2017 Transportation Task Force Meeting Minutes

November 28, 2017
9:00am
Meeting
State Capitol
Cabinet Meeting Room, Lower Level, Room 3
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Attendance of Task Force Members:

Barbara Palmer, Director, Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)
Steve Holmes, Executive Director, Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged
Valerie Breen, Executive Director, Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
Mary Smith, Chair, Family Care Council
Edward Griffin, MV Transportation, Inc. (Alachua County Community Transportation Coordinator) - CTC contact
Sharon Peeler, JTrans (Jackson County) - CTC contact
Robert Villar, (Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners) - CTC contact
Danielle McGill, Self-Advocate appointed by APD
Ross Silvers, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (Pinellas County) - CTC Contact
David Darm, Self-Advocate appointed by Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged

Opening Comments:

Chair Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated we are on target and she is very pleased with all the work that has been done.

Minutes:

Grendy Henry asked members to review the draft minutes from the October 5, 2017 meeting. David Darm made a motion to accept the draft minutes as amended. Robert Villar seconded the motion. None opposed.

CUTR PRESENTATION

Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) Orientation

Rob Gregg began by thanking the task force for having the opportunity to work on this project. Other present members of his team were Jay Goodwill and Ann Joslin. Rob briefly talked about where we started and where we are going. He went over the timeline of this transportation disadvantaged (TD) services study. Rob said the research CUTR accomplished that helped them arrive at developing their recommendations was related to the issues cited in Senate Bill 2502

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proviso language. He said funneling all the information into a succinct report was the main goal of this study.

Rob said CUTR looked at what transportation services exist in Florida to include challenges to providing services from the customer's perspective and what they go through trying to access the transportation system. CUTR looked for recommendations to bundle from a systemwide approach. Rob mentioned that some recommendations could be joined together but they kept them separate for now.

CUTR assessed many elements such as transportation disadvantaged and Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) data, urban versus rural, fare system analysis, operational variables, and technology. They looked at existing models. Rob stated the system model in Florida is the best model. He said independent operations are possible within the State of Florida's transportation system model. CUTR looked at APD's approach to its customers and social economic data. Their focus was on the customers and training for the them and the providers.

Rob highlighted some coordinated transportation system statistics for the TD population in Florida. In 2016, there were 21,622,138 total trips (1,647,992 or 7.62% of these were APD funded), the overall complaints percentage was low at 0.03%, and there were 1.72 accidents per 100,000 miles. From a coordinated system perspective in Florida, Rob pointed out that urban areas get more funding and other matching funds than rural areas.

Rob talked about mobility management. He said this is in their recommendations with a focus on customer care and coordination. Mobility management could enhance and improve transportation and strengthen communications between community transportation coordinators (CTCs). He also mentioned we must recognize what is rapidly changing in the environment. Specifically, smart phones/mobile applications and how the use of them is growing. Expanding mobility options with technology advances is a goal.

Ann Joslin gave an overview of the research CUTR did involving regional fare systems. Ann said regional fare systems are good when there is a lot of transfer activity, which is mostly found in urban areas and not so much in rural ones. Ann mentioned a small pilot project that is under way in Tallahassee involving Star Metro buses and Gadsden county and a fare payment mobile application. She said there are a lot of regional fare payment opportunities. However, it does require money to get the needed technology and equipment. Ann said there was not really any paratransit focus on payment systems across America. Rob then stated that paratransit kind of lags behind regarding the use of fare payment systems but that some agencies are looking into the possibility of using it now. He also mentioned using an easier/simplified fare payment may be an option.

- Chair Palmer asked Rob what exactly is a simplified fare payment? He said every transportation system has their own fare payment system and policy. Simplified fare payments are about flexible technology applications. He also said fare boxes are disappearing due to the Wallet application being on smart phones to pay for services.

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Ultimately, it comes down to local policy and funding regarding the use of fare payment systems.

