

# CHEROKEE COUNTY TRANSIT

77 HARDIN STREET

MURPHY, NC 28906

PH: (828) 837-1789



## Transportation Advisory Board Meeting Agenda

Date: 06/30/2021

### Attendance:

### Ridership:

Deviated-Fixed Route-Downtown and Around averaging 20-30 trips a day; slight increase from the first three quarters (330-350 miles/day)

Demand Response = trips average 1,600/month

- Trips are lower than fy18 and 19, but are increasing compared to the last quarter of fy20 (post Covid)
- Service/hrs miles correlate accordingly to the number of trips

### Contracted services

- Current agencies that use our contracted services
  - Cherokee county DSS for Medicaid transportation
  - IOI
  - Appalachian Community Services

### Future plans

- We have recently revived our relationship with Vocational Rehab. After quite a few years of VR not using our services, we now have a new agreement with them for fy22 and we have already scheduled some trips.
- Also renewed an agreement with Valley View Nursing Home.
- Reach? Homeless shelter? Veterans groups?
- WIOA- (Tom Brownback is going to reach out to the adult and youth program leaders to see if transportation is something that they may need.)

Tab meeting format, dates, locations, requested information.

Attendees agreed that the everything was fine as it currently stands.

## **Grant updates:**

Fy21 NIMBLE- **immediate need grant from Nantahala health – we asked for this for a fence around the property we did not receive.** Due to receiving the last-minute information from them about needing a %50 match, or the funding to complete the project for which the grant was requested, and the fact that the reply was time sensitive with an extremely short window to reply, this was declined on our part. Maria stated that if there were grants available such as this in the future, it wouldn't hurt to bring it before the board just in case there was money that could be moved to cover the need.

NCDOT cares grant-

- POP now runs through end of fy22 (through 6/30/2022); that will help us this coming year

NCDHHS cares- given 18,274 for vaccine transportation we have expended \$1,400 so far.

-NCDOT has made a recommendation to the state to allow us to use the remainder of the funds for ROAP eligible trips (elderly disabled, employment, general public trips)

ROAP- dependent on NC state budget- in fy20 we received \$153,072 in grant revenue, for (fy21 we didn't receive any ROAP funds because of cares)

5311 Community Transportation Program (CTP) – admin

- Received fy22 agreement for the amount of \$172,930 (up 3,552 from fy21)

5310 seniors and individuals with disabilities- operating grant- still waiting on agreement from the state – we applied for \$88,436 (increase of \$13,436 from fy21).

We are not sure of the actual amount that may be approved. The 5310 grant does not give guidance on the amount since they utilize a set formula and we don't know the numerical details of the formula to be able to determine the amount that would be allocated.

## Capital grant-

- We are still trying to replace one of our raised roof vans- We decided to go with a mid-roof Ford 150 Transit. It is shorter and higher off the ground than the raised roof vehicles we have. It should be able to maneuver better in some of our rural locations. It can hold 1-2-wheel chairs and 1-5 ambulatory passengers depending on the number of wheel chairs. We requested quotes and have a dealer chosen. We're just waiting on wiring and camera installation estimates. – when this goes through we can sell our last raised roof e350.
- 2) also, we have received an agreement for \$29,724 to replace the cameras in our fleet. The current cameras in the vehicles are from 2013, so the technology has advanced greatly in this time span.

HCCBG – Home Community Care Block Grant- we are going to be transporting seniors and other passengers to the Med-assist event July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist. Visitors register ahead of time and can receive free OTC items.

## Medicaid managed care NEMT updates-

- 25 passengers that we know of have been assigned to managed care. Some of our passengers will still have Medicaid Direct which we will be working with our local DSS to transport
- The 25 passengers represent 18% of the Medicaid transportation passengers we served this year. The number of trips we provide to each passenger varies greatly, but based on averages, this represents about 16% of our Medicaid trips. Overall that is only 2% of our total trips.
- With the new managed care process, I am hoping this number will be enough for us to get our feet wet and work out the kinks with the transition before next year when more of the passengers move to managed care.
- We have one broker, Onecall, we are currently working with.
  - We have user access to their scheduling portal, but we have yet to have anything scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - There is a concern that the users of the Medicaid broker system may have difficulties in making their appointments through the new system. They were sent out letters and were given the options to choose from a couple of different providers but some are still calling

DSS or Transit for answers about this new Medicaid Transformation program.

Susan Prunier, the DSS Transportation Coordinator has been working with us and the people who are being impacted by the Medicaid Transformation into Managed Care. She has been extremely helpful to us as and the passengers as we try to prepare for the changes that will begin 7/1/21.

Unfortunately, we have had some users who have stated that they may self-pay since they can't get their appointments scheduled through the brokers. We have encouraged them to continue to contact their transportation broker.

We are very hopeful that once they start making their Medicaid appointments through the brokers, they will be more comfortable with the new way the state has chosen to enable us to provide Medicaid transportation services to them and that they will find it more useful and easier to make, cancel and/or change their appointments.

VTCLI veteran's grant/ HBSS software- helping with the technological aspects of transitioning to managed care.

We are optimistic that HBSS will be able to create the necessary program additions that will allow both information be downloaded from both Modivcare and Onecall programs.

We are also hopeful that an alert system will be added to Onecall so we will be notified of any updates or trips that need attention from us instead of having to check the website multiple times a day to avoid missing any trips that we may have the opportunity to perform.

The current Cherokee County Pay Plan is being updated and some of the positions in the county will have a higher job grade which also comes with an increase in the base salary. We are very please to see this change as any monetary increase for the positions does tend to help with morale as well as the recruitment of new operators.