



Chittenden County E&D Advisory Committee

Wednesday, December 14th 10:00am

Meeting Minutes

Participants: Marshall Distel (CCRPC), Chris Damiani (GMT), Morgan Prouty (SSTA), Adam Lawrence (SSTA), Melinda Scott (Williston), Erica Marks (AgeWell), Timothy Bradshaw (VTrans)

1. Introductions

Marshall Distel welcomed partners to the quarterly meeting. Introductions were then made.

2. GMT Updates

Chris Damiani started out with a brief GMT update. Chris provided some details about a GMT MyRide customer satisfaction survey. A lot of helpful information came out of that survey, in terms of rider satisfaction and smart phone usage. A majority of survey respondents indicated having access to a smartphone to request rides. At the beginning of the MyRide pilot, about 60% of rides were requested through the call center, with 40% being requested through the MyRide app. Today, around 50% of reservations come through the call center and the other half through the app.

Tim Bradshaw added some comments about driver capacity and its impact on reservations. He also noted very positive feedback from an international student who regularly gets picked up at Montpelier high school. The student expressed that no app-related glitches have been experienced, even when using the service on a daily basis.

3. SSTA Updates

Adam Lawrence highlighted that E&D ridership remains at around 1,100 rides per month. Pre-COVID ridership averaged around 1,500 rides per month. 1,100 may be the new normal for now. There has been a lot of talk about E&D rides being canceled, which has been a phenomenon experienced around the state. Adam expressed that the non-critical care E&D rides are the ones that are sometimes subject to being cancelled. Critical care rides remain a top priority. SSTA currently has no E&D volunteer drivers. From a staffing perspective, SSTA is doing better than most around the state, but it is still a challenge.

Morgan Prouty noted that there is not a blanket canceling of E&D rides. There's an evaluation that's made on a first-come-first serve basis and what the next day looks like. The last-minute requests are often the ones that are sometimes not able to be filled. SSTA works closely with critical care units in Chittenden County. Since these schedules are generally reoccurring and well-planned, these rides have not been subject to cancelation.

Erica Marks noted that she has not received any complaints from E&D riders and praised SSTA for their handling of the situation.

Adam noted that there are some strains on new vehicle availability as well. As more drives come online, the next issue may be vehicular availability.

4. Other Updates

Tim provided an update on the VTrans Community Driver Marketing Campaign. The volunteer driver issue is not isolated to Chittenden County. Gas prices, the mileage reimbursement rate, and other issues are



putting a strain on volunteers. VTrans is looking to evaluate a number of different reimbursement models, as the volunteer transportation program is close to being broken. There is a need for a new model to support volunteer-based transportation. A media campaign is scheduled to be released early in the New Year.

Tim clarified that the model would explore other forms for payment options rather than a mileage reimbursement. However, there are still a number of hurdles related to payments verse a mileage reimbursement, such as the issuing of 1099s.

Marshall mentioned the possibility of CCRPC exploring outreach to specifically to target EV owners for volunteer driver opportunities.

Morgan mentioned that there was one volunteer driver with an EV pre-COVID. However, the driving range was sometimes an issue and was more challenging to work around with scheduling short trips.

Chris asked about potential changes to tax structure to better facilitate payments to volunteers. Tim was unaware of Vermont-specific tax changes, but mentioned that some initiatives are being explored at the federal level.

Marshall asked about the Mobility Committee push and asked for clarification about how that is different from a traditional E&D Committee. Tim detailed that the idea of a Mobility Committee would be to bring more transportation-related partners to the E&D planning table. For other regions, this has included the Recovery and Job Access Program (<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/recovery-job-access>), Jenna's Promise (<https://jennaspromise.org/>), etc. For Chittenden County, we need to think about who else we can invite to these discussions to assist with mobility challenges. Tim also noted that more engagement rather than simply discussing financial items, has been another goal of the Mobility Committee shift.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 10:35AM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 8th