

HELENA AREA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HATAC)

Tuesday, January 20, 2015 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Intermountain Board Room, 3240 Dredge Drive, East Entrance

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Attendance:

Allison Batch (SAVE), Les Clark (MILP), Brian Johnson (United Way/Treasurer), 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), Mike Hruska (Capital Taxi), 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), Walt Hanley (RMDC), Saundra Lowry (Area IV RMDC), Karen Lane (Lewis and Clark County Health Department)

Conference Phone: Selena Barlow

Introductions:

Meeting called to order at 2:30 pm and started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet. Membership forms were distributed along with hard copies of meeting materials. HATAC Chair 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:

Deborah Swingley moved to have minutes amended to reflect the meeting participants, Brian Johnson seconded, no discussion, amendment passed. Brian Johnson made motion to approve December meeting minutes with amendment, Deborah Swingley seconded, no discussion, December minutes approved.

Executive Committee Report/Recommendations/Action Items:

- **Lead Agency FY 2016 Grant Application to MDT for Financial Assistance for HATS:** The HATAC Executive Committee requested from the Lead Agency a robust preliminary grant budget that supports the HATAC set of FY 16 Recs and outlines the real costs of implementing the FY 2016 Helena Area Coordinated Plan. Steve Larson has been instructed by City Manager to submit a constrained budget; not clear if the Commission wants to see a constrained or a robust preliminary budget grant proposal. Coordination Subcommittee discussed most recent version

of the FY 2016 Coordinated Plan at January 13 meeting and has been working hard on edits. The Coordination Subcommittee and Executive Committee (EC) need more information from Lead Agency before recommending approval. For the following reasons the final draft of the Coordinated Plan as not been completed:

1. the response to EC from the City Manager about the constrained budget approach they are using to build the FY 16 budget,
2. it is still not clear to EC whether or not the Lead Agency will be coordinating with HATAC on the items articulated in our memo,
3. it is still not clear to EC what recommendations will be funded by the Lead Agency
4. There are a few outstanding questions from Steve for broader HATAC consideration including prioritization request and days of service multiplier.

The EC recommends that HATAC postpone a vote on the Coordination Plan until after the February 4th Administrative meeting. Brian Johnson moved that HATAC postpone vote on FY 2016 Coordinated Plan until after the February 4, 2016 admin meeting, Sandra Lowery seconded motion. Discussion: Commissioner Elsaesser spoke to a MDT preliminary grant budget that is robust and reflects the HATAC recommendations. March 2 is the Deadline for application to be submitted along with an approved Coordinated Plan and the MDT preliminary grant budget. Commissioner Hunthausen's goal is to see recommendations and vision of HATAC and the Lead Agency be laid out whether it be in a robust budget or constrained budget with a memo; hope the process does not get tied up. Elizabeth Andrews explained there are three months from the time of the vote on the preliminary budget proposal and the vote to finalize the City budget during which fund raising efforts will be underway, Numbers attached to line items is key. Commissioner Elsaesser supports more efficient fixed routes for the service to the greater area; it is ambitious and doesn't know if it can be provided in the next year. Call to question, motion passed unanimously.

- **Coordination Subcommittee Recommendation for Capital Request**

Ranking: Coordination Subcommittee met and prioritized requests according to criteria in memo. There were two applicants, HATS and MILP, others were interested but insurance issues were a concern. Applicants were strong in some criteria areas weak in others. Both scored high with regard to supports the HATAC Local Service Improvement Strategy Recommendation for the FY 2016 Coordinated Plan, neither of these requests, if granted by MDT, will be available until late in FY16. Coordination Subcommittee recommends the following ranking be

included in final draft of Coordinated Plan: (1) MILP (5 passenger ADA Accessible Expansion Vehicle) and (2) HATS (12 Seat Replacement Vehicle/Route match Fixed Route module/bus shelters). Pat Sanders moved to approve Coordination Subcommittee's recommendation, Deborah Swingley seconded. Matt Elsaesser asked how MILP plans to use vehicle. Bob Maffit reported MILP will use vehicle in coordination with Capital Taxi to have a 24/7 transportation option similar to the pilot program MILP and Capital Taxi coordinated last year. Motion was called to question and passed. Full application can be viewed on Nation Builder site under resources. The Butte Transit Manager reported that they have spare vehicles available now for community's that need them and would be willing to work with Helena partners that need a vehicle now.

