

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) Meeting Minutes**  
**January 24, 2018**  
**MnDOT Central Office Transportation Building**  
**395 John Ireland Blvd, Saint Paul, Conference Room 461**  
**1:00 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Members Present**

Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability  
At-Large Representative – Tim Sexton, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association (via phone)  
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health (via phone)  
Kelly Garvey, Minnesota Department of Education (via phone)  
Jon Kelly, Minnesota Department of Commerce (via phone, proxy for Peter Brickwedde)  
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (via phone)  
Ronald Quade II, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (via phone)  
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services (via phone)  
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council

**Members Absent**

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce (Jon Kelly served as proxy)  
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging  
Claire Wilson, Minnesota Department of Human Services (Diogo Reis served as proxy)

**Others Present**

Minnesota Department of Transportation:

Kristie Billiar, ADA Program and Policy  
Tim Mitchell, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Jake Rueter, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Noel Shughart, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Sue Siemers, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Kjensmo Walker, Public Engagement and Constituent Services Office

University of Minnesota:

Frank Douma, Humphrey School of Public Affairs  
Kaydee Kirk, Center for Transportation Studies  
Arlene Mathison, Center for Transportation Studies

Heidi Corcoran, Dakota County

Larry Eisenstadt, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Ilya Garelik, Minnesota Department of Human Services and Minnesota Board on Aging  
Leah Hegg, American Cancer Society (via phone)  
Alan Herrmann, Scott County  
Tim Weltcin, Prime West Health (via phone)  
Sherry Yude, Minnesota Non-Emergency Transportation (MNET) Program client

**Call to order, introductions, & member meeting participation**

Willshire called to order the January meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:05 PM on January 24, 2018 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

**Review and approve agenda**

Kelly moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Sutton. The agenda was unanimously **approved**.

## **12/20/17 meeting minutes**

Sutton moved to approve the December 2017 minutes, seconded by Kelly. The minutes were unanimously **approved**.

### **Phase II of MCOTA disability awareness training**

Shughart provided an overview of the training purpose and of the first training. He and Willshire also highlighted the document with the proposed future training and key questions.

Members' feedback included the following:

- Willshire emphasized that transportation is the linchpin for persons with disabilities that provide the means to live, work, and play. She felt focus of this training is to help agencies create good policy (including topics of disability history and disability laws and policies) and being mindful of persons with disabilities. It would be valuable to have MnDOT and Met Council ridership data on persons with disabilities. She also felt that a topic on Universal Design is not needed for this council.
- Held felt that all seven areas outlined in the document would be beneficial. Kelly shared that it is helpful to hear about the lived experiences of persons with a disability, as we had at the December meeting.
- Collins felt that the following training topics would be most valuable: general issues within the disability community, transportation issues within the disability community, accessibility, and sensitive and appropriate interactions with persons with disabilities.
- Sexton noted it would be valuable to have examples from other groups/situations where challenges were overcome and successes were achieved with respect to these disability topics.

Corcoran added that she felt it would be valuable to understand the impacts of travel training and how organizations provide in-depth education on travel options based on each individual's needs.

Similar to the first training, the training would be held the same day of an MCOTA meeting (month TBD), after the business portion of the meeting is adjourned.

### **Draft agenda for Volunteer Driver Program Forum**

Mathison reviewed the draft forum agenda that the forum planning committee assembled. Committee members include Willshire, Collins, Hardy, and Garelik as well as staff members Shughart, Rueter, Mathison and Kirk. The event is May 9 and it will be held at the Continuing Education and Conference Center in St. Paul at the U of M.

MCOTA members provided feedback and requested the topics focus more on the vision for volunteers/volunteerism in the future and include more uplifting/forward-looking topics vs. focusing on the current problems. The committee will work to consolidate the current/problem areas and carve out more time for future and long-range issues to have more visioning. The committee meets in early February. A "save the date" email announcement will be sent in the near future.

Kelly asked if Brickwedde has been notified that he is invited to speak at the forum. Shughart said he has not yet formally reached out but would do so in the near future. Kelly will give Brickwedde a heads up for now to hold the date.

### **Quarterly stakeholder communication**

Mathison talked through the document containing the proposed content for the January MCOTA email communication to stakeholders. The following information will be included: Volunteer Driver Program Forum "save the date", MCOTA Annual Report for 2017, reminder on RTCC organizational grant application, and upcoming MCOTA meetings.

Willshire asked if information on how to join MCOTA meetings is included on the email. The email links to the website for the details on how to call in or attend in person. Also, training opportunities that other organizations are sponsoring around disability awareness can be included in communications and potentially added to the website. The Feb. 27 ABILITY Event in St. Cloud is one that will be included in the next communications and added to the MCOTA website.

### **Update on MCOTA research study *Best Practices for Addressing Youth Employment and Training Transportation***

Eisenstadt provided a recap of the purpose of the study: to document both national and Minnesota best practice examples of innovative programs meeting the transportation needs of working youth through surveys and/or semi-structured interviews. Project team members include Douma and Charles Noble of the UMN State and Local Policy Program and advisory group includes Eisenstadt, Leona Martin (MN Workforce Center), Pearson, Shughart, and Mathison.

Douma provided an overview of the four project tasks and that the goal is to have this study complete by June. The first two tasks are 1) set the context of the problem and 2) research case studies and they will begin in late January and run through the end of March. Task three will synthesize tasks one and two to create recommendations and will be complete by mid-May. Task four is to create a report of all the work by end of June. Bi-weekly meetings have been set up with the task force to keep the project moving forward.

Willshire suggested the research team connect with the Minnesota Association of Centers for Independent Living (MACIL) as part of this project.

Pearson noted that if anyone has significant ties to other youth program(s) in their area serving youth ages 14-24 to let Shughart know and he will pass the information along to Douma.