- Co-Chair Holmes talked about a technology in Europe called "Mobility as a Service". This involves buying a monthly package and traveling all month long. Technology will lead to changes in fare payment systems. The hard part, however, will be doing the needed work behind the applications. Technology should lead to simplified trips for customers.

- Ross Silvers wanted to see some study data pertaining to smart phone technology and asked where it came from. Rob said the data comes out of California and he can call it up later in the meeting today if needed. Rob said significant growth has occurred with smart phones.

- Robert Villar made a point that in a universal fare payment system, cash is still accepted. He said a smart card and mobile fare using an application is planned in the future for the Miami-Dade area. They are spending lots of money with mobile technology. The other technology moving forward is "open pay", which is a quick way to take payments online or using a mobile app and charging a credit card. He said it is challenging when lots of people pay with cash.

- Chair Palmer said basically we are where we would want to be. But realistically we need something we can take to the legislature and look at tangible things we can do.

Rob briefly covered new routes being funded through the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Federal Transit Administration 5311(f) program, which is designed to provide viable transportation options for residents in rural communities. He discussed transportation network companies such as Uber and LYFT possibly being options for providing transportation trips in rural areas.

CUTR Recommendations

Rob stated that he does not think we need to look to redesign the transportation system in Florida.

Recommendation #1 (Regional Single Point Mobility Information Centers): The emphasis with this recommendation is on a regional perspective and building upon existing models. He pointed out that one limitation is existing CTCs, funding wise, having a person to do this. He thought a pilot should involve a CTC with multiple counties.

- David Darm asked if this funding would go to the CTC chosen to do the pilot and to hire staff to set up a call center and to establish this system? Rob Gregg said yes and that he thinks we can build the pilot upon an existing system. Rob also stated that Miami-Dade should not be a candidate for this pilot because they do this already. Rob said there are

a couple areas in Florida that he thinks would be good pilot candidates but he did not specify which ones. An evaluation process would need to happen to allow a pilot if they go this route.

- Chair Palmer thought the amount of money here is not enough. She would like to hear from CTCs on the task force about funding. Edward Griffin responded by saying that staffing would involve one person for clearing house questions and that he would not be worried about funding to hire this person. He said funding would be needed to extract the information (travel information).

Recommendation #2 (Comprehensive Mobility Management Services Program): The focus of this recommendation is getting the mobility management approach out and emphasizing it. We need to push beyond coordinated agreements and be a coordinating connection service. This recommendation incubates mobility management, supports development of internal coordination of services for customer needs, promotes development of new service models and opportunities for transportation network companies (TNCs), and it offers an opportunity for APD to engage with potentially all CTCs.

- Chair Palmer wanted clarification on whether there would be two pilots? Rob said there would be a pilot for this recommendation and a separate pilot for Recommendation #1.

Recommendation #3 (Expand and Fund a Mobility Enhancement Grant Program): Involves continuation of an existing program. It would be administered by the Commission on Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) in collaboration with APD and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC). Rob recommended increasing the funding amount for this program.

Recommendation #4 (Technology Project Grant Program): This would provide dispatchers with adequate time to make better dispatching decisions than the current system permits, accommodates the transportation needs of passengers in a more timely manner, and improves on time performance. Rob said some of our coordinated services in Florida are not up to what they need to be with infrastructure and technology.

- Edward Griffin asked where are we looking to get the money from for funding? Rob said they are not looking at where but what the funding level would be. CUTR took a pilot type approach.

- Valerie Breen asked who funds the human capital and technology needed for this and who owns the personnel? Ross Silvers said we in Pinellas county applied for and got money to pay for his position.

Recommendation #5 (Redesign and Transition of the APD Transportation Business Model): Involves the need for APD to go through an internal process with some technical support if necessary to operate with more consistency and to get more data from the various regions. Rob also stated that many CTCs do not contract with APD for transportation services due to

funding limits. Rob's takeaway from the APD transportation system is that transportation is not a top choice and it has limited funds.

