



Minutes for the RCC Meeting MARCH 23, 2022.

The RCC Chairperson, Valerie Shaw, called the meeting to order at 9:04am. The meeting was held in person at the AAA9 offices in Cambridge, Ohio and available virtually. There were twenty-four in attendance, twenty-two in person and two on the Teams platform.

Madam Chairperson reviewed the zoom meeting code of conduct and the meeting agenda and welcomed members and guest speakers. Ms. Hill called the roll and acknowledged the virtual participants.

Madam Chairperson reviewed the minutes from the last RCC meeting on November 17, 2021. Minutes were sent to all members prior to the meeting for their review. There were no corrections or additions. Motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Tracy Haines; seconded by Shannon Hursey. Motion carried.

Madam Chairperson then introduced the first of two guest speakers. Carol Baker is the Advocacy and Educational Coordinator, the Foundation Fundraiser and Events Coordinator, and the Site Coordinator for Evidenced Based Programs with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) region nine.

AAA is a 501 (c)(3) serving the needs and providing opportunities for the senior population through 622 Area Agency on Aging offices around the country. The senior population over 85 years old is the fastest growing population segment in region nine, the OMEGA region, followed closely by those 60-85 years old. These populations are truly diverse in their needs and expectations of assistance. AAA9 serves seniors with a staff of approximately 150 persons and a budget of roughly \$53 Million. AAA9 is committed to be in service to elders providing choices and advocacy. PASSPORT, the Medicaid waiver program, helps seniors live independently and stay in their own homes as they age which is the preferred choice. It is the largest program in the agency. The Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program is now in every county of Region 9 and provides vouchers for seniors to shop at local approved farmer's markets for fresh and more healthy produce. Ms. Baker also shared the story of how AAA9 purchased and renovated the historic building in which they are currently housed. There was a question-and-answer period after the presentation and the presentation slides may be found on the OMEGA website.

The second guest speaker was then introduced. Thomas Hess is a Community Life Engagement Program Manager with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and covers the southeastern portion of Ohio. Mr. Hess spoke of the three types of transportation and made the case that transportation is THE link to how the developmentally disabled population interacts with their communities and whether that is successful and productive or not. The three types of transportation include: NMET- Non-Medical Transportation which includes transportation to employment, adult day care or workshop facilities, volunteer activities and transfer locations to access additional services. TRANSPORTATION which includes all medical trips to physical or mental health providers and programs. And SELF -DIRECTED SERVICES which is a new program slated to begin July 1, 2022. The Self-Directed Services Program would allow persons to schedule their own trips to integrated workspaces and to places like the YMCA, or a mall, where interaction and integration with the whole of the community may be enjoyed. It would also promote the use of services beyond the typical 8-3 M-F workshop/daycare schedule and include expanded weekday and weekend trips. The committee designing the new self-directed services program, called the blueprint committee, can be located at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org. Mr. Hess encouraged us to take advantage of the many resource tools available on that site. There was a period of open discussion and Q&A following the presentation. Presentation slides may be found on the OMEGA website.

Ms. Hill then presented the Steering Committee reports. There were four items brought for discussion.

The funding process for 5310/5311/5339 ODOT funding applications was discussed. Members were advised that funding applications will be released by ODOT on March 28, 2022, and they are due to ODOT by May 4, 2022. For 5310 applicants, a letter of support from OMEGA will be a requirement and the applicant must request this in writing from OMEGA. Additionally, ONLY the Regional Coordinated Plan should be referenced in the application. Shon Gress asked if the local county plans are not being used, then do counties still need to update them. The answer is that county level unmet needs, goals and strategies are still required by ODOT to be included in the annual Regional Coordinated Plan update, so they do still need to focus on these requirements for plan inclusion however other plan segments are no longer the responsibility of the county but are the responsibility of OMEGA, the regional coordinating agency. In addition, it is important that the county level unmet needs and goals are reflected in the regional plan so there is value in having yearly updated perspectives from the counties to ensure this. Finally, this program is still considered by ODOT to be a pilot program. Once the regionalization initiative is no longer a pilot, ODOT will release new guidelines defining local, county level responsibilities and accountabilities.

The Steering Committee is also actively engaged in assigning action steps to the strategies in the Regional Coordinated Plan. In 2021, three regional goals and seventeen strategies to accomplish those goals were developed by the Steering Committee and presented for approval by the RCC. The next stage in development for the anticipated regional plan revision that will take place in CY 2023 is to develop and assign action steps to each strategy. It is anticipated that this will be accomplished by the Steering Committee by June or July 2022. The entire Goals-Strategy-Action Steps section of the plan will be presented to the RCC for consideration and approval in the third quarter meeting.

