

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MINUTES

Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

May 26, 2020

Teleconference Only - Remote Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Baker, Willits Senior Center
Kathy Sheehy, Ukiah Senior Center
Diana Clarke, Ukiah Senior Center – Alternate*
Jacob King, Mendocino Transit Authority
Dawn White, Mendocino Transit Authority - Alt.*

STAFF PRESENT

Nephele Barrett
Janet Orth
Monica Galliani

MEMBERS EXCUSED/ABSENT

Sheila Keys, Redwood Coast Regional Center
Doris Sloan, Consolidated Tribal Health
Jill Rexrode, Redwood Coast Seniors

MEMBER VACANCIES

“Potential ‘handicapped’ transit user”
“Potential transit user at least 60 years of age”

* USC Alternate not voting at this meeting.
MTA Alternate voting due to its two seats.

- 1. Call to Order & Introductions.** The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. Introductions were made.
- 2. Public Expression.** None.
- 3. Minutes of December 9, 2019.** The minutes from the December meeting were included in the packet for information and reference. Due to the length of time between meetings, the minutes had been finalized. Janet thanked those who reviewed and commented on the draft minutes. No action was taken.
- 4. Review and Recommendation on MTA’s Analysis and Prioritization of 2020/21 Unmet Transit Needs.** Janet described the annual process to date, the Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) recommendation that “there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet,” and next steps, as detailed in her written staff report. MCOG’s Board of Directors will make a formal finding by resolution as part of budget adoption at its June 1 meeting. It was noted some of the same participants today had attended the April TPC meeting. Nephele added that even though none of the identified needs may be reasonable to meet, there could be other avenues to pursue meeting some of them through grants and other means.

Dawn joined the meeting during staff’s overview.

Discussion included:

- There is risk of losing service if funding is at peril for senior centers, with potential loss of door-through-door service. (Diana)
- A loss of funding does not meet the definition of an unmet need, however needs could be created by it. (Nephele)
- The federal CARES Act funding is anticipated to cover losses of local transit revenues. There were no new details available on that program. (Janet, Dawn)
- So a cautionary approach should be taken, due to COVID-19 economic impacts. (Richard)
- The federal relief funds are to come through the FTA Section 5311 program, hopefully to balance budgets in the end. Can senior centers apply directly, or just MTA? It was assumed only MTA is directly eligible. (Nephele, group)

Staff called for the question and final review of any needs on the list if desired. Nephele noted that some needs in the analysis were identified as already existing, since the original list was purposely unfiltered before MTA’s report.

Richard moved, seconded by Kathy, to take the same approach as the TPC; that is, with caution due to the financial uncertainty, so that “there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet for FY 2020/21.” **Discussion on the motion:** Would there be any opportunity to revisit needs during the year if conditions change? Nephele reported the process is annual, so it will be closed; she repeated that a need could be met if the opportunity arises. The next cycle begins again in November, so there may be a better indication of the financial situation then.

Jacob joined the meeting during discussion. The motion was repeated before taking action.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Baker, seconded by Sheehy, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*4 Ayes – Baker, Sheehy, King, White; 0 Noes; 3 Absent*), the SSTAC recommends a finding that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet for Fiscal Year 2020/21.

5. Discussion/ Recommendation on Any Other Transportation Issues. Diana asked MTA members whether there had been any progress on senior center contracts for the new fiscal year. Dawn offered to consult with Executive Director Carla Meyer and would meet with her after adjournment of this meeting. It was noted that MTA had formally claimed from MCOG the same level of Local Transportation Funds for the senior centers transportation program as for FY 2019/20, and this amount was included in MCOG’s proposed FY 2020/21 budget. No new recommendations were proposed and no action taken.

6. Miscellaneous / Members’ Concerns / Announcements. Janet reviewed status of SSTAC membership, reporting that two members whose seats expired in April had agreed to be reappointed, for approval on MCOG’s June 1 agenda. The third expired membership was a duplicate seat. There remain two vacancies for non-agency potential transit riders. In discussion, members agreed to watch for any volunteers.

Richard reported the Willits Senior Center plans to re-open its thrift shop June 1, pending logistics to comply with the public health order.

Diana asked about progress on a new funding formula for senior centers transportation. Nephele reported that options were presented but a recommendation postponed until the TPC can meet in person; since the change would not take effect until FY 2021/22, there is some time to work on it more.

Discussion followed on the current health order in regard to meetings. Is MTA bringing back any staff onsite? Dawn reported re-entry was occurring slowly, and there were still some layoffs. Jacob reported no service changes, i.e. no new reductions in service beyond the cuts to out-of-county routes and frequency of trips. He has been present onsite at MTA throughout the pandemic emergency.

Janet thanked the members for participating throughout the year, it has been very helpful. She noted no further SSTAC meetings are on the schedule until November; however if there is a reason to meet, the SSTAC may convene earlier (there is no prescribed frequency of meetings).

8. Adjournment. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Submitted by Janet Orth, Deputy Director / CFO