- Chair Palmer made a point that she thought way too much emphasis was being put on APD transportation services. She said APD does have some challenges. Chair Palmer stated APD serves about 11,000 people with transportation needs. In contrast, there are over 312,000 people with developmental disabilities in Florida. She wants everyone to understand this in not just about APD clients. This is about everyone in the state. There are a lot of people in Florida that are not on a waiver that need services. It is very important for us to keep this in mind when coming up with solutions. Chair Palmer also said she loves the idea of APD folding into a system that is already set up.

- Mary Smith asked a question about agreements and the different entities that have agreements in cost sharing. Rob Gregg stated the process with the CTC is basically an authorization for a trip. Mary's issue relates to individuals in her area spending on travel costs and personal care and not having enough available funds to spend on other services such as health care and meaningful day activities. She does not want the person penalized and having to pay more out of pocket. Mary said there should be some cost sharing and not all of this put on APD.

- Co-Chair Holmes said there are lots of federal, state and local funding in county budgets.

- Chair Palmer stated APD is a microscopic part of other programs out there. She wants people to have access whether they are an APD client or not. Co-Chair Holmes spoke about taking TD funds and subsidizing APD clients and providing more trips. But the state also realizes other folks need transportation and how do we balance this funding wise. Chair Palmer said this is why we are here now with this task force and that a pilot might address this.

Recommendation #6 (Establishment of IDD Transportation Sensitivity Training Program): This could be designed for transportation customers with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The sensitivity element targets transportation personnel to understand, communicate, and provide customer care. The training would involve both providers and customers. It is important to create an awareness for drivers and provider staff to better understand the transportation experiences of riders with disabilities.

Recommendation #7 (Establish a Florida Mobility Management Technical Assistance Resource Program): Involves providing technical assistance and a professional development network of mobility managers. It supports education and awareness of techniques, strategies and best practices of mobility management. It could promote local and regional coordination. CUTR is familiar with some federally funded grant programs that allow for mobility management. Rob, however, does not know how well these grant programs are coordinated across the state.

- Chair Palmer stated that in our first task force meeting, we heard from several people about problems individuals have with transportation (e.g., people being dropped off late and picked up late). Her question is how does this work now with a CTC? Is there an ombudsman in place? Rob Gregg said CTCs are required to have a complaints process for these issues.

- Robert Villar said his customers are not shy about complaining. He said the local coordinating board is also a good place to submit complaints. Robert stated that problems happen on both fixed routes and with door-to-door services. In most cases, complimentary services Miami-Dade provides are better than their fixed routes system.

- Ross Silvers said from a customer's perspective, a ride is a ride. It is not a TD or APD issue. The rider's complaint is my ride was late or left me stranded. When we get the complaints, we must ask questions to figure out what kind of trip it was. Part of the challenge is dealing with who the provider was and the type of trip provided. Ross said every vehicle, as required by the CTD, that provides TD trips must have a decal and the TD ombudsmen telephone number on it for the riders.

- Co-Chair Holmes said he had a complaint yesterday. Someone went to have a Thanksgiving meal but did not get to eat all of it and the cost of the meal was $100. But this situation involved a private provider not a TD system provider. Co-Chair Holmes stated transportation is really one person at a time and the riders take different trips all the time. Regarding complaints, getting to the root of them is key and looking for the details. Customer relations is how complaints usually get solved. You must have a customer service focus on every issue in order to solve the problem.

End of CUTR Presentation

<u>**TASK FORCE FEEDBACK**</u>

- Ross Silvers stated Recommendation #1 and #2 seem to overlap. Ross said TNCs and private transportation didn't seem to fit in Recommendation #1. He asked how many pilots would be in Recommendation #2 and would it involve one staff member per site? He thought a way to get more pilots was to encourage more people to apply for mobility management funds under the 5310 Grant program. He said we need to be specific and clear with our recommendations.

- Robert Villar said there needs to be more money made available for these recommendations and not just shuffling around of current funds.

- Chair Palmer said the legislature is expecting us to come with recommendations that will require additional funds being provided.