The four regional special projects were very briefly discussed. These projects were funded with \$100,000 in ODOT special funding awarded to OMEGA. All four projects were successfully completed in 2021 and detailed reports on each are located on the OMEGA website for review. The four special project reports were also sent to ODOT. The four special projects included: Employment Transportation Feasibility Study, One Call/ One Click Strategic Planning Study, Region 9 Resource Guide Project, and Media Outreach Project. Both flyers and magnets for the Region 9 Resource Guide were available to all meeting participants and Nicki Silver gave a brief update saying in the last 30 days there have been 138 views to the website with 62% of those being return visitors and 38% new viewers. She also said that they will be adding to the resources available in the Guide this year with the intention to add food pantries and homeless shelter information as well as update current information.

The most recent update to the Regional Coordinated Plan was also presented. The 2021 yearly annual update is located in Appendix Q of the Regional Coordinated Plan. It is also located on the OMEGA website for review. Our regional plan is a four-year plan with the current original plan covering 2019-2023. Plan review guidance from ODOT has been delayed. Therefore, ODOT has granted a one-year extension of the current plan. For CY 2022 and CY 2023, Region 9 will be required to submit only a yearly update to the Coordinated Plan. However, during CY 2023 the Regional Coordinated Plan will have to undergo a comprehensive revision which will be submitted to ODOT in December of 2023. This “new” plan will cover 2024-2027 in its scope.

The calendar for the rest of 2022 was then addressed. In 2021, members voted to have the quarterly RCC meetings “travel” to different sections of the region in order to highlight local services and local attractions in general. It was further decided that a lunch option would be included immediately following the meetings for additional peer discussions. The first RCC meeting was requested to be held in Cambridge with lunch afterward at Theo’s. The second quarter meeting will be hosted by Senior Services of Belmont County with lunch at Mellman’s. Volunteers were asked to host the remaining two meetings. The September meeting will be hosted by Coshocton County Coordinated Transportation Agency and the final meeting in November hosted by Tuscarawas Senior Center.

Another change in format is the addition of value-added guest speakers. There was discussion for potential topics for the meetings and it was decided that June will focus on all things EV (Electric Vehicles). The September meeting will feature Medicare and Medicaid issues and November will include Veteran’s Services and the United Way. Also suggested was the inclusion of a brief period of time each meeting where members could spotlight their programs and services. This “local spotlight” feature will be added to agendas going forward. Shon Gress suggested the possibility of OMEGA hosting a webinar for those interested in the Region about “How to apply for approval to offer DoDD transportation” in conjunction with Tom Hess who willingly agreed. It was discovered that only two transits in Region 9 are currently approved for DoDD transportation contracts, CCCTA and SEAT.

This concluded the Steering Committee reports.

Madam Chairperson called for the “Good of the Region” Announcements which included:

* A reminder again of the ODOT application release date (March 28) and the application deadline (May 4). OMEGA is available to offer any assistance needed.

- * All counties in the OMEGA region were also included in projects that have been federally funded for broadband expansion projects.
- * Jill Cunningham, Mobility Manger for Tuscarawas, Carroll, and Harrison was awarded a \$10, 000 grant from the United Way. The funds will help pay for transportation for those who fall through the cracks (Do not meet the requirements) of other funding sources but need financial assistance with vital transportation needs and a three-week financial assistance for employment transportation to new employment program.
- * Nicki Silver, Mobility Manager for Muskingum, and Guernsey was awarded a \$5000 grant from United Way to also assist the many who fall through the cracks of other funding sources and still need financial assistant for vital transportation.
- * Tracy Haines and Valerie Shaw announced they are looking into creating a volunteer personal assistance program for those needing medical procedures which require an attendant but who do not have access to anyone who can ride with them. This is in early stages of development, but they are hoping to have a program working as a trial by fourth quarter and suggest that this might expand to be an excellent regional pilot program. Any interested parties were urged to contact CCCTA and attend initial discussion meetings.
- * Invitation was made to everyone to join us at Theo's after the meeting.

There were no further announcements. Motion to adjourn was made by Jill Cunningham, with a second by Nicki Silver, and Madam Chairperson called the meeting adjourned at 10:56 am.