

King County Mobility Coalition

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Seattle Goodwill Industries

700 Dearborn Pl S, Seattle, WA 98144

In attendance:

Members/Alternates: William Ayears, Gaby Bell, Alaric Bien, Dorene Cornwell, Kailey Fiedler-Gohlke, Cecile Henault, Francois Larrivee, Ref Lindmark (co-chair), Jacque Mann, Leslie Miller, Aaron Morrow, Scott Ninneman, Alex O'Reilly (co-chair), Eileen Rasnack, Jim Seeks, Irene Stewart, Suni Tolton, Caitlin Wasley, Cindy Zwart

Collaborators: Brian Brooke, George Coffee, Jate Ekmahasawasdi, Celeste Endlich, Doug Gellert, Iris Guzman, Kathy Hardy, Melony Joyce, Cassie Marshall, Aaron McCullough, Edith Savadove, Sunnie Sterling, Bill Woolley

Staff: Jon Morrison Winters

Welcome, Introductions & Brief Announcements

Ref Lindmark, Coalition Co-chair, opened the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

New Introductions:

- Iris Guzman is with the City of Seattle Human Services Department
- Aaron McCullough is the new Access Coordinator at Sound Transit
- Bill Woolley is with Hopelink's Transportation Brokerage team. Bill recently became the Outreach Program Supervisor.
- Celeste Endlich is a Mobility Management AmeriCorps at Senior Services
- Elizabeth King is a Program Manager with Hopelink's Mobility Management team. Elizabeth will be leading Emergency Management coordination efforts and staffing the regional Vulnerable Populations Emergency Management/Transportation Coordination Workgroup
- Sunnie Sterling is the Revenue Analysis Manager at Sound Transit
- Kathy Hardy is Commute Trip Reduction Coordinator at the City of Kent

Consent Calendar

August 2015 Meeting Minutes: The Coalition approved the meeting minutes as drafted. Melony Joyce pointed out that the August minutes mention her being reassigned while she has, in fact, once again been assigned to working with the Coalition on coordination efforts and is able to serve as Metro's alternate.

New Members and Alternates: the Coalition confirmed the appointment of the following members and alternates:

- Hamdi Abdulle of Somali Youth and Family Club as member representing Children and Youth Services Representatives. Hamdi is replacing Jim Blanchard, who has retired.
- Cindi Laws of the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Association of Seattle & King County as a representative of the Taxi/For-profit Transportation Industry.

PSRC SNTC Member: The Coalition confirmed the appointment of Aaron Morrow to serve on the Puget Sound Regional Council's Special Needs Transportation Committee as a representative of people with disabilities.

Briefing: Seattle Low-Income Access to Transit/Community Affordability and Resiliency
Ref introduced Iris Guzman from the City of Seattle. Iris shared a presentation about the city's Community Affordability and Resiliency initiative. The presentation included an overview of the several programs that are part of this initiative, including Vehicle License Fee rebate program and the Low-Income Access to Transit component.

More information on the Vehicle License fee rebate, including income guidelines, is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/cartabrebate.htm>.

Low Income Access to Transit includes assisting with ORCA LIFT outreach, as well as a new Transportation Ambassadors program that will involve working with Community Based Organizations to share transportation information and resources with their staff and clients.

Seattle also has utility discount and other programs that are part of the Community Affordability and Resiliency Initiative. Taken together with transportation discounts, they represent a holistic, "no wrong door" approach.

Irene Stewart asked if child care assistance is included. At this time it is not included in the current suite of programs.

Alaric Bien asked about the Transportation Ambassadors program. Currently SDOT is moving forward on selecting CBO partners and anticipates working with three to four in the first year of the program.

Other Coalition members asked clarifying questions about the relationship of LIFT and Access fares and other aspects of the program.

Iris stated that Seattle is happy to partner on outreach and enrollment events and she will provide additional information to the Coalition.

The Coalition thanked Iris for her presentation.

Briefing: Medicaid Transportation Brokerage

Alex O'Reilly, Coalition co-chair, introduced Francois Larrivee, the Director of Brokerage Services at Hopelink. Francois presented on the Medicaid Transportation Brokerage, which in King and Snohomish Counties is operated by Hopelink. While this is a service that is familiar to many Coalition members, new Coalition members may be less familiar with the service and how it works.

Francois explained that the Brokerage offers two types of transportation assistance: gas card/bus fare or "lower mode" and door-to-door service or "higher mode." The concept of the brokerage involves transportation services being provided by non-profit and for-profit partners. Hopelink does not provide the service directly.

The client experience involves calling Hopelink for an eligibility screening, then calling to book rides to Medicaid-eligible medical services as early as two weeks in advance of an appointment, up to the day before (and same-day in certain circumstances). Clients may use MyRideOnline.org to check on the status of their ride.

On-site staff at Harborview Medical Center and Seattle Children's Hospital help to mitigate the issue of missed connections and no-shows.

Ref asked whether trips are booked by individuals or the medical facilities. Typically it is the individual, but some clinics, such as dialysis clinics, will book on their end.