- Valerie Breen informed CUTR that they did an extraordinary job of translating transportation information from an incredibly complex system in a very short period of time. It expanded her knowledge of transportation significantly. She told the task force she would like to focus on a single point of entry and possibly looking at a combination of Recommendation #1 and #2. She wants to look at doing a pilot in an urban and rural area. She also wants to work out the details of Recommendation #6.

- Chair Palmer wants to be clear on what Valerie said. Chair Palmer stated APD's recommendation needs to be separate from Valerie's recommendations. Chair Palmer then asked Valerie if her motion was to combine Recommendation #1, #2 and #5. Valerie said yes and that she is also prepared to look at Recommendation #6.

- David Darm asked what would be the expectation of APD participating in a pilot if you combine Recommendation #1, #2 and #5? Chair Palmer said it seems to her that CTCs have the mechanisms to be the core delivery system. It is just a matter of APD working together with CTCs to figure out how we can change the other systems to fit.

- Chair Palmer stated the legislature wants us to take a deep dive, look at how APD delivers services, and look at how federal entities pay. If we do a request for proposal (RFP), the RFPs may come in very different about how to propose to solve the problems. Chair Palmer stated that we do not have to have the answers here. We just need to determine what the legislature wants us to put forward and put something in place that is well thought through.

- Ross Silvers suggests combining Recommendations #1 and #2 and keeping Recommendation #5 separate. Chair Palmer agreed.

- Rob Gregg said the intent of Recommendation #5 is for APD to review, assess and revise their transportation process. He talked about having a live project pilot with a CTC while APD concurrently is doing an internal redesign of their processes. Rob said APD needs to secure their interests first. He said more than 50% of the trips APD funds are done by group homes. Chair Palmer said an important reason why is that group homes result in lower costs than CTCs. She also said that group homes took this transportation service on themselves to do and the clients get dropped off on time and picked up on time. She thinks transportation services currently being provided by group homes/APD do a better service than CTCs because it is more customized. Chair Palmer said higher costs are why APD is not working with CTCs. Rob said before going to a CTC for a pilot, you need to know where and how APD trips are done.

- Valerie made a motion to combine elements of Recommendation #1, #2 and #5. David Darm seconded the motion. There was no task force vote yet on this motion. Robert Villar suggested keeping Recommendation #5 as a standalone. David Darm clarified that a pilot must done in partnership with APD. Chair Palmer agreed. She also said

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they need to be clear whether a pilot would be regional or not. David Darm said he understood it was intended to be regional. Robert Villar said regional does not work in all areas.

- Chair Palmer wanted everyone to look at the coordinated system map where CTCs are contracting with APD. She said we need to be very clear on what we want to do here and that a pilot would need to be in areas where CTCs and APD are and are not involved. Edward Griffin believes Recommendation #5 should be a standalone so we can get back together to reestablish a relationship between CTCs and APD. Chair Palmer said we are trying to get to a single point of contact. Co-Chair Holmes stated that single point of contacts can be done in large counties and can result in some good data. Co-Chair Holmes wants to pull Recommendation #5 out and that it would make it easier to do a pilot. David Darm said that Recommendation #1 and #2 seem to fit as a pilot. Valerie Breen wants to add Recommendation #6 back. Chair Palmer said lets table this until after lunch.

Lunch 11:50 A.M.- 1:00 P.M

TASK FORCE FEEDBACK (Continued)

- Chair Palmer informed the task force that we are going to table the first and only motion we discussed prior to lunch. It was a motion to combine elements of Recommendations #1, #2 and #5.

- David Darm wants to clarify two pieces within Recommendation #5. It needs to clarify that APD looks at the internal processes of analyzing its data, how it collects data, and looking at some of the components within the system for funding transportation. The second piece would be that APD and the CTC selected for the pilot to look at innovative strategies to partnering and sharing their resources. Chair Palmer wanted to state that Recommendation #5 was not for a pilot but for a consultant to come in and help with discussions about CTCs and bring consistencies statewide.

