

# St. Lawrence County Public Transit Task Force

Minutes for Thursday November 21, 2019

## Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 1:01 PM by Frank Doldo with 19 attendees present. All were welcomed and introductions were made by all.

## Members Present

Karen Bage, Patty Seelig, Leigh Ward Charette, Carolyn White, Klaus Proemmn, Mary Jo Terrance, Tim Welp, Sam Purington, Christine Richardson, Matilda Larson, Ron McDougall, Cassie Dodd, Rachel Lapoint, Jerome James, Judy Aldrich, Priscilla Legette, Mairkey LaBrake, Sue Rose, Rena Ryan and Frank Doldo.

## Previous Month Minutes

October's minutes