

Working Group to Identify Lake County Paratransit Lead Agency

July 8th, 2020

Meeting Was Held Through Zoom

1:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Working Group Members Present: Steve Carlson, Lake County Board; Jessica Hector-Hsu, RTA (Advisory Member); Kathleen O'Connor, Libertyville Township (Working Group Vice-Chair); Shane Schneider, Lake County/LCDOT (Alternate Member); Linda Soto, Lake County Director on the Pace Board (Working Group Chair); Bethany Williams, Lake County Partners; Mayor Leon Rockingham Jr., City of North Chicago; Terry Wilke, Lake County Board

Working Group Members Absent: None

Other Attendees: Sean Collins, LC Health Department; Eric Tellez, LC Planning, Building & Development; Sally Ann Williams, Pace; Linda Chamberlain, RTA; Kisha Hearn, Pace; Gary Scott, Pace; Kevin Carrier, LCDOT; Mike Klemens, LCDOT; Joe Surdam, LCDOT

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Linda Soto called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

2. Agenda Changes & Announcements

Linda Soto asked the Working Group for any agenda changes or announcements. No changes to the agenda or announcements were raised.

3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2020

Joe Surdam took a rollcall on attendance. All members were in attendance for today's meeting.

Linda Soto asked for a motion on the approval of the meeting minutes from May 13th, 2020. A motion was made by Kathleen O'Connor with a second by Terry Wilke.

Joe Surdam took a rollcall vote on the meeting minutes from May 13th, 2020. All members voted in approval of the meeting minutes except for Mayor Rockingham, who abstained.

4. Approval of the Letter of Recommendation addressed to Chair Hart and the Members of Lake County Board

Linda Soto asked Joe Surdam if he had received responses or comments on the Letter of Recommendation. Joe Surdam stated that primarily all the feedback received was in support of the letter and the recommendation on adding the definition of paratransit used in the Paratransit Market Study was made by Emily-Gelber Maturo. Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) staff decided that Emily's recommendation would be a good addition to the letter due to the fact

that a reoccurring theme of the Working Group meetings has been to be clear as possible about what the Working Group is working on and trying to achieve for when the County Board reviews the letter. Joe noted that the definition of paratransit can be found in the second paragraph of the letter.

Linda Soto asked the Working Group if there is any further discussion to be had on the letter. Terry Wilke noted that he has received nothing but positive reactions on the letter and a lot of encouragement given on moving forward with what is trying to be achieved regarding paratransit. Linda Soto added that it sounds like everyone is in approval of the letter and asked how much direction the Working Group does need to receive and noted that the Committee's mission is technically done. Linda Soto noted that in the letter there is the transition period to the Countywide program and that the County Board must receive the letter, review the letter, and then determine the timeline for that transition period. Linda Soto continued that the two-year timeline puts emphasis on LCCTSC during the beginning portion of the transition and asked if Kathleen O'Connor would like to elaborate on that. Kathleen O'Connor noted that the Working Group was charged with making a recommendation, which has been done, and then it will be up the County to take next steps. Kathleen added that in the interim LCCTSC will take the function on continuing to monitor the progress of Ride Lake County Central and West, talk to potential partners, but there hasn't been an expectation that either service would be expanded upon until there has been some closure and clear direction on next steps. Kathleen O'Connor anticipates that this would be the role LCCTSC continues unless given direction from the County that they would like to see the scope of responsibility changed or have the Working Group take over the role. Kathleen added that LCCTSC is aware that their role will change within a relatively short time with all things considered and will continue to meet with the County quarterly, twice a year, or annually depending on the recommendation of LCDOT and try to keep everyone in the loop as much as possible. Kathleen O'Connor stated it is a positive we're making steps forward and hopeful for people and the efforts being made will be appreciated in this environment. Linda Soto asked if there were any other comments on the letter itself. No other comments were raised.

Linda Soto recommended that the Working conduct a vote on the approval of the letter and continue with some added discussion. Linda Soto asked if Kevin Carrier or Shane Schneider had anything to add before the vote of approval on the letter takes place. Shane Schneider responded that he would like to add what LCDOT believes the next steps might be and stated that depending on the outcome of the meeting, which sounds like it has been very positive for the recommendation, LCDOT plans to bring the letter and share it with the Public Works and Transportation Committee (PWPTC) potentially as early as August 5th. Shane Schneider added that LCDOT would get some initial feedback from the PWPTC and noted PWPTC have primarily been the one sharing and giving direction to staff on paratransit. Shane Schneider continued LCDOT would potentially then bring the letter to the full board sometime after the PWPTC meeting has taken place and added another key next step would be having a meeting with Pace's Senior Staff. LCDOT tried to have the meeting with Pace but the pandemic resulted in the meeting being put on hold. Shane Schneider noted that LCDOT would still like to reconvene that meeting, have a discussion with Pace staff, and make sure all are moving forward in a direction that everyone supports, then LCDOT can start working out the details as whether LCDOT needs to put in place another transition committee or move forward with the current staff available. Linda Soto asked if there were any comments. No comments were raised.