- Chair Palmer stated that APD does have different types of providers. These providers (group homes, etc.) must be included in any recommendation. There are 209 group home providers. When we start looking on how we blend this all together we want to include the group homes and other providers in the system.

- Chair Palmer would like to entertain a motion to accept Recommendation #5. Let us put some money into a consultant to streamline how APD works and how the consultant can come up with ways for APD to better partner with CTCs. Ross Silvers suggests removing the reference to a "third party" from this recommendation. Chair Palmer agreed to take this out. Ross also said we need a consultant to look at the overall

transportation processes at APD and how to better coordinate TD and APD transportation.

- Chair Palmer asked Ross Silvers to put in a motion for Recommendation #5. Ross made a motion to strike language about a third party to manage the system. He said keep the existing language in about a consultant coming in to look at the overall transportation management at APD and how to make it better. He also said that there should be a process in which CTD and APD leadership get together to have greater efficiency with transportation. David Darm seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the first motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

    o Chair Palmer hopes that the consultant hired would understand that CTCs are all different.

- Chair Palmer asked the group who wants to make another motion? Valerie Breen is now working on language for the next motion.

- Danielle McGill spoke about technology and having a safety component to it. She wants to make sure safety is a part of any recommendation. A lot of riders do not know how the system works. We need a transportation system that makes it easier for riders to understand. Chair Palmer said this can be part of Recommendations #6 and #7.

- Ross Silvers said oftentimes we want to jump at the latest technology. It is important to recognize that any technology that makes it easier for a rider to access trips and enhances the safety of the rider is good. Robert Villar said all this costs money. Chair Palmer stated she is hearing that under Recommendation #4 that more language be added about safety. Danielle makes a motion to put in a safety component in Recommendation #4. Robert Villar seconded the motion. Co-Chair Holmes opposed. This is the second motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- Valerie Breen made a motion to combine Recommendations #1, #2, #3 and #6. This would involve establishing a minimum of two pilots to develop a single point of contact for transportation disadvantaged and I/DD customers that includes mobility management services and sensitivity training services. David Darm seconded the motion. Co-Chair Holmes said this motion takes away the original legislative intent because it involves using the term enhanced program. The intent was not to use current TD funds to do anything with this recommendation. Valerie then added that FDDC is the place for sensitivity training. Chair Palmer said maybe we say that Recommendation #6 be done by FDDC. Valerie amended her original motion. The motion was then made to combine Recommendations #1 and #2 only and rewording the language to include a pilot in both a rural and urban area. Ross Silvers seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the third motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- David Darm made a motion to accept Recommendation #6 with language added to reflect that the FDDC will take the lead on developing the curriculum and with a focus on I/DD, seniors, and all other people with disabilities. Ross Silvers seconded the motion. None opposed (Valerie Breen abstained). This is the fourth motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- Chair Palmer wanted to discuss grants/grant programs regarding Recommendation #3. Rob Gregg said the intent of this recommendation is to continue the Mobility Enhancement Program and with recurring funding. Chair Palmer said this would be challenging in this current environment. Co-Chair Holmes also had a concern with funding. He said we have great partners out there and that he would hate to go to FDOT or the legislature and ask for money each year. Co-Chair Holmes suggested we may want to ask the legislature for $200,000 for two grants here. Chair Palmer asked about doing a pilot within the grants. Robert Villar is concerned that a pilot will work but there will not be enough money to continue it. Valerie Breen said we must have a mechanism to sustain any pilot study going forward. Co-Chair Holmes wondered if a rural CTC would want to do a pilot and buy more vehicles but then no more money is given in the future to sustain the services they would now be doing for the pilot?

