

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED**

Martin County Administration Building
4th Floor Workshop Room
2401 SE Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34996
(772) 419-4081

www.martinmpo.com

Monday, June 6, 2011 @ 10:00 A.M.

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Michael Mortell called the meeting to Order at 10:08 A.M.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Michael Mortell, Chairman
Werner Bols, Vice Chairman
Suzanne Desposati
John Haddox
Krista McGovern
Dalia Dillon (arrived 10:18 A.M.)
Phyl Weaver
Angela Van Etten
Jayne Pietrowski, FDOT

EXCUSED

Cindy Barnes
Jody Ianuzzi

ABSENT

Melissa McInturff

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator
Claudette Mahan, Associate Planner
Michael Malham, Planner I
Margaret H. Brassard, Administrative Assistant II

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Ed Fielding (arrived at 10:10 a.m. left at 11:28)
Joe Capra, Captec
Lisa Sanders, MTM
Kenneth Skaggs
Diane Moore, Martin County/finance department.

A quorum was present for this meeting.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Phyl Weaver. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Haddox. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2011, meeting was made by Mr. John Haddox. The motion was seconded by Ms. Phyl Weaver. Ms. Van Etten complemented the thorough minutes, there was no additional discussion. The motion passed unanimously

The Chairman noted that Mr. Skaggs, a person from the public, had completed a *Request to Speak Form*. Mr. Skaggs was asked if he would like to speak at this time prior to the beginning of the agenda items. Mr. Skaggs advised that at this time, he did not choose to speak, but he would like to sit through the meeting, learn what was going to happen to the transportation disadvantaged service, and would advise if he wished to address the committee later in the meeting.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

A. FY2011 TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED SERVICE PLAN (TDSP) MINOR UPDATE MEMO: temp11LCBTDA07.01

The Chairman refreshed the committee regarding the trip priorities and not having more than fifty percent (50%) recurring medical trips. The Local Coordinating Board asked that this matter be taken to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board for public attention and input. The MPO Board as a whole didn't make a change or recommendation regarding this issue. The Local Coordinating Board has the legal authority to approve the trip priorities in the TDSP as they deem necessary.

Ms. Beth Beltran stated that the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) is reviewed annually by staff. The ride prioritization is the only significant change.

Ms. Lisa Sanders, from Medical Transportation Management, Inc. (MTM) discussed the changes in detail. She noted that MTM was required to provide improvement dates for capital service improvement. She stated that for FY 2010-11 they listed replacement of vehicles, bus shelters, and other bus stop amenities, expansion of fleet, weekend and employment shuttles, expanded evening services, marketing, and automated fare collection. Two new vehicles have joined the fleet and are in operation. Due to the New Freedom Grant, night and weekend service was provided and some Saturday service is still provided in Indiantown. MTM has had new brochures created for their marketing of the routes, a website, and new schedules. They've joined the Chamber of Commerce, periodically place ads in the newspapers, newsletters and participate in various safety programs offered, to list a few of their methods of publicizing their services.

Ms. Sanders stated that riders using funds from the TD or Medicaid Programs will be calling MTM and riders using the public transportation will need to contact Community Coach. Ms. Sanders stated that the majority of MTM's services are medical. Ms. Krista McGovern stated that she was told by MTM that she would have to call Community Coach in order to get a ride to the LCB meeting, and when she did, it was full. Had she known that she would have to ride on Coach she would have called sooner. Mr. Mortell stated that currently, with the dialysis rides consuming almost all of the trips and funding, it's like a fixed route only individualized, as the same people and locations are serviced. What causes the paratransit complications, is trying to

merge other types of trips, adding people and having changes every month. The LCB Board needs to make a policy decision. The last decision discussed by this Board, was the cap of 50% of recurring medical trips. Had this policy been in affect at the time Ms. McGovern called, she would have been able to get a ride, because there would have been 50% left for other types of riders, and the remainder of the dialysis people would have to seek alternative transportation. Ms. McGovern stated that Coach was able to get her to the meeting, but they had to finagle things in order to accomplish it. Ms. Sanders stated that Ms. McGovern should contact her directly in order to receive a paratransit ride to get to the meetings in the future.