Besides providing Medicaid Transportation, the Brokerage has expanded to take on other contracts including McKinney-Vento Transportation for some school districts and providing transportation for some non-Medicaid patients.

Gaby Bell asked if dual-eligible individuals (on Medicaid and Medicare) qualify. Francois stated that they do.

Celeste Endlich asked what languages are available. The Brokerage has bilingual assisters who speak Spanish and Russian. For other languages, the "language line" service is used.

Coalition members asked additional clarifying questions of Francois. Francois provided hand-outs and business cards with the phone number for the Brokerage and the MyRideOnline.org URL.

Bill Woolley, also from the Brokerage, volunteered to come out to facilities for outreach meetings and noted that having on-site staff at facilities has really improved the customer experience. Bill sees himself as a “mobile version” of the on-site staff. He needs partnerships to make him successful

The Coalition thanked Francois for his presentation.

Briefing: Sound Transit Updates

Ref introduced Brian Brooke from Sound Transit. Brian and Sunnie Sterling updated the Coalition on two topics: Sound Transit’s Permit Parking program, and options for adopting a low-income fare for Express Buses and Sounder as part of an upcoming fare change.

Brian discussed the need for permit parking at Park and Rides and noted that the pilot program conducted last year was successful. They are moving forward with implementation of a permanent program. The first phase of the roll-out will be for carpools and vanpools. Participants must be transit riders and must have an ORCA card. The program will be opened to single occupant vehicles in phase 2, likely in 2017. SOVs will also require ORCA verification. Carpool permits will cost \$5/month. Permit costs for SOVs is to be determined. There is some discussion of a low-income discount for the permits. No more than 50% of parking spaces will be changed to permit spaces, so parking will still be available on a first-come, first-served basis to non-permit holders.

Sunnie discussed the options before Sound Transit’s board regarding the upcoming fare change. The options on the table are adopting a low-income fare for all Express Buses or just for buses operating only in King County. There is also the option to adopt a low-income fare for Sounder [*update: Sound Transit’s board has adopted a low-income fare on all Express Buses as well as Sounder*].

Ref added that transfers between Sound Transit and Metro are complicated, and would be made simpler by the LIFT fare being adopted by Sound Transit.

Brian noted that the Sound Transit website, SoundTransit.org, is the best source of information on these topics.

The Coalition thanked Brian and Sunnie for their presentations.

Melony Joyce made an announcement that Metro has moved to a policy of driver or automated “call-outs” (announcing the stop) for 100% of bus stops, in compliance with new ADA guidance. Additional follow-up from customers is needed in order to determine the best volume for the call-outs. Melony also asked for volunteers to provide feedback.

Irene asked whether buses could be “looped” with hearing loops for people using hearing aids that are equipped with T-coils. Melony responded that there have been some conversations about that at Metro, but she was not sure about implementation of a hearing loop on a bus. Irene responded that there are several examples where this has been done, and promised to share more information.

King County Mobility Coalition 5-Year Action Plan Updates

Jon Morrison Winters, the Coalition’s Mobility Manager, reviewed our work to date on our 5-Year Action Plan, which contains seven initiatives and several strategies.

The Action Plan was officially adopted at our last meeting in August. Since then, progress has been made on at least three of the Initiatives: Access to Healthcare, Veterans Transportation, and Emergency Management Coordination. Additional planning work is underway to move forward on the other initiatives by forming subcommittees and workgroups to focus on them.

Mobility management staff provided additional information about the work to date. Jon solicited volunteers to serve on Initiative Subcommittees.

Quick Briefings:

King County Metro Update:

Ref provided information about Metro’s Winter Weather Preparedness efforts and encouraged members to sign up for Metro alerts. Ref also announced that over 20,000 people have signed up for ORCA LIFT since March.

The upcoming Metro service change will be a big one, as it will include changes to better connect to Sound Transit’s new Light Rail stations at Capital Hill and the University of Washington. Ref also gave a brief update on Metro’s Long Range Plan, to be followed up by a presentation from Metro staff in February.

Subregional Coalitions and Mobility Management Update:

Jon noted that the work of the subregional coalitions continues to move forward, but he did not have a detailed update, as they are still in a staffing transition. He expects the staff position to be filled soon. The other work of Mobility Management was discussed under Action Plan Updates and consists of the Operation Easy Access project, Veterans Transportation projects, and Emergency Management project. These projects are all moving forward with help from the Mobility Management team at Hopelink.

Next Steps

Alex announced that Ref’s term as co-chair ends in December and a co-chair nomination process

will need to take place to find a new co-chair. She added that Ref is planning to retire in March. The Coalition expressed thanks to Ref for serving as Co-Chair and for his dedication to the work of the Coalition and improving mobility for all.

- Next Meeting: **Tuesday, February 16, 2016** from 9:30 – 11:30 AM in South King County

Agendas, minutes and handouts from past Coalition meeting are available online at:
<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/kccsnt/agendas-minutes.html>