

HELENA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HTAC)
July 15, 2014 Monthly Meeting Minutes
Neighborhood Center 200 South Cruse Helena MT
2:30 PM till 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), John McCrea (Senor Rep.), Bobb Allen (At Large), Jennie Ekwortzel (Senior Corps), Walter Hanley (RMDC), James Schell (City of East Helena Mayor), Bob Morgan (Helena Citizens Council), Karen Lane (L & C County Health Dpt.), 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), Mike Schaff (Interested Citizen), Dave Depew (Interested Citizen), Brigitte Bellefleur (Montana Voc Rehab), Lloyd Spanks (MILP), Sherry Bersanti (Center for Mental Health), Julie A. Serstad (RMDC Executive Director), Judy Harris (HTAC Member At Large), Laura Erickson (L&C County), John Huffland (RMDC), Trish Sorenson (Interested Citizen), and Rachel Peura (ADA Advisory Committee).

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

Introductions: Meeting started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet. Membership forms were distributed along with hard copies of meeting materials.

Approval of Minutes: Rachel Peura made motion and Vivian Crabtree seconded to approve June 17, 2014 minutes. No discussion, minutes approved.

Executive Committee Update: Update given by Brian Johnson as Elizabeth out on family leave. Executive Committee meets the first Monday for updates from lead agency, to discuss emerging opportunities and to set the meeting agenda.

The CTAA grant is providing fantastic learning opportunities in a number of areas and revealing a number of emerging opportunities that need some further HTAC discussion. Executive Committee requests that the HTAC Coordination Committee meet in early August to discuss:

1. revised city form/next steps for in-kind donations project.

2. TDP, HITP Grant Round 1 and now Round 2 outreach opportunities pointing toward the need for more service outside the city limits and region. Montana Code limits city run systems to within 8 miles of city boundaries. For all these reasons we want to start the conversation about what might be the best governance model/structure for a lead agency in a regional system – if that is a governmental structure, non-profit structure or maybe something else. Elizabeth will coordinate meeting time and place with committee. Rachel Peura, James Schell, Les Clark, John McCrea, Mike Hruska and Judy Harris volunteered to be on the committee.

The HTAC Action Plan is ready, this is a month by month summary document of what activities HTAC will be focusing on for FY2015. It is based on the HATS TDP, the HITP Grant Round 2 Report, the FY 2015 Coordinated Plan and the May HTAC Action Plan Work session outcome. A draft copy will be emailed for comment, this month.

Lead Agency Update/Discussion (HATS): Brian Johnson gave update because Steve Larson was unable to attend meeting. Memo from Steve was available at meeting and emailed with agenda to HTAC. Route map software is in process. East Valley bus service preserved at 40 hours a week. L & C County gave \$16,000 line of credit to keep route going. Ridership numbers were distributed at meeting. Ridership continues to decrease. Federal funding is tied to ridership. At a time of decreasing ridership the role of HTAC is vitally important. See attached for ridership numbers and HATS update memo.

Transit Riders' Council Formation Discussion: Discussion facilitated by Jeanette Blize. Discussion was video-taped and will be made available for viewing to interested parties. Mike Schaff, Bob Maffit, Trish Sorenson, Jerry Hutch, Vivian Crabtree, and Jaymie Sheldahl volunteered to be a part of the Riders' Council Sub-Committee. Detailed discussion notes to forthcoming.

Commissioner Matt Elsaesser commented that he appreciated the rider's comments, especially Mike Schaff's. Commissioner said there is a need for fixed routes. Most of us coming to meetings are not taking the bus here so it can be very easy to distance our decisions from what would be most useful to the riders. Commissioner thinks the Rider's Council is great and he is willing to bring forth ideas from Council to Commission. Mayor James Schell stated he wants the Riders' Council to be permanent and he spoke to the importance of encouraging rider's comments whether they are on the Council or not. Jeanette Blize addressed that is the main role of the Riders' Council: to get into the community, ride the bus,

gather the feedback directly from the Riders' and then bring it forward to the HTAC.

Public Comment:

George McCauley-Letter regarding sidewalk snow removal: ADA Advisory Committee for the city of Helena connected with George and the ADA Committee will help George draft the letter addressing the City's Snow Removal Policy.

Commissioner Elsaesser's update from City Commission: trying to create a non-motorized transportation district, fundamental safe biking and walking route across town – this includes the shoveling of snow issue. City commission is trying to push for fixed routes to more effectively get people around the community. We are at a crisis if our ridership numbers do not go up. We need to go to big employers and get more support for our transit system.

Mike Schaff: People First meeting 6 pm on July 21 at Chamber of Commerce Building. Meeting is held on the 3rd Monday of the month. PEERS group is recruiting for members.

Trish Sorenson: Thanked Rocky Mountain Development Council for getting a bus to get her and her grandson to and from Head Start last school year.

Upcoming Meeting Announcements:

- **The HTAC Coordination Subcommittee will meet August 4 at 2 pm at United Way Conference Room** to continue the discussion on in-kind project, regional system governance models and any emerging coordination related lead agency activities.
- **The Transit Policy and Advocacy Coalition Strategic Planning Session will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 5 from 10-1 PM at Carroll College Campus Center Lower Level Cube.** [Click here to RSVP](#) and fill out the survey by July 31st. The session will be facilitated by M+R.
- **The August 19 HTAC meeting will be held from 1-4 PM (location to be announced).** The focus of the meeting will be a Service Improvement Planning Charrette with Scott Chapman and Nelson Nygaard. The purpose of the planning charrette is to lay the groundwork for and continue the process of inclusively vetting the service improvements recommended in the TDP in order to inclusively plan and cost out one service improvement and

establish 2 regional concepts. Scott will also be meeting with lead agency staff and riding the system.

- 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 16th 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.

Rocky Mountain Development Council is welcoming new Executive Director Julie Serstad on July 30th at Care Takers Cabin from 5-7pm. Afterward you could walk to Alive at Five for music.

Meeting adjourned 4:00pm

HTAC meetings are the 3rd Tuesday in each month and will begin promptly at 2:30 pm. 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-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. They will also be available in the HATS conference Room in a binder. Meeting materials will be provided. Thank you!