Ms. Sanders stated that MTM has expanded their operational services. She stated that this is where the prioritization comes into the equation. The medical trips were to only receive 50% of the monthly allocation used for recurring or subscription trips. Other medical, employment, education, groceries/nutrition, social services, agency trips, and other social or life sustaining trips would be available for the balance of the trips. Ms. Sanders inquired if the Board wished to keep this prioritization or if they wished to change it at this time. Ms. Phyl Weaver asked if the dialysis center has done anything to alleviate any of these issues. Mr. Mortell asked how the cost would change if MTM loaded their bus with people to go to the dialysis center, on the same day, it's still the same number of people, and MTM charges per person. Ms. Sanders stated that she's working with the CTD staff on establishing a group rate for providers. The Kidney Center has said that they would change their schedule to work with MTM. Currently, the funds would not change, until a group rate is implemented. Ms. Van Etten also noted that people should not have to be on the bus longer than an hour. Ms. Sanders stated that the MPO put together a map showing where each dialysis patient lived and if they were along a fixed route. There were approximately three people who resided in Hobe Sound who utilized the MTM services for dialysis. MTM is trying to group them to get the same chair time, and have a provider pick them up as they are in the same area, and take them to the same location and instead of paying individually, they would be charged a group rate. The CTD staff is sharing contracts with Ms. Sanders so she can negotiate a fair rate with the providers. Ms. Sanders is also looking at group rates with cab companies. Ms. Suzanne Desposati stated that dialysis people should not be denied trips right now they should receive at least a two months notice. Mr. Mortell stated that they had been given notice. It was noted that this decision was made at the last Board meeting which was April 4, 2011, to be effective in July, so there was ample notice. For the past few years, the dialysis people were receiving rides and only 20% of non-dialysis people were receiving rides. Mr. Mortell stated that when this is implemented it needs to be established that if there is a parent, a spouse, or someone living in the house, who can transport this dialysis person, then this causes the person to fall off the priority list. Ms. Van Etten stated that it comes back to eligibility criteria. It's an attempt to change the eligibility but she feels that it needs to be addressed in the plan. Mr. Mortell stated that based on the presentations the Board has had, that the funds being provided only provides for about 50% of the people who desire trips. Mr. Mortell stated that the person who needs the service should be the first to receive it, then move back. A person who has no other means of transportation, doesn't live near a fixed route, and can't meet any of the criteria, should be prioritize as number one. If the person has someone who takes them to the store and other places on a regular basis, they should not be prioritized as needing a ride as much as someone who has no one. The largest obstacle to this is that not all people are honest, who will enforce this, and what happens when the person is caught in a lie. This will need to be considered when this decision is made. Ms. Sanders stated that they have already suspended people for a month from transportation if they missed their appointments three times. This is a guideline that came to MTM by the TDSP.

