

**MINUTES**  
**STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
**February 20, 2013**

Attendees: Chairperson Karen Gooden, Maryland Department of Transportation; Thomas Curtis, Maryland Department of Disabilities; Angela Castillo-Epps, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council; Christaan Blake, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; Louis Jones, Maryland Department of Transportation; Andrew Bielak, Maryland Department of Transportation; Eva Austin, Maryland Department of Transportation ; Larry White, Maryland Department of Transportation; Jim Ports, Harford Transit Link; Karen Bode, Baltimore County Department of Aging; Louise Tinkler, Carroll Area Transit System; Nelson Rodriguez, Central Maryland Regional Transit ; Elizabeth Kreider, Maryland Transit Administration; Dr. Kunirum Osia, Maryland State Department of Education. Jerry Boden, Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs participated via teleconference.

1. Chairperson Karen Gooden opened the meeting with a greeting to all of those in attendance. She highlighted that this Committee's meetings were Open meetings and were subject to all of the rules of the Maryland Open Meeting Act. With that being said, all invitations and notices are made to the public and all efforts are made to be in full compliance with the provisions of the Act. Ms. Gooden thanked the Local Operated Transit System (LOTS) representatives in attendance for coming out and also expressed gratitude to them for meeting together as a group and, for the work that they were doing towards the Uniform Paratransit Application Process.
2. Attendees were asked to review the minutes of the January 16, 2013 meeting. The minutes were accepted by a majority vote with amendments. The amendments were duly noted and corrected. The amended minutes are attached (attachment #1).
3. Mr. Jim Ports, Harford Transit Link, served as spokesperson for LOTS representatives and gave an update on the Uniform Application process. He explained that he along with Karen Bode represents Baltimore County, Nelson Rodriguez represents Central Maryland Regional Transit, including Howard County and Louise Tinkler, represents Carroll County. This group worked on a document that would encompass much of the required information that their respective organizations would need to process a client. This draft document "Statewide Standard Paratransit Application" is attached (attachment #2). Jim covered the definition of Fixed Route Service, ADA Paratransit Service and Deviated Fixed Route. He reviewed the ten page application that was developed section-by-section. Discussion followed as to what steps will be taken to continue the development of this application for state-wide use. Elizabeth Kreider, of the MTA, stated that the application will be reviewed by Toyin Ogunfolaju and Michael Weidger of the MTA. Committee members agreed that this course of action and a legal review would be the prudent steps needed for the development of a sound useful document. It

was mentioned that Senator Robey will be briefed on the progress that the LOTS have made with the development of a Uniform Application Process

4. Ms. Gooden gave a “State of the Committee Report” highlighting the 2012 Accomplishments, the 2013 Goals, some proposed changes in the Committee/Meeting Structure, and some actions that will be carried out both before and during the monthly meetings.

### **2012 Accomplishments**

- In 2012, the State Coordinating Committee for Human Service Transportation met ten (10) times as a full committee and various other meetings were held by State Coordinating Committee for Human Service sub-committees. The Committee held regularly scheduled monthly meetings for approximately two hours every third Wednesday of the month at the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). Representatives at the meeting included key staff from the following agencies: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Maryland Transit Administration, Maryland Transportation Authority, Maryland Department of Disabilities, Maryland Department of Aging, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Human Resources, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- The mission of the Committee was explored in depth in 2012 and, in line with the Executive Order and in an attempt to bring greater organizational structure and focus, the State Coordinating Committee for Human Service Transportation developed three sub-committees: (1) Information Gathering; (2) Needs Assessment; and (3) Planning and Communication.
- Also in 2012, the Committee was focused on planning for a summit which was tentatively scheduled for May 2012. The purpose of the summit was to assemble key stakeholders of human services transportation to examine collective resources and opportunities for partnership and coordination to address the growing demand for human services transportation.
- In an attempt to bring greater organizational structure to the planning of the summit, an MDOT internal steering committee was established. Three core subcommittees were created to assist in implementing the objectives of the summit. The subcommittees were Finance, Planning and Information Collection and Management.
- In an effort to improve communication and better coordinate the various human services transportation initiatives underway throughout Maryland, the Committee welcomed several guest speakers to provide updates and present information on the following topic areas:

-Mr. Christian Kent, WMATA, Assistant General Manager of Access Services. Mr. Kent discussed the importance of communication with stakeholders and other community advocates and the need to explore new and different approaches to meet the needs of human services transportation riders.

- Ms. Linda Singer - Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator. Ms. Singer informed the Committee of the SHA's comprehensive efforts to address unmet needs throughout the communities in Maryland with regard to ADA accessible sidewalks and access to bus stops.

-Mr. Joe Schissler - constituent, member of the blind community who shared first-hand experience with the application process for paratransit certification in various jurisdictions.

- In furtherance of the Committee's outreach and communication efforts, Committee Chair Karen Williams Gooden worked with the MTA's Office of Local Transit Support and met with representatives from the 21 various Locally Owned Transit Systems (LOTS).
- The Committee remained committed to working on issues identified by SB 789 (which was ultimately withdrawn) and to developing non-legislative recommendations to satisfy the goals and intent of the bill. The Committee, therefore, strongly supported evaluating the various application forms, identifying where the forms overlap and how they could be streamlined into one universal application form to be accepted by each jurisdiction in Maryland (i.e. reciprocity).
- In September 2012, the Committee hosted a workshop with representatives from the LOTS to discuss any necessary revisions to the application and the appropriate mechanism to recognize uniform acceptance and implementation.

Lastly, an effort to coordinate human services transportation more effectively, each agency was requested to provide mobility data that included a description of the human transportation services provided from each of the respective agencies.

### **2013 Goals**

- This committee had an outstanding year 2012, and we want to build on that success. This year, we are already off to a fast start through our support of the pilot project called "Coordinated Alternative to Paratransit Service" or CAPS. This is a proposal that was brought to MDOT by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority for a partnership to provide people with developmental disabilities the option of an improved daily travel experience, and save the State up to 50% of the per trip cost at the same time. Acting Secretary Darrell Mobley granted his approval for proceeding to explore and implement a pilot project around this service model. Staff from MDOT, MTA and WMATA are all working together to implement this pilot over the next several months.

The SCCHST will continue to advocate and support a successful implementation of the CAPS pilot.

### **Regional Coordination Study and Pilot of Model**

- MDOT, WMATA and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments are partnering on a study of regional coordination of human services transportation in DC's Maryland suburbs. This study is designed to look at a range of service models that can provide better and more affordable specialized transportation as an alternative to paratransit service. The scope of this study, which is scheduled to be concluded in May, is designed to ensure that an implementable model or models are developed that can be placed into service as pilot projects not long after the completion of the study. We want to take the results of this study and use them to positively impact the lives of customers, who are currently limited to only paratransit service. We want to provide the customer with options, and save state resources at the same time. This committee will channel a great deal of its resources monitoring the progress of the study, and help to implement a level of service.
- This committee will also take a leading role in a summit later this year that will be organized to share with regional stakeholders the results of the study, the next steps, and how they and their clients can take advantage of the work that will have been completed.

Ms. Gooden also stated as this committee turns more and more of its attention to regional coordination and alternatives to paratransit, we don't want to lose too much focus from matters involving paratransit service.

5. There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned.

6. Next meeting scheduled is March 20, 2013 at Maryland Department of Transportation 7201 Corporate Center Drive Hanover, Maryland at 10 o'clock AM in the Intemann Conference Room.