- Rob Gregg suggested combining Recommendations #1, #2 and #3 into a new grant program. Chair Palmer asked who would administer this grant if this were to occur and would we do the pilots through grants? Valerie Breen is worried about conflicts of interest if the TD program was administering these potential grants. Co-Chair Holmes does not think you should have a pilot under some grant program because you want a pilot to go for a while. He says keep them separate with a separate funding source. David Darm said it sounds like we would totally rewrite Recommendation #3 and maybe limit it to the I/DD population. Robert Villar said maybe we should not limit it to I/DD and maybe open it up to the TD population.

- David Darm made a motion to scrap the current language in Recommendation #3 and create a whole new grant program focusing on new I/DD innovation. It would be administered by the CTD and an advisory committee would be set up to oversee the awarding of the grant funds. The advisory committee would consist of representatives from at least APD, FDDC and maybe CTD. There would be no pilots within this new grant program. The task force would seek an amount of $500,000 for this new Recommendation #3. Valerie Breen seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the fifth motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

Chair Palmer wanted to summarize where we are at now. The first thing we did was Recommendation #5. This involves streamlining and bringing consistency to APD as well as working on relationships with CTCs. The second thing we did was combine Recommendations #1 and #2 and having a minimum of two pilots with one being rural and the other urban. This includes designing a single point of contact that will help people maneuver through the transportation system and implementing mobility management. Rob Gregg wanted to discuss doing a request for proposal (RFP) and competing for the pilots versus assigning a grant to pilot

specific CTCs instead. Co-Chair Holmes said he would prefer to not go the RFP route and maybe put instructions in Proviso language on exactly how entities could compete for the pilots. Chair Palmer said this discussion is very important and that Proviso language could provide the criteria for accomplishing the pilots.

- Co-Chair Holmes made a motion to not accept Recommendation #7 because the National Center for Mobility Management already provides a variety of technical assistance. Edward Griffin seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the sixth motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- Chair Palmer said we are now back to Recommendation 4. Edward Griffin asked why are we looking in this study to address getting additional technology for providers? Rob Gregg said rural areas do not have the technology that urban areas have regarding transportation. Chair Palmer wants to consider moving technology into maybe Recommendation #3. Valerie Breen said an ongoing issue is having people being able to receive technical assistance when dealing with any technology. Co-Chair Holmes said he is not currently a fan of this recommendation because there is a wide range of grant programs funding new technologies and he was concerned this recommendation would be duplicative of those programs. Chair Palmer suggested that technology be included in the new Recommendation #3. Ross Silvers made a motion to merge the technology language from Recommendation #4 into the new Recommendation #3. Robert Villar seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the seventh motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- Robert Villar made a motion for a funding amount of $250,000 for Recommendation #5. Valerie Breen seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the eighth motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

- Edward Griffin made a motion for a funding amount of $150,000 for Recommendation #6. Mary Smith seconded the motion. None opposed. This is the ninth and last motion to carry pertaining to recommendations.

TASK FORCE PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Recommendation #5 (Redesign of the APD Transportation Business Model) – $250,000

(2) Combine Recommendation #1 (Regional Single Point Mobility Information Centers) and Recommendation #2 (Comprehensive Mobility Management Services Program) – 2 pilots at $500,000 each, total of $1 Million

(3) New Recommendation #3 (Establish an Innovative Service Development Discretionary Grant Program for Transportation for Persons with I/DD) – $500,000

(4) Recommendation #6 (Establish of IDD Transportation Sensitivity Training Program developed by the FDDC) – $150,000

Ross Silvers made a motion to approve the entire draft final report as amended today. Valerie Breen seconded the motion. None opposed.

Wrap-up:

Chair Palmer thanked CUTR and everyone else. She said people were open and honest and really contributed to this undertaking. She said the President of the Senate is very interested in the results of this study. Chair Palmer stated we did a good job and that the outcomes could be significant.

Public Comments:

None.

Next Steps:

1. CUTR to revise draft final report and submit it to APD by December 6, 2017.

2. APD will send CUTR's revised draft final report to task force members. Feedback from task force members is due by December 8, 2017.

3. Final report submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2017, at which time the task force shall terminate.

Adjournment time: 2:50 p.m.