Ms. Jayne Pietrowski, with FDOT, advised that some other Boards have what is termed a “critical medical category”, and the TD working group is working to expand the number of TD rides which will be available in the near future. She requested that a decision not be made until the Board has heard what the TD working group and what the CTC is proposing which is later in the agenda. Ms. Beltran stated that this Board has already voted to change the prioritization at the April meeting and this information is included in the TDSP. Ms. Sanders and Ms. Beltran have discussed this, and they have determined that the Kidney Center was not willing to make any changes or work with the CTC with the suggestions that were offered because they were being accommodated. For the first time, at the MPO meeting, the Director of Operations from the dialysis center was specifically asked if his facility would be willing to arrange chair times in an effort to work with MTM in scheduling multi-load rides of the patients. Other counties have been contacted to discuss methods they have used, and they have advised that sometimes the transportation companies have to be firm and state, “this is what we have available, how can you amend your schedules so that we can help you transport patients.” The facilities need to make changes in their schedules in order to work with the transportation available. In Broward County, it was learned that some patients only received a TD ride home from some of the dialysis centers, the patients were required to find their own way to the center. This priority list is a reflection of what was voted on at the April meeting. The work that the TD group has done has made the dialysis center take note, so it’s been successful. Ms. Pietrowski requested to delay implementation of the prioritization until the Board hears the things going on to increase the number of rides. It’s not a motion, it’s a comment that is being made in the middle of a report. She wishes to come back to this. Ms. Sanders continued stating that Acadiana is no longer a provider, but she is trying to get them to return into the network. They were canceled due to the lack of insurance. Other providers are Mercy Non-medical, a new provider out of Broward County, Ride-Rite and We Care. We Care does not provide any trips for children and they only do Medicaid and TD for over age 18. Mercy and Ride-Rite will do all trips and will not deny due to age. Ms. Sanders advised that MTM has 37 vehicles in operation. She advised of the new rates which were discussed at the last meeting with the CTD staff. The ambulatory is now \$16.82 and wheelchairs are \$28.84 per trip. The fixed routes are free, the paratransit service is \$1.50, while TD and Medicaid trips remain at \$1.00. Ms. McGovern asked why the ambulatory and wheelchair amounts differ. Ms. Sanders advised that in order to transport wheelchairs it has to be a specifically equipped vehicle and it takes more time to load and unload. Ms. Sanders advised the Board of the certifications, MTM’s ride guides, vehicle inventory, safety program certification, grievance procedures, and rate structure.

Ms. Sanders requested approval of the TDSP which was reviewed. However, Ms. Beltran requests that the motion not be made until the issue which was brought up by Ms. Pietrowski regarding the implementation of the prioritization of the trips be reviewed. Mr. Mortell stated that the document itself is policy driven. Approval of the TDSP will adopt the 50% cap. Ms. Van Etten requested that the committee return to this request after the agenda portion provided by the working group. Mr. Mortell stated if the committee does not come back to this matter, that would mean that the 50% cap would be implemented.

Mr. Warner Bols made a motion to approve the plan which includes the 50% cap on medical rides. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krista McGovern. There were no additional comments regarding the motion. The vote was taken and passed with one opposition. Jayne Pietrowski opposed the motion.

B. COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) EVALUATION

MEMO: temp11LCBTDa07.02

Ms. Beltran advised that this is a required, annual, labor intensive evaluation of the CTC. Certificates of Appreciation were issued to the following volunteers for this event: Ms. Krista McGovern, Ms. Angela Van Etten, Ms. Phyl Weaver, and Ms. Jody Ianuzzi. Ms. McGovern presented the activities involved in the evaluation and the results. Each volunteer contacted approximately 20-40 riders to solicit remarks regarding ridership and/or denial of rides. Ms. McGovern reviewed the rating results with the committee. The ratings concerned the type of uses for the TD rides, medical, life sustaining, time constraints and other. Ms. McGovern suggested for the next survey, that "other" not be used as people chose "other" but did not indicate the actual reason. It should be a response which would require the rider to indicate the issue at hand. All the riders praised the drivers. Ms. Van Etten claimed that the list of riders were not only TD, as there were also New Freedom riders which were surveyed. These riders were able to receive rides to the grocery stores, work and other non-medical trips. The list included riders that were not TD riders, but it wasn't broken out that way on the survey. It was broken out for the volunteers who performed the interviews for the survey, who they were riding with, and the funding source. The rider survey was overall for all rides that MTM was coordinating, not just TD money. Ms. Van Etten stated that the number of people provided to them by MTM was not a large enough sample. She stated that she had to call 80 plus people in order to get 28 surveys. There also were not enough TD people included in the survey. She was happy with the positive results of the survey but she recommends in the future that the survey be directed to the TD and Medicaid riders only. Ms. McGovern stated that of all the messages which she left, only the Hispanic households returned her calls, she found that interesting and she was glad that she spoke Spanish so she was able to conduct the interviews. She also received telephone numbers for four people who were in nursing homes, some of who were not cognitive. Ms. Van Etten recommended that people residing in nursing homes should not be included in the survey at all, as they cannot complete the first few questions rendering their surveys incomplete. Ms. Sanders stated that approximately 30% of the riders are from nursing homes. Mr. Mortell stated that they should still be included in the survey as that is a lot of riders.