Corcoran shared that Dakota County travel training initiative will be focused on youth. Dakota County's Lyft project is targeted to people seeking employment who live outside the boundaries of Metro Mobility. Douma welcomed Corcoran to join the youth employment and training transportation project's efforts.

Sexton moved to approve the study and scope of this project, Kelly seconded. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

### **FY18 MCOTA budget update**

Shughart shared a document that included an overview of the budget and associated tasks. MCOTA is anticipated to stay within budget this year. Sexton asked if the youth employment and training transportation project funds will be expended this year and it was confirmed that that funding will be used this year.

### **Agency updates**

- Transportation Research Board (TRB) Meeting
  - Mathison shared that she attended the paratransit taxi subcommittee meeting at TRB earlier this month. The Boston and DC transit authorities talked about their work with taxis and transportation network companies in their metro areas. In DC, Uber and Lyft were not willing to share ridership data as specified in the RFP so DC awarded the contracts to two taxi companies to expand paratransit service.
  - She also shared that in Canada there was a study done that is similar to Douma's earlier volunteer driver research.
- Metro Mobility Task Force – Sutton shared that the task force has one more meeting before the report goes to the legislature by February 15. Earlier meetings were focused on what Metro Mobility does and provides. The task force decided to divide up into three subgroups to focus on various recommendations in specific areas, including some legislative recommendations. More information on this effort is listed on the Met Council website. Willshire added that there is a lack of accessible vehicles, especially at peak times during the day. There are efforts with the legislature around increasing the number of accessible vehicles. The next meeting of this group is February 7.
- Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils application – Siemers shared that there are seven regions working to submit applications. This is a strong response since they were estimating 3-4 regions would submit. The Mankato and Fergus Falls (north-central region) areas have not moved forward with any action to submit an application. That will follow up with his contacts in the two regions that have not yet

submitted. Siemers added that a January 12 Q&A webinar was held that engaged many people and that the deadline for the letter of intent is February 15.

- Olmstead Plan
  - Billiar shared that the revised draft plan is out for comment. The transportation section has not yet received any public comments. Mathison will include this information, including the opportunity for comment, in the next MCOTA communication; Shughart will pass this same information to MN Public Transit Association to include in their newsletter. Related, Billiar shared another idea for newsletter content would be talking to Todd Grugel at MnDOT.
  - Billiar also shared that the Olmstead annual report will be submitted to the subcabinet shortly.
- Potential remote/web connections for future MCOTA meetings – Shughart noted that Skype does not have full accessibility; therefore MCOTA meetings will continue to use a conference call number for people who need to join remotely.
- Alternate room locations – Rueter shared that they are exploring other potential space for MCOTA meetings including space at MDH, DHS, and the new MnDOT basement conference room. Members should contact Rueter if they have room ideas that are accessible, conference calling ability, and ample parking and transit access.
- Other agency updates
  - Rueter followed up to his recent email about how the MnDOT’s Office of Transit and Active Transportation is taking public comments on rules governing public transit. Comments can be made by going to MnDOT’s rulemaking webpage at <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/rulemaking.html> and clicking on the “comments” link. MnDOT has not yet drafted rule amendments but is interested in hearing from stakeholders about updates that should be considered. For more information about the rulemaking process, go to MnDOT’s rulemaking website <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/rulemaking.html> or contact [Laura.Nehl-Trueeman@state.mn.us](mailto:Laura.Nehl-Trueeman@state.mn.us). Mathison will include this in the next MCOTA communication. Kirk will add this item to the February agenda.
  - Willshire shared that February 8 from 1-3pm the MN Council on Disability will hold a Legislative Forum that brings together the disability community with key legislators. This year they will focus more on bonding bill concerns. This event will be web streamed. Willshire suggested that anyone interested in attending can the MN Council on Disability to RSVP and/or request the web link.
  - Willshire also highlighted the AV bus that is now operating in downtown Minneapolis. Members of the public can take a ride.

### Call for future agenda items

Shughart requested that MCOTA members send any future agenda items to himself or Rueter.

### Public comments

- Updates on public comments from December meeting: Yude shared her concerns about her experiences with non-emergency medical transportation as an MNET client. Reis shared that he spoke with Ms. Yude by phone shortly after the December MCOTA meeting to talk through her concerns. He shared that he also spoke with MTM by phone and shared with Ms. Yude the reasoning for the change. Reis agreed to call Ms. Yude again to follow up. Willshire added that this issue is a valid concern however it is not under the purview of MCOTA; it is related to DHS directly.

**Adjourn:** Sutton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously **approved**. The meeting ended at 2:48 p.m.

**2018 meetings:** Wednesdays, 1:00-3:30pm, MnDOT Central Office: Feb 28, Mar 28, Apr 25, May 23, June 27, July 25, Aug 22, Sept 26, Oct 24, Nov 28, Dec 19 (3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. of month)

**Future agenda items TBA:**

Disability awareness trainings

**February agenda items:**

Approval of Volunteer Driver Program Forum agenda

Volunteer driver reimbursement

Action requested: Information

--Update on volunteer driver program reimbursement committee meeting – Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association; Department of Commerce representative

--Volunteer insurance brochure update

Update on MnDOT's Office of Transit and Active Transportation on rules governing public transit

Metro Mobility Task Force presentation – Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council

**March agenda items:**

Begin FY19 work plan discussions

**April agenda items:**

Final approval of FY19 work plan

Olmstead Implementation Office on the final quality-of-life survey – Kristie Billiar, MnDOT

**Standing agenda items:**

Review and approve agenda

Review and approve meeting minutes

Quarterly communications – review and/or approve

FY18 MCOTA budget update

Agency updates

Call for future agenda items

Public comments