



Minutes for the RCC Meeting September 21, 2022.

The RCC Chairperson, Valerie Shaw, called the meeting to order at 9:06am. The meeting was held in person at the COTC Community Room, Roscoe Village, Coshocton, Ohio. The meeting was in person and no virtual option was offered. There were twenty persons in attendance.

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

Madam Chairperson reviewed the minutes from the last RCC meeting on June 15, 2022. 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 Jill Cunningham; seconded by Mike McBride. Motion carried.

Tracy Haines and Valerie Shaw provided our “Local Spotlight” segment highlighting both Coshocton County and the services provided by CCCTA.

Tracy Haines provided an overview of activities in Coshocton County. Roscoe Village is a canal-era town from the mid 1800’s. It hosts the Canal Days festival, the Apple Butter Festival, and the Christmas Candlelight Celebrations. Visitors can stroll through the cobblestone streets, or take a horse drawn canal boat ride which travels a restored section of the Ohio and Erie Canal. Coshocton and the surrounding area also boast nearly a dozen wineries. The Sunflower Festival and “Wine your Way Through” corn maze event are located at the KOA Campground.

Valerie Shaw, Transit Director, provided an overview of CCCTA: CCCTA stands for Coshocton County Coordinated Transportation Agency, which began in 2001 and celebrated their 20th anniversary last year in 2021.

When Valerie took over in January 2019, CCCTA was operating as a 5310-section program but quickly became aware of two large barriers to growth: no one knew who or what CCCTA was, or even that they existed in the county.

The other barrier that needed immediately addressed was the fare structure. In 2019 CCCTA was charging people \$1.99 per mile when they did not qualify for low-income and/or elderly fares. If someone called and wanted to go to say, Zanesville, and they were not funded through Medicaid or a AAA grant, the costs were approximately \$65 one way. No one could afford that. A few months into Val's first year, she decided to apply for the 5311 Public Transit Program. To her surprise, CCCTA was awarded 5311 funding and transportation services became available to everyone, with reasonable fare charges.

CCCTA also made significant effort and investment in advertising the transit services to include weekly advertisements in the local Beacon, on the local radio stations, and billboards. Val and Tracy also attended many speaking engagements, and expos taking all opportunity to introduce and promote the public transit services. In 2022, CCCTA was able to offer free fares for in-county transit trips. They have enjoyed continuously increasing ridership numbers.

When Valerie started in 2019, there were about 10 part-time drivers and no full-time drivers. With the help of 5311 operating assistance, they are currently in the process of hiring their 5th full-time driver and our 6th part-time driver. The budget has more than doubled. CCCTA operates 12 vehicles- a current fleet of 9, plus a leased van through the Local VA and two independent drivers. From the vehicles that have been awarded through OTP2 and 5339 grants from 2021-2023, CCCTA is waiting for delivery of 12 new shuttles.

The CCCTA motto has become "the answer is never no. It's let's see what we can do". And everyone at CCCTA truly stands by that. Valerie also credits success to locally developed partnerships and relationships that have been fostered with the local DJFS, Veterans, Port Authority, CCCTA administration, county Commissioners, City Council and the Mayor, Sheriff's office, OMEGA, ODOT, and other regional partnerships. CCCTA success and growth has become a community affair supported by an amazing mobility manager in Tracy Haines, caring staff and drivers and terrific passengers. Valerie shares: "I really feel that our community makes things happen because we all work together to do it. "

Next, Chuck Dyer, ODOT Office of Transit, provided an overview of the Mobility Ohio Pilot for Coshocton, Guernsey, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties. He reassured that ODOT would ensure that match through contracting opportunities will be maintained in the pilot program. They are still working on the structure and requirements for the Mobility Ohio Pilot. In November we will have meetings within the region and Macie will continue to participate in RCC/Steering Committee meetings. Technology will be a critical factor and the software RFP is currently under review before publishing to the public.

The Steering Committee report was given by Deborah Hill, OMEGA Regional Transit Planner. Regional goals, strategies, and action steps have been completed. In anticipation of the Regional Coordinated Plan Revision which will take place next year, the next agenda items will include review/revision of the SWOT analysis, Origin-Destination mapping, and analysis of the survey for unmet needs data results.

The meeting topic was next introduced. The topic brought focus to “Barriers Before the Bus Doors Open and Barriers After the Bus Doors Close”. Ms. Hill began the topic exploration by providing an exercise in barriers created by language – either because of different home languages or because of illiteracy issues. She reviewed a diverse list of disabilities that affect how and why transportation is sought and delivered and how barriers must be in the forefront of all aspects of transportation. Deb also provided an exercise to demonstrate how people may feel unequipped or unable to navigate life’s challenges and transportation needs.

Misty Smith, AAA9, then provided an age sensitivity experience to help us better understand issues faced by the aging and senior population. Depth perception issues, sight impairment and hearing loss, dexterity challenges, memory loss issues, and illness were all “experienced” and points made how each related to transportation needs and limitations; AAA9 will provide this sensitivity training for drivers, businesses, etc. upon request at no charge. The slide presentation may be found on the OMEGA website.

Kayleen Carpenter, Rose Community Management, manages Riverside Towers in Coshocton which is a housing facility for seniors and those with disabilities. She also lives with Cerebral Palsy. She provided a “Fireside Chat” of the reality of what it is like to be disabled through all aspects of life from childhood throughout adulthood. She also offered valuable insight on transportation issues.

Kayleen passionately and authentically shared how transportation brings back dignity and independence to individuals with disabilities. She also highlighted the need to bring a companion rider for transportation as support, which has also been identified as a regional unmet need through the regional surveys. She mentioned how solving barrier issues for one disability can inadvertently become a barrier to another segment of the disabled population. For example, raised curb ramp “bumps” are helpful for those with vision impairment but are also, inadvertently, very difficult for persons who have depth perception issues. She suggested the benefits that might be gained if providers would plan routes based upon disability and mobility issues. She also mentioned that though the vast majority of transportation drivers were excellent and caring, still the need for sensitivity education for drivers on different types of disabilities is needed.

Lastly, Kayleen spoke about the recent outing that 30 of her residents were able to take to the canal boat rides in Coshocton solely because of CCCTA and the free fares within the county. A trip had not been taken in 12 years and she was able to truly make the RCC members feel how life changing and impactful transportation is and what a high impact the efforts of providers have on the lives of those people they serve through transportation.

In discussion with the group, and from the other presentations, it was clear that there are social returns on investment that need to be highlighted and considered in transportation in addition to the data driven results we currently track. These social returns on investment need to be included in our regional metrics and specifically added to the Regional Coordinated Plan.

The calendar for the rest of 2022 was then addressed. The fourth quarter November meeting will be hosted by the Tuscarawas Senior Center, Dover, Ohio with lunch afterward at the Senior Center. The meeting topic will be "Veteran's Services and the United Way".

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

- * Nicki Silver, Mobility Manager for Muskingum and Guernsey counties, received a \$1500 grant from United Way for gas cards for those who need transportation but fall thru the cracks of other funding sources. She is also updating the Region 9 Resource Guide to include food pantries and homeless shelters.

- * Senior Services of Belmont County (SSOBC) is expanding their home delivered meals program to include an 11th route – they serve over 1,200 meals a day to seniors. They are also purchasing a generator so they will be able to serve as a warming center in the winter and for emergency use.

- * Tracy Haines, Mobility Manager for Coshocton County, was awarded \$2,500 from United Way for NEMT for people who are not eligible under other funding programs. They also received a Coshocton Foundation grant for more than \$70,000 for match funds for the multiuse path project on CR 621. A TAP grant of over \$800,000 was awarded to complete the multi-use path project.

- * Invitation was made for everyone to join us at the Steak and Stein Restaurant in Roscoe Village after the meeting.

There were no further announcements. Motion to adjourn was made by Kevin Davis, with a second by Sheri Wetzel, and Madam Chairperson called the meeting adjourned at 10:49am.