- **Lead Agency request for HATAC to prioritize recommendations and input on service multiplier/number of holidays bus service operate:**
 - The HATAC recommendations have been deliberately not prioritized because the recommendation is it is better to take them as a package and fund as funding becomes available. There is three months of fund raising time between March 2nd vote and the final Helena budget vote. Brian Johnson moved that the HATAC not prioritize recommendations, recommendations are to be taken as a package and will be funded as funds become available. Sandra Lowery seconded, call to question, motion passed, Les Clark abstained.
 - Executive Committee recommendation it that the Lead Agency run para-transit only for Election Day and holidays, not fixed route. Instead of 260 days of fixed route service, just use para transit system on 2 election days and 10 holidays for Lead Agency budget calculations. Brian moved– run para transit on 2 election days and 10 Federal Holidays when service would not normally run, Deborah Swingley seconded. Discussion: Karen Lane recommended the fixed route stay running on election days. Trish Sorenson expressed importance of Election Day running. David Kack recommended looking at 5-6 federal holidays that transit systems won't run. Steve Larson said the language of the Coordinated Plan regarding people living in poverty says the bus system needs to be running. Called to question 7 votes in favor, 3 votes opposed, 2 abstained. Motion passes.

- **Regional Governance Model Study Progress:** David Kack shared that interviews are complete and draft study is being reviewed by HATAC Coordination Subcommittee at next meeting. David will present study results and recommendations at next meeting for HATAC consideration.
- **Helena Inclusive Transit Planning (HITP) Grant Round 3 Activity Progress:** Capital Transit Coalition kick off meeting immediately following February 17 HATAC meeting, beginning at 3:30. Agenda items include Progress City Preliminary Budget Discussions/Transit Stakeholder Summit/Regional Service Improvement Strategy activities (community surveys, etc.)

Lead Agency Update (HATS) Report/Discussion:

See attached January HATAC memo and ridership report. Capital commuter has given a total of 1400 rides, 814 rides last week. Lots of positive feedback from the riders and State workers as the commuter bus has helped with parking issues around the Capital.

Presentation: Brand Package and Next Step Recommendations:

Selena Barlow described the core elements of the brand – wrapping busses, bus stop signage (see attached power point). Next steps are work on the passenger guide, GTFS Google Transit and develop a comprehensive rider focused website. Focus for HITP Grant Round 3 is marketing support leading up to the Local Service Improvement Strategy Launch date including the planning of a Transit Stakeholder Summit. Deborah Swingley moved the HATAC advance brand package and HATAC memo requesting final brand package/FY 2015 funding consideration to Lead Agency Board (City of Helena Mayor and Commissioners). Les Clark seconded motion, no discussion, motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Helena Area Riders Council Update:

Rider's Council met prior to HATAC on January 20, 2015. No progress as of yet, moving forward is contingent upon obtaining a phone number and HATS number will not be able to be used. Council is going to ask Helena Resource Advocates for help funding a phone line so the Rider's Council information can get out to the public. Rider's Council will get update from Steve Larson regarding the complaint form currently being used by HATS being replaced by a suggestion form.

Public Comment:

- Mike Hruska with Capital Taxi submitted a Letter of Interest to the HATAC regarding a contract for the paratransit service requesting the support of the HATAC to advance Letter of Interest. Executive Committee will discuss at the EC monthly meeting and report back to full HATAC.

- David Kack: Rep. Nancy Wilson from Missoula will submit Bill LC737 which would raise the state gas tax by .05 and .02 of that will go to transit.
- Commissioner Matt Elsaesser: Capital brand has been well received and is pleased to see the broad spectrum of support.

HATAC February Meeting Announcement/Adjourn:

- February 4, 2015: Commission Admin meeting from 4-6
- February 5, 2015: Joint work session
- February 17, 2015: HATAC meeting at Intermountain from 2:30-3:30
- February 17, 2015: Capital Transit Coalition meeting 3:30-5:00
- 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.

Meeting adjourned at 3:58pm

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>