

HELENA AREA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HATAC)

Tuesday, February 17, 2015, Monthly Meeting Minutes

Intermountain Board Room, 3240 Dredge Drive, East Entrance

2:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Attendance:

Les Clark (MILP), Jaymie Sheldahl (RMDC-Head Start/Secretary), David Kack (WTI/MSU), Andy Hunthausen (L&C County Commissioner), Matt Elsaesser (City of Helena Commissioner), Bob Maffit (MILP), Patrick Sanders (DPHHS), Deborah Swingley (MT Council on DD/Vice-Chair), Steve Larson (HATS), Mary Sherlock (Rider's Council), Walter Hanley (RMDC), Kim Kurokawa (St. Peter's Hospital), Elizabeth Andrews (HCC District #2/Chair), Trish Sorenson (Rider's Council), Raynor Roberts (Rider's Council), James Schell (City of East Helena), Laura Erickson (L&C County), Sandra Lowry (Area IV RMDC), Karen Lane (L&C Health Dpt), Paul Kindt (PEERS/HI), Bobb Allen (Citizen at Large), Debra LaFontaine (MT National Guard Fort Harrison), Adam Gill (HCC), Al Knauber (IR), Jessica Peterson (IED/CTC)

Conference Phone: Selena Barlow and Scott Chapman

Introductions:

HATAC Chair Elizabeth Andrews called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm, asked meeting participants follow Roberts Rules including asking questions thru the Chair, and started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet. Membership forms were distributed along with hard copies of meeting materials. Elizabeth Andrews reviewed the primary role of the HATAC as outlined by the Montana Department of Transportation, a TAC is an advisory council that cooperatively assists the lead agency/transit manager in assessing and prioritizing local needs and enhances coordination among community partners, and includes making recommendations on various transit related issues.

Approval of Minutes:

Jaymie Sheldahl moved to approve January HATAC meeting minutes, Deborah Swingley seconded, no discussion, January minutes approved.

Executive Committee Report/Recommendations/Action Items:

Lead Agency FY 2016 Grant Application to MDT for Financial Assistance for HATS:

- **Admin meeting update/outcomes/next steps recommendation**-Chair referred group to admin meeting summary in packet including set of communications pieces from chair and Executive Committee around the admin meeting opportunity. Staff has recommended a budget constrained by the grant/match amount plus an additional 75K to help fund a possible 2nd route for the local HATS system. Budget for Marketing Plan, Mobility Management Program/Manager, election/holiday service was not discussed except for

reference to cost of adding these additional programs. Local match program allowing contribution restrictions was not discussed. There is interest from commission to explore getting an additional route to local transit system. There seems to be consensus regarding new brand and rebranding as funds become available, but not sure if this means we can pull the lever on planning activities as we have not been notified by staff on possible timeline any of these items. Commissioner Elsaesser said looking at getting at least busses wrapped for the fixed routes.

- **Consider Final FY 2016 Coordination Plan**-Elizabeth Andrews explained the process for developing plan including HITP Grant Round 1 and 2 planning activities, consultant recommendations, initial draft by David Kack using last year's plan as a guide, December 18 Memo and Discussion Draft Submittal to Lead Agency, HATAC Executive Committee Review, input from Steve Larson on using Capital Transit language versus HATS and what he needs and by when, HATAC Coordination Subcommittee review/input during month of January, January 20th HATAC approval to advance most recent version of discussion draft for to Lead Agency Board via hard copy and electronically for February 4th Admin meeting discussion (with caveat that the draft plan would be considered at February 23rd meeting as not enough input from Lead Agency for final HATAC consideration). HATAC Executive Committee has heard nothing back from board (Mayor and Commissioners) regarding Coordination Plan Discussion Draft. With providing set of recs, drafting plan, ranking capital requests and revising plan as per those capital requests and other necessary information, HATAC work around coordination plan is finished outside of advocating for approval with Lead agency Board. Next step is that HATAC needs to recommend Lead Agency review and approve as EC has learned from MDT that in the case of a community where governing body is a governmental entity rather than non-profit that they are looking for Lead Agency approval (or not) not the TAC as HATAC is advisory. Need to edit the document to reflect that nuance. Les Clark made motion **“In its role as an advisory body to the Lead Agency, HATAC recommends that the Lead Agency review, approve and implement the FY 16 Coordination Plan Discussion Draft dated 02-02-15 drafted by HATAC members for the purpose of the FY 16 MDT Grant Application.”** Jaymie Sheldahl seconded, no discussion, chair called the question, motion passed unanimously with Commissioner Elsaesser abstaining. Chair shared will communicate to Lead Agency Staff and commission verbally at Admin meeting opportunities and via email and hard copy.
- **Consider the Lead Agency Grant Submittal Recommendation including Final Grant Preliminary Budget**-Chair explained that it is not the role of the TAC to approve the budget, it is the TAC role to advise and make recommendations and the preliminary budget still does not reflect HATAC recommendations with budget implications, however this is another advocacy opportunity for HATAC input on draft budget as Steve has asked us to consider

grant application at this meeting. Deborah Swingley made motion “**In its role as an advisory body to the Lead Agency, HATAC again recommends that the Lead Agency create and approve a grant preliminary budget that reflects the HATAC recommendations for FY 16 with budget implications.**” Les Clark seconded motion. Discussion: Laura Erickson- Does it utilize the full match available for MDT? Yes...2016 transit assumptions (refer to 2/9 memo in packet) does fully account for full grant award. What is the difference between the budgets? Actually 3 budgets rolled into grant application. Deborah Swingley reiterated that MDT does not prohibit a grant budget above and beyond grant award also a good demonstration of vision and fundraising too for more diversified budget. Deborah and others restated city should adopt a grant budget that builds in recommendations by HATAC that have projected costs. Build into others shared if we have a budget that includes all the items in the budget we have a marketing tool – shared financial vision needs something to identify items that need funding. Do not know if Lead Agency will approve HATAC coordination plan as written or not. Deborah Swingley- there is nothing precluding these items from being included in the budget. Bob Maffit- at least pencil out budget for everything that is recommended, the City needs to develop their grant budgets in this way. So if application expresses the intent of all members, it clearly communicates what might or could happen, it aids in community buy-in – it may not be what City passes as budget, it’s a visioning tool and this puts it in. Commissioner Elsaesser- would be good to show where the in-kind items are; this motion is just with budget implications (budget assumptions). Commissioner Hunthausen- it is ok to make a recommendation with what HATAC has said all along – you don’t always get what you want, but it’s ok to stand and say this is the work we’ve done and this is what we’ve recommended. Chair called the question, motion passed unanimously with Commissioner Elsaesser abstaining. Chair shared will communicate to Lead Agency Staff and commission verbally at Admin meeting opportunities and via email and hard copy.

Lead Agency Update (HATS) Report/Discussion: See attached February HATAC memo and ridership report. Capital Transit Commuter – 3600 riders for January. State workers would like to see it all year around; neighborhoods have noticed the parking outside their homes has improved. Chair commended partners for efforts to that end and encouraged other partners to consider such circulators for their transit an/or parking needs and work with Lead Agency to that end.

Presentation: Regional Governance Model Study: David Kack presented results of the Regional Governance Model Study conducted under HITP Grant Round 2 and recommendations for next steps. Shared that one topic that emerged during the course of the HITP Grant Projects is the current governance model for the Helena Area Transit Service (HATS) and whether or not is can meet the transportation needs of the growing Helena region. HATS currently operates under a model whereby the City of Helena is the Lead Agency. Based upon coordinated partner interest in exploring the benefits and challenges of a regional governance model, HATAC recommended that Western

Transportation Institute review various governance models and determine which may be best for establishing a regional transportation system for the Helena area. Kack reviewed matrix of options for the Helena Area pros and cons included in the report and shared top recommendation for Lead Agency model for the Helena area for now is non-profit model. Recommended interested community partners convene to continue the discussion about recommendation and make a deliberative decision on model, identify prospect(s), develop a transition plan. Jaymie Sheldahl made motion **“In its role as advisory body to the Lead Agency, HATAC recommends that the Lead Agency Board direct the City Manager to participate in a convening of current system contributors and other interested parties to continue the discussion of a new Governance Model for the Helena Area.”** Seconded by Bob Allen, some clarifying questions during discussion including how to non-profits come up with enough to cover operating costs until reimbursement if not already able? Kack shared lines of credit from private sector like banks or others partners a possibility. Chair called the question, passed unanimously, Commissioner Elsaesser abstained. Elizabeth Andrews will communicate this motion to Lead Agency Board and will send out link to report to all partners and media with media release developed by HATAC Executive Committee. Thanked those who provided statements for the media release.

Click here for link to final Regional Governance Models Report report and other resources mentioned in the minutes:

<http://helenaareatransportationforall-eandrewscommunityengagement.nationbuilder.com/resources>

Helena Area Riders Council Update:

The Riders Council met with Bob Maffit from MILP who discussed a Capitol Taxi Para-Transit Service concept sketch. The service focused on the HATAC’s 6th recommendation: Explore contracting out various Lead Agency services as a way to better meet needs and lower lead Agency operating costs, including exploring using accessible taxi. Riders Council recommended the proposal be brought before the HATAC for discussion and consideration. The HATAC Executive Committee will have a discussion at EC meeting as to whether or not to include such a discussion/consideration opportunity at next month’s HATAC meeting agenda.

Public Comment:

Laura Erickson asked that everyone fill out the satisfaction survey at the end of the HATAC and the Coalition Meeting.

HATAC February Meeting Announcement/Adjourn: Chair shared upcoming advocacy opportunities and encouraged participants to reach out to the Lead Agency Board and ask for support of HATAC recommendations, as well as, to contact Jesse Peterson with Capital Transit Coalition for more information:

- February 18, 2015: Commission Admin. Meeting

- February 23, 2015: City Commission meeting where HATS MDT Grant application will be considered.
- March 2, 2015: HATS MDT Grant Application due.
- March 17, 2015 2:30 – 3:30 pm: HATAC Monthly Meeting. Executive Committee Elections are coming up (bilaws state month after submission of MDT award. Chair shared all current executive committee members interested in continuing for another year. Elizabeth Andrews shared she will not run for re-election natural time for changing leadership given bi-laws (and grant intent to continue to engage people with mobility limitations in planning and leadership) and upcoming personal and professional demands on her time. Looking for nominations between now and March 17th, Nominees speak at the March meeting and elections will be April 21, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35pm

As outlined by the Montana Department of Transportation, a TAC is an advisory council that cooperatively assists the lead transit agency manager in assessing and prioritizing local needs, as well as discusses and make recommendations on various transit related issues.

<http://www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats/helena-transporation-advisory-council.html>