

Emmet County
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Pellston Regional Airport, Conference Room, Pellston, MI
Friday, February 2, 2007

Present: Les Atchison, Tom Foltz, Jack Jones, Lyn Johnson, Vickie Carpentier

Absent: Thomas Shier, Chairperson,

Guest: Chris Carr, Straits Regional Ride; Mike Overton, Cheboygan County Administrator; and Fred Featherly, MDOT.

Call to order:

In the absence of the Chairperson the Vice-Chairperson, Les Atchison, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes:

Review and approval of the November 29, 2006 was tabled to the next meeting date.

Dial-a-Ride Proposal:

Chris Carr with Straits Regional Ride presented a project study proposal for a Dial-a-Ride System to operate from April 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007, within a five (5) mile radius of the City of Petoskey. Mr. Carr explained the proposal to the Committee members and answered questions, such as defining elderly as someone more than 65 years of age, and clarified that weather related closing of the operation would not be tied to the Cheboygan Area schools. Mr. Carr agreed that the cost to ride the Friendship Center bus was cheaper but that the Dial-a-Ride system would have longer hours of operation. For the test time frame, Emmet County would be charged \$26.00 per hour, which are Dial-a-Ride's variable costs related to operations. He stated they do not feel that they have to pass on their total fixed cost because they are already incurring these costs due to their current operations. If the test program was adopted, the hourly cost would go up. The proposed project study time frame would be from April 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.

Discussion:

Of the cost involved and what the potential service area(s) would be; Dial-a-Ride would provide a public service, so how could it be provided at the lowest possible cost; location(s) to park the bus(es), and the location(s) would require a parking space where, in the winter, they can plug the bus in; if the County decided to proceed with the project study and at the end of the study time frame, what impact would it have if the County determined not to continue or establish a Dial-a-Ride program; funding that the Friendship Center receives from the State and grants would not allow the Friendship Center to provide this kind of program.

Most Dial-a-Ride systems are funded by a millage. A millage could be county-wide or limited to a special area. Next general election is 2008, and a special election would cost approximately \$35,000.00.

Providing a public transportation system is not a county mandate, nor would such a service be equitable to all County residents.

The proposed ride service would benefit and provide service to more people than the currently available transportation services.

Recommendation:

The Committee recommends that the Committee members travel to Lansing and meet with MDOT to discuss transportation services and possible funding to provide transportation services.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.