



Chittenden County E&D Advisory Committee Wednesday, December 9th 10:00am-11:00am Meeting Minutes

Participants: Morgan Prouty (SSTA), Adam Lawrence (SSTA), Heather Filonow (UVM Home Health), Dan Currier (VTrans), Marshall Distel (CCRPC), Eleni Churchill (CCRPC), Leah Soderquist (United Way), Jordan Posner (GMT), Erika Marks (Age Well).

1. Introductions

Brief introductions were made.

2. VTrans Presentation on Statewide Program Guidance

Dan Currier began with an overview presentation of the updated VTrans E&D manual and the workplan guidance. The presentation started with some background information, dating back to the 2004 statewide E&D guidance. Dan also talked about the outcomes of the first annual E&D summit that was held virtually during the summer. He also highlighted the updated VTrans E&D website (<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D>) as a helpful resource for RPCs, E&D partners, and others interested in the E&D program. Leah Soderquist reiterated how helpful the website now has become.

Dan then described the work plan for RPCs. One of the primary work plan objectives is to outline the role and responsibilities for RPCs, public transit providers, and other E&D partners. Chittenden County's work plan has been centered around planning tasks that have been led by United Way.

Other major work plan tasks were identified, which includes four quarterly E&D committee meetings held in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, participation in a statewide E&D Summit, and a 2020 rider survey follow up.

Dan touched on other notable tasks that could be included within the E&D workplan, which could include efforts to assist VTrans with centralized tracking of E&D data, increase community outreach and marketing, and tasks specifically related to the impact of COVID-19 on E&D service.

Marshall outlined United Way's efforts and will work with Leah and the E&D committee moving forward to revise Chittenden County's E&D Work Plan in the coming months.

3. GMT Updates: Budget, etc.

Jordan Posner outlined some budget updates. Some partners will exhaust their cash match, but the budget as a whole looks adequate and will not be fully spent this year.

Leah asked about town budgets and how the E&D committee may be able to help partners secure their cash match? Jordan outlined how federal relief funding has largely left out municipal budgets. Until some assistance is given to municipalities, it will continue to be challenging for some partners to adequately meet their cash match. The group briefly discussed budget concerns in Milton.

Leah asked if there may be an opportunity to review the fundraising pitch for the region's E&D program? Reviewing our donation policy may be an option moving forward. Jordan expressed concerns with the

grant language allowing us to ask for donations from E&D users. Leah clarified that we may be able to look into fundraising assistance from the general public.

Jordan also summarized how microtransit is coming to Washington County and could have a significant impact on E&D demand response services.

4. SSTA Updates

Adam outlined SSTA's 45% ride volume. There was hope that this would increase since the summer, but the recent surge in COVID cases has put a halt to growth in ride volumes. SSTA has taken the COVID surge very seriously for both employees and riders. They employ full-time cleaning and sanitizing staff, which utilize viricide and electrostatic fogging spray to clean SSTA vehicles. Drivers have been retrained on mask-wearing policies and other safety protocols. Adam expressed that SSTA is doing all that is possible to keep passengers and employees safe.

Adam also described how the volunteer driver workforce continues to struggle during the pandemic. However, the volunteer driver plan remains at the top of the planning list moving forward.

Jordan said that Age Well has been inundated with new volunteers. The group will evaluate if any of these volunteers would be comfortable driving E&D users. Leah said that the volunteers that came forward are mainly associated with the meals on wheels program, which doesn't generally involve more than one passenger in the vehicle.

Heather Filonow said that as a partner, she would not be comfortable with letting her adult day clients utilize a volunteer driver unless certain safety assurances are met.

Morgan Prouty added to the discussion with some conversations about in-town and Medicaid volunteer driver apprehensions. The majority have indicated that they are waiting for a vaccine prior to volunteering to drive. They want to return, but do not feel comfortable.

5. Other E&D Partner Items

Erika Marks shared updates with regards to her volunteer team. They also do not feel very comfortable given the rise in COVID cases.

Heather then shared updates about the UVM Home Health adult day program, which was reopened briefly. However, after internal discussions, the adult day program was closed again on 11/13. The following Monday, the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living issued guidance to cease adult day services. Heather described how for the four open days, things went really well in terms of procedures, workflows, and operations.

The meeting ended shortly after 11:15. Marshall will send out a calendar invite for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: March 10, 2021