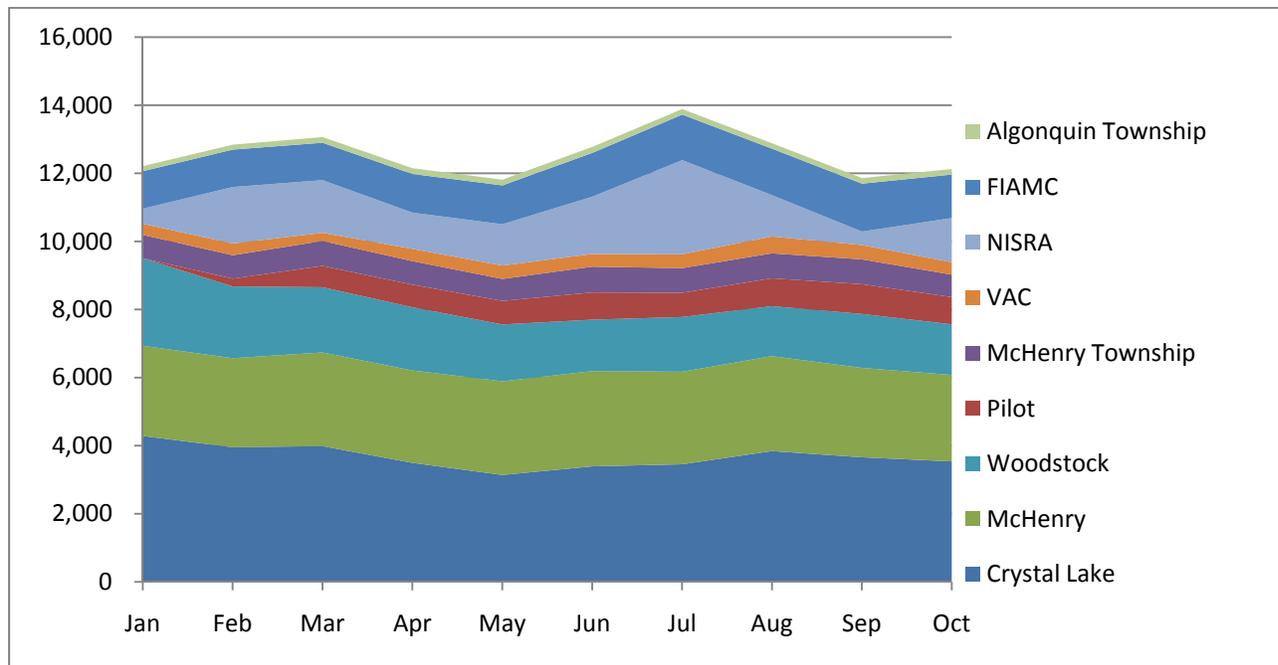
1. COMPLETE - Convene partners for integrated and coordinated service to begin discussion of agreement needed to expend federal funds – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon
2. COMPLETE - Finalize and confirm information on transit map – Jason Osborn and Sarah Chadderdon

Service Summary

Total Monthly Ridership

	Crystal Lake	Pilot	McHenry	McHenry Township	Woodstock	VAC	NISRA	FIAMC	Algonquin Township
Jan	4,287		2,648	686	2,572	328	441	1,100	149
Feb	3,953	229	2,617	686	2,111	344	1,659	1,100	142
Mar	3,986	626	2,753	734	1,916	238	1,546	1,100	170
Apr	3,496	665	2,715	693	1,855	360	1,061	1,137	167
May	3,141	691	2,752	647	1,669	393	1,211	1,144	169
Jun	3,394	799	2,797	756	1,513	372	1,684	1,285	177
Jul	3,454	709	2,722	728	1,605	405	2,765	1,338	162
Aug	3,842	819	2,790	733	1,466	495	1,218	1,362	162
Sep	3,659	875	2,626	726	1,586	422	398	1,407	162
Oct	3,536	800	2,543	660	1,487	363	1,298	1,279	162

**estimated*



City of Marengo

One additional hour of service on weekdays (from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.) and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to noon began on August 2, 2010.

During the additional hours of service, the following trips were taken:

- August: 4 trips (4 Saturday)
- September: 9 trips (2 weekday, 7 Saturday)
- October: 13 trips (3 weekday, 10 Saturday)