Ms. Phyl Weaver and Ms. Claudette Mahan performed their interviews on the buses. Ms. Weaver stated that one lady interviewed, who was going to the hospital, said that she had a car, a driver's license and that she just didn't really care to drive, however, she has driven to Miami. The rider also advised that she didn't want to take the fixed routes because she would have to stand in the sun and wait for the bus. One man, who was going to a doctor, normally rode his bicycle, but once in a while rode the bus. A third person interviewed was in a wheelchair. His wife answered the door when the bus arrived. It was observed that there were two white station wagons in the driveway. He told Ms. Weaver all the different places he goes with his wife and his relatives. Ms. Weaver was amazed that there are people who are ill and being denied rides and then there are people like these on the bus. Mr. Mortell reminded the committee, that these people may still meet the criteria. Ms. Sanders stated that upon receipt of this information on these riders, she reviewed their charts. On paper, the man she reviewed did meet the criteria of TD, he has a letter signed by his physician, and MTM has a copy of his Social Security check. You would not know that he has other transportation options, unless you go to his home. Mr. Mortell stated that if the priority goes from the neediest to the least needy, when do you prioritize it? If all the TD rides are consumed within the first 5 days of the month, and on day 6 someone who is more needy than anyone already on the list, calls in to get a ride, they would be denied. Someone needing a ride in week two may be more needy than someone who received a ride in week one, but will not receive it, because all the trips are scheduled in week one. The priority list would need to be in place before the rides are all issued. Prioritization will be

difficult as the most needy person may not call until week three or four, so the decision to prioritize must be as arbitrary as only 50% of the rides may be consumed by medical. Ms. Sanders stated that all the people who claim to be transportation disadvantaged all sign that they qualify for TD. Ms. Beltran stated that there are recommendations as a result of the CTC Evaluation, which could be implemented in addressing the criteria. One of them is checking on people to confirm if they do have other options of transportation. Mr. Malham stated that some of the recommendations should be the LCB Board's responsibility, not MTM's. Mr. Malham stated that the beneficiary eligibility needs to be amended. Martin can amend their eligibility rules. One of the recommendations was to include in Martin County's beneficiary eligibility under A.1. "and do not have access to other means of transportation." Ms. Van Etten read from the TDSP and advised that the comment is already stated in the TDSP. Ms. Van Etten also stated that this is an inappropriate time to be making a recommendation. This is supposed to be a review of the CTC's past performance which has nothing to do with making changes at this time. Ms. Beltran stated that the recommendation is in preparation to move forward in a more effective manner. Ms. Van Etten stated that we do need to move forward and she understands regarding the recommendation, but the Board can't make a recommendation that is for something that the Board hasn't even done yet, which is change the criteria for TD rides. She stated that the Board can't put that on MTM, when the Board hasn't done its work of changing the criteria.

Ms. Van Etten made a motion to amend the section of the CTC Evaluation, A.1. Rider/Beneficiary Eligibility that reads "*unable to purchase transportation and do not have access to other means of transportation*" to match the language in the TDSP, which would state, "*unable to purchase transportation and have no other form of transportation available.*" Mr. John Haddox seconded the motion. There was no additional comments on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. John Haddox made a motion that the Board approve the evaluation report with staff recommendations, and as part of the motion, he requests that MTM and staff prepare for presentation at the next meeting, ways to amend the intake form to strengthen the verbiage of the eligibility requirements, and what improvements MTM and staff can make in order to assist the Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krista McGovern.

Ms. Sanders stated that the eligibility form was approved by this Board June 7, 2010, and she doesn't feel it's the form, it is that people are not always honest. Mr. Haddox stated that he would like information of how MTM and the staff can make amendments to the requirements to circumvent people getting around the rules with dishonesty.

Mr. Malham and Ms. Van Etten noted the "B-1 Public Transit Ridership Percentage Goal" needed to be amended to state that "...the LCB can develop a percentage goal..." this would also be reflected in the TDSP standards A.3, A.4, A.5.

