

**Emmet County
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
April 25, 2016**

Present: Commissioner Les Atchison; Commissioner Charles MacInnis; Commissioner Bert Notestine.

Staff: Director of Transportation and Development Kelley Atkins; Administrator Marty Krupa; Assistant Administrator/HR Director Gary Appold; Civil Counsel Kathleen Abbott; Recording Secretary Priscilla Meyer

Absent: None.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Atchison in the Emmet County Board of Commissioners Room.

Agenda:

Motion by MacInnis to approve the agenda. Supported by Notestine .
Motion carried in a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment:

None.

Communications:

None.

Minutes:

Notestine noted that on page 3, paragraph 4, of the minutes "in option 4 at 3.5 mils" should be changed to "in option 4 at .35 mils."

Motion by Notestine to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2016 meeting with the change as noted. Supported by MacInnis.

Motion carried in a unanimous voice vote.

Kelley Atkins presented a proposal for a transportation voucher partnership program with Emmet County, area human service agencies and for profit transportation companies as a result of his research of similar programs in other locations. (See attached.) In this proposal the human service agency would buy coupons for half the price (example \$20.00 for \$10.00) from Emmet County. The human service agency would determine rider eligibility based on criteria to be agreed upon. The for profit transportation company would then submit the used vouchers to Emmet County for reimbursement. Any additional cost for the ride would be paid for by the rider.

Atchison stated that the Northern Michigan Community Action Agency is already qualifying people for available services.

The committee also discussed working with the Disability Network, the Petoskey Club, Community Mental Health, the Women's Resource Center and the Safe House.

Notestine asked whether an employer could purchase the coupons in order to get their employees to work.

There was discussion on what hours would be covered by this service, whether it would be only for after hours when existing services were not operating, and what areas would be covered (countywide, only populated areas or mile radius outside city limits).

Notestine asked about insurance issues. Abbott reported that she talked to the attorney for the County's liability insurance carrier who indicated they do not insure fixed routes but they do insure on demand. A contract would be needed when the program is finalized.

MacInnis asked about the cost of the rides, whether that could be determined.

Atkins suggested that the program be designed and then they would be able to work with the transportation companies on what the actual cost would be.

There was discussion on whether there would be a cap on the amount available to individuals.

MacInnis asked, if possible, that a determination be made as to the estimated cost per ride and the cost to the County, how many people would be able to be served verses how many might be eligible, and how it would be administered.

Notestine asked whether there might be any state or federal money available for this type of program.

It was suggested that the human service agencies get involved to provide what the needs are and any recommendations they might have.

For the next step Atkins recommended that staff meet with the human service agencies and Atkins will get information on the area cab services and fares.

Atchison will give an updated report to the Board at the May meeting.

Committee Member Comments:

Notestine noted that he received a call from a lady in Mackinaw City and she requested that nothing be done with the Friendship Center buses. She is happy with their services. She uses both the Friendship Center buses and Straits Regional Ride.

Public Comment:

Toni Drier stated that she is the guardian of an individual who uses the Friendship Center bus from Levering to Petoskey and the ride is \$2.50 in and \$2.50 back.

Matt Mikus suggested that the Committee consider questions they might get from the cab companies such as what is in it for them and if they are getting coupons instead of money how do they fill their gas tank. Atchison responded that they would be making more money with this program and the coupons could be turned in more often to get their cash sooner.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Transportation Committee will be on Wednesday, June 15, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Les Atchison, Committee Chair

Priscilla Meyer, Recording Secretary

Date: _____

PROPOSAL

A transportation voucher partnership program consisting of Emmet County, area human service agencies, and for-profit transportation companies who wish to participate through an RFP solicitation.

Emmet County would provide to the participating human service agencies voucher coupon books to be purchased by the rider. For example: \$10.00 worth of rides could be purchased for \$5.00, \$20.00 worth of rides for \$10.00, \$30.00 worth of rides for \$15.00, \$40.00 worth of rides for \$20.00 and \$50.00 worth of rides for \$25.00. The rider uses the vouchers to pay for the ride. All additional costs of the ride above the value of the voucher must be covered by the rider.

The coupon books would be sold by the participating human service agency. On a bi-weekly or monthly basis Emmet County would collect the monies from the sale of the vouchers from the human service agency. On this same schedule, the for-profit transportation provider would submit used vouchers to Emmet County for reimbursement.

The human service agency participating in the program would determine rider eligibility based on established criteria. For example: Rides to work or to secure employment (proof of employment or a log sheet of job applied for could be required), medical appointments or people with disabilities (a letter from a doctor could be required), students with an ID and seniors. Other issues such as children should be discussed by the transportation committee.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Hours of Operation

- Afterhours (5pm-midnight), Weekends
- Should this program be limited to hours that existing services are not operating

Area of Coverage

- County Wide?
- Populated Areas Only?
- Up to X number of miles outside of populated areas?

Caps

- A cap of vouchers that could be purchased by one individual per week or per month

Meet with local human service agencies to seek their comments and recommendations on this proposal and estimate number of riders per week per agency.

Consider this a pilot program to determine costs and usage in the first year.

If current for-profit transportation companies can't or won't participate in this program it may spawn start-up companies.