Linda Soto asked for a motion for the approval of the letter of recommendation as presented. A motion was made by Bethany Williams with a second by Terry Wilke. Joe Surdam took a rollcall on the approval of the letter of recommendation. All members voted in approval of the letter of recommendation.

5. Discussion on next steps for the Working Group Committee

- a. Recommended Actions**
- b. Lessons Learned**

Linda Soto asked the Working Group if anyone wanted to discuss or has a comment on next steps, recommendation, or lessons learned. Shane Schneider responded that he wants to start off by offering up a big thank you to everyone on the committee and to everyone that has participated. Shane Schneider noted that this has been a big effort and a lot of time was committed by everyone involved, which LCDOT is really appreciative of and has learned a lot through the engagement about everyone's opinion and presentations from the other agencies and believes this was a great process. Shane Schneider added the County really appreciates everyone's effort and all the teamwork that went into it.

Linda Soto added that we look forward to getting the job done even in these challenging times. Linda followed up on the Pace meeting that has been delayed due to the Pandemic, Pace's headquarters are not open yet, however that does not mean we couldn't have a meeting somewhere in the current environment. Linda Soto continued that depending on what the County's schedule is, if they would rather wait or try to do something sooner or later, Pace has environments where they could set up meetings being socially distanced. Linda Soto stated she would like to have a meeting take place in person rather than having a meeting via Zoom. LCDOT's next step would probably be meeting with the County Administrator and County Board Chair and share the letter of recommendation and let them know LCDOT's thoughts, then move forward with a meeting shortly after that. Steve Carlson responded that the County Board is considering having in-person meetings take place in the main County meeting room and that it is currently an on-going discussion. Linda Soto responded that Pace is still trying to figure out when they will open its headquarters again fully. Shane Schneider added most of LCDOT staff is still remote and only going into the office on occasion. Linda Soto responded that she is going to update the Chairman and Executive Director at Pace on today's Working Group meeting and will leave the ball in LCDOT's court in that once the Committee has received the letter and has had some discussion, LCDOT will let Pace know when and what exactly LCDOT wants to cover

Shane Schneider added that transportation has been identified as a big issue in the Pandemic environment and noted that he believes there is a lot of momentum and interest in the topic right now and that the pandemic has only pronounced the need for better service. Linda Soto agreed with Shane Schneider and added that in the coming next two years you try to look at the silver lining in some of these situations and believes it's really going to be a driving factor to create more funding for infrastructure and different ways of funding transit at both the state and federal level. Linda Soto added that from a planning perspective, some of the changes will be hard but will be able to do some changes faster and more radical changes. Sally Ann Williams added that Pace does look forward to moving the project forward, optimizing some of these services in the Lake County area making them more efficient, and working with the group to try and initiate some of the directives that were identified in the Paratransit Market Study. Sally Ann Williams added the reason for what she said is that there is confusion among the customers on when they can utilize what service and

noted that this effort is truly a big step in moving towards coordinating some of the services that are on top of each other and unraveling some of the issues that persist. Terry Wilke added that he has been advocating for this effort for years and wanted to thank Kathleen O'Connor and Linda Soto and everyone else for their efforts and pushing for this change.

6. Public Comment

Linda Soto asked if there were any public comments made. Joe Surdam stated that no public comments were received. Before adjourning the meeting, Linda asked if it is known whether the Working Group is going to have an additional meeting or wait to hear back from the administration and board. Kevin Carrier followed up noting there are two more meetings scheduled and it would be a good idea to keep those two meetings scheduled in case the committee has any feedback or questions, they can be cancelled if there is not business for the Working Group..

- 7. Reminder – the next working group meeting, if needed, is scheduled for:
Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Lake County Division of Transportation, Main Conference Room
600 W. Winchester Road, Libertyville, IL**

8. Adjournment

Linda Soto made a motion on adjourning the meeting with a second by Kathleen O'Connor. On a unanimous voice the meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.