Mr. Malham stated that the LCB and MTM will work together to review the A.1 Rider/Beneficiary Eligibility in order to insure proper screening. MTM will continue to work with transit providers to streamline the invoicing and payment options. Ms. Van Etten stated that she had spoken to staff from We Care. They were working with Ms. Sanders and they were pleased, but they did want to try improving the invoicing and payments system. Ms. Van Etten indicated that the signed manifests have been misplaced at MTM's St. Louis office which has delayed payment to the providers. MTM has indicated that they will be more diligent in keeping track of the manifests.

The motion on the floor made by Mr. Haddox and seconded by Ms. McGovern, was reviewed, and amended to include the changes to A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, and B-1. The vote was called with no objection. The matter passed unanimously.

**C. UPDATE-COORDINATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN COA AND MTM –
FTA NEW FREEDOM GRANT PROJECT**

MEMO: temp11LCBTDa07.03

Ms. Sanders has been in contact with Ms. Kaufman from Counsel on Aging (COA) and it was learned that the COA has some internal policies which do not allow MTM to have access to their background checks, which is a part of the coordination agreement. COA has worked with MTM and provided a letter resolving the remaining three issues, hopefully a coordination agreement will be forthcoming soon. Ms. Beltran reminded Ms. Sanders that the MPO Board Agendas go out next week for the June 20, 2011 meeting and if this issue is not going to need to be on the agenda, for the MPO Board's input, (as requested at the April LCB meeting) she will need to know soon.

D. TD WORKING GROUP UPDATE

MEMO: temp11LCBTDa07.04

Ms. Sanders stated that the TD Working Group has met a few times since the last meeting. MTM is working with the CTD to establish a group rate. She's also working with the CTD regarding eliminating nursing home transportation for TD members. The CTD advised that frequently nursing homes are provided funding for their residents' transportation. The CTD indicated that the TD funding should not be used for those services. This does not take in account the Medicaid only TD residents. Ms. Sanders stated that not all of the nursing homes can provide transportation for their residents in wheelchairs as they do not have an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) plan. MTM will still provide transportation for residents in wheelchairs, provided that the LCB Board gives permission. Mr. Bols asked if there was a clear definition of a "nursing home". It was noted that not all persons in assisted living facilities have funds to pay for transportation as some are sponsored with state vouchers. Ms. Sanders stated that some nursing homes have contracts with other providers to provide transportation for their Medicare and private pay residents.

Ms. Sanders also mentioned that MTM has looked into a voucher program. She's contacted five cab companies and three have expressed interest in the program. MTM submitted their information to FDOT and learned that the 40% of their trips are only four to five miles. She discussed with the cab companies what they would charge for these trips. One company offered a flat rate of \$15.00, another \$2.00 pick up fee with a \$2.00 per mile (minimum \$10.) and the third company offered \$3.20 pick up fee with a \$2.50 per mile charge with no minimum. This information shows that a voucher program would be viable in this area. The volunteer program was checked into. Ms. Valerie Anderson of the American Cancer Society, advised that there are 71 volunteers in this area and she would be willing to assist MTM with providing transportation, it is unknown what type of transportation or how many trips they would provide, but MTM will be working with FDOT and the Center for Urban Transportation and Research (CUTR) on this matter. Ms. Jayne Pietrowski advised that the DOT has a statewide contract with CUTR for research and technical assistance. Ms. Pietrowski and Ms. Sanders are working on developing a scope to have CUTR provide technical assistance to help develop and organize the alternatives listed, and to see what would be entailed in implementing the programs should the Board

