

## **HELENA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HTAC)**

**August 19, 2014 Monthly Meeting Minutes and Transit Service  
Improvement Planning Charrette  
St. Peter's Hospital Education Center, 2475 Broadway (Main Entrance)  
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

**Attendance:** Cindy Baril (County Citizen), Allison Batch (SAVE), Les Clark (MILP), Brian Johnson (United Way/Treasurer) Jaymie Sheldahl (RMDC-Head Start/Secretary), Vivian Crabtree (MAB Capital City Chapter), Mike Hruska (Capital Taxi), Elizabeth Andrews (HCC District #2/Chair), Walter Hanley (RMDC), James Schell (City of East Helena Mayor), Bob Morgan (Helena Citizens Council), Jerry Hutch, David Kack (WTI/MSU), Jeanette Blize (M & R), Sandra Lowry (RMDC Area IV Agency on Aging), Andy Hunthausen (L&C County Commissioner), Matt Elsaesser (City of Helena Commissioner), Bob Moffit (MILP), Lloyd Spanks (MILP), Judy Harris (HTAC Member At Large), Laura Erickson (L&C County), Trish Sorenson (Interested Citizen), Ann Sherwood (self), John Rundquist (Facilitator), Tom Stuber (MDT-Transit), Justin Johnson (self), Melinda Reed (Friendship Center), Tracy Reich (Helena BID/DH), Elisa Prescott (L&C County), Denny Lenoir (Congressmen Daines), Patrick Sanders (DPHHS), David Kack (WTI/MSU), Brian Obert (MT Business Conn), Deborah Swingley (MT Council on DD/Vice-Chair), Jacob Harrison (MT Council on DD), Eric Bryson (L&C County), Kim Kurokawa (St. Peter's Hospital), and Eric Kohring (MILP), Shannon Lewis (Senator Tester's office)

Conference Phone: call-in capabilities not available at meeting site

**Introductions:** Meeting called to order at 1:00pm and started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet. Membership forms were distributed along with hard copies of meeting materials. HTAC Chair Elizabeth Andrews reviewed the primary role of the HTAC 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 makes recommendations on various transit related issues.

**Approval of Minutes:** Brian Johnson made motion and James Schell seconded to approve July 15, 2014 minutes, no discussion, minutes approved.

**Executive Committee Report:** Grant wraps up November 30, 2014. The four Action Areas reviewed. The Riders Council will convene via conference call this month and is currently working on creating a framework for the Council; Communications and Marketing plan is the topic of discussion for September HTAC meeting. Action Area 1, Service Improvement, is the focus today.

Brian Johnson has completed the final HTAC re-revised by-laws draft. The draft will be emailed to HTAC members for review. Vote to approve by-laws will happen at September HTAC meeting.

HTAC now has a fiscal agent relationship with United Way via the Helena Resource Advocates. This will make it possible for HTAC to accept donations.

The Coordination Committee met this month and will be reporting what came out of that meeting at the September HTAC meeting.

**Lead Agency Update (HATS):** See attached memo. There have been 190 applications for para-transit completed. HATS is going from paper to an electronic system that works off scheduling and optimizing scheduling for the day. Staff has been meeting with route match representative every month. Struggling with getting the parameters in place, but system is working well and in the end will be much better for riders. Last year's grant MILP project is complete, waiting for final report from MILP. Waiting for some in-kind reports for budget reporting, but at this time of the \$706,000 allocated in the HATS budget \$645,000 was used. See report of fiscal year. The \$50,000 not used will return to the State of Montana and is used within the MDT system. Brian Johnson asked why the \$50,000 was not spent. Steve Larson explained that the City of Helena sets budgets in January for the budget that starts July 1. March 1 is the deadline to turn in estimated budget so it is way ahead of time to allocate for unknown expenses and factors so they guess and guess high when turning in budget numbers. Limited to status quo budget by the City of Helena and can't use left over money to exceed the budget that is set. Need to find a balance to be able to spend the money allocated. Develop budget for next year to see what the budget expenditures and needs are to present to the City Council. Keeping in mind how do we find more transportation opportunities for people with disabilities and how do we provide the fixed routes for the choice riders.

## **Transit Service Improvement Planning Charrette – Facilitated by Scott Chapman, Nelson Nygaard:**

Commissioner Andy Hunthausen gave opening remarks. The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners are fully committed to working on the transportation issues in our community. We are a community at a crossroads. We have to move into that long view of how we want to see our transportation system evolve for our changing and growing community. Andy thanked HATS Superintendent Steve Larson for his leadership and vision. It was Steve who saw the grant opportunity that has brought us to this phase in our planning. He thanked Laura Erickson for applying for the grant and continuing to monitor the grant and meet the dead lines necessary to keep the grant going, the Riders who rely on the bus system every day and use it, our elected officials in the room for being present, St. Peter's Hospital for the facility and support, Montana Council for Disabilities who stepped up to help make the grant work for our community, the HTAC, and MILP. Commissioner Hunthausen encouraged those present who don't use the system every day to ride the bus. As our community evolves our businesses and employers will help take our transportation system to the next level. Transportation is huge. There are economic, justice, employment, infrastructure, parking and more issues that transportation encompasses. We know we have to change and move and do something different in our community. Public transportation can have a beneficial impact on infrastructure.

Scott Chapman led the group through our Transit Service Improvement Planning Charrette. Five separate groups worked on a service improvement that could address the identified priorities and needs of our community. Each group produced a map and written description of the suggested service improvement.

**Public Comment:** No public comment

## **HTAC September Meeting Date/Topic/Location Announcements:**

- The Communication and Marketing Consultant, Selena Barlow will be in Helena the week of September 15 for her site visit and will **be presenting at and leading a plan input opportunity at our Sept 16<sup>th</sup> HTAC meeting**, as well as, meeting with HATS staff, riding the system, speaking with riders and conducting interviews with key transit marketing “gatekeepers” while she is in town. Meeting site has not been secured; the accessible meeting location will be announced prior to September meeting.

**Meeting adjourned 4:20pm**

HTAC meetings are the 3rd Tuesday in each month and will begin promptly at 2:30 to 4pm.

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 makes recommendations on various transit related issues.

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

NOTE\*\* All agenda items/issues must be turned into Elizabeth Andrews no later than the first day of each month 2014. Final agenda and materials will go out a week ahead of monthly meeting. A reminder email will go out the day of the meeting. Meeting will be posted on the city web [www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats.html](http://www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats.html). They will also be available in the HATS conference Room in a binder. Meeting materials will be provided. Thank you!