approve of the methods used to expand the number of TD rides in Martin County. Ms. Pietrowski stated that the consultant that they are using has helped Polk County implement their volunteer program last year and his work on the volunteer program was presented at the TD Training conference recently. It was noted that the State does pay the contract. All different methods are in use in the different areas. Mr. Bols asked if the DOT has relaxed the drug testing requirement. Ms. Pietrowski stated that in Polk County, they did not. Using the taxi vouchers, the liability is assumed by the entity managing the program, the taxi companies have agreed to participate at the level that other carriers are required to do in terms of insurance, and this would be the same for the volunteers. The consultant is skilled with this knowledge so they will direct us as to how Martin County should proceed. It was noted that Indian River has had a volunteer driver program for 20 years. Ms. Sanders stated that she and Ms. Pietrowski will keep the Board advised. They hope to have the consultant provide a presentation at the next meeting. Ms. Sanders stated that she and Teresa Lane, with the South Florida Commuter Services, met with the Treasure Coast Kidney Center regarding the car pool program. They handed out surveys to the staff, however they have not received any responses to date. The TD working group will follow up with letters by mail in an effort to get responses for the carpool program. They will offer an update at the next meeting.

The dialysis wait list has been implemented so there will not be any new patients added to the list. They are working with the nursing homes and those nursing homes that have transportation are providing some rides. Between having the nursing homes provide some transportation and establishing the wait list they have reduced 148 trips.

**E. COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC)
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
MEMO: temp\1LCBTDa07.05**

Ms. Sanders gave an overall summary regarding what MTM does. She stated that they provide outreach, attend meetings, meet with providers and evaluate the providers to insure that the patients are being safely transported. (See handout provided.) She directed the Board's attention to the fact that since the dialysis wait list was implemented in December, they have reduced the dialysis trips and the medical and other types of trips are beginning to increase, which is a positive indication that the wait list is working. She read details from the handout regarding the TD trips from all providers that were completed since February, as well as complaints and reasons for the complaints, for the quarter. Ms. Sanders stated that she would provide the list of people who had complained to Ms. McGovern as she wanted to compare the list with those whom she had contacted for the survey. Ms. Sanders will email the list to Ms. McGovern. Ms. Sanders also noted the provider breakdown for the quarter.

Mr. Bols made a motion to approve the CTC Quarterly Performance Report. Ms. Krista McGovern gave a second to the motion. There were no further discussions regarding this report. The motion passed unanimously.

6. NOTED ITEMS

It was noted that there was a newspaper article regarding dialysis patients, a copy was in the agenda.

Ms. Beltran advised the Board that Mr. Haddox will be attending the TD Conference as the LCB-TD member, which will be held in Daytona Beach in August.

7. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

None.

8. COMMENTS FROM FDOT

None.

9. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Skaggs asked how would the nursing homes which operate busses and vans, go about getting ADA qualified, licensed or permitted to perform ADA trips. Also, he inquired as to if the 50% medical on rides was going to be implemented or is it something that if not discussed would it be reviewed at the next meeting. Mr. Mortell stated that the Board just adopted a plan that implemented the 50 % medical rides, and the balance of the meeting was to override the plan or take further action, and no further action was taken.

Ms. Sanders responded to the question regarding the ADA transportation stating that there is a program sponsored through FDOT which allows nursing homes and other social service agencies to apply for vehicles which are ADA accessible. Ms. Sanders is providing that information to the nursing home coordinators if they want to become a contractor for MTM, so that they can apply for those vehicles through FDOT's Section 5310 Program. They do contract with other local providers to provide some transportation so they can also contract with those providers to provide transportation for the TD clients.

Mr. Skaggs also stated that he was a dialysis patient. He asked if the Treasure Coast Kidney Center (TCKC) was going to begin providing transportation to its patients. Ms. Sanders stated that the TCKC has not said that they were going to provide transportation to its patients, they have only agreed to work with MTM on scheduling so that they can multi-load as many people as possible. The TCKC has no intention to get a bus for its patients at this time.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is August 22, 2011, (actual date is August 29, 2011) at 4:30 PM which will be followed by the public hearing at 6:00 PM in the Commission Chambers. Ms. Van Etten requested that the meeting be reschedule to be 4:00 PM instead of 4:30 PM. No comments were made.

11. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.


Recorded and Prepared by:


Margaret H. Brassard, Administrative Specialist II


Date

Approved by:


Michael Mortell LCB/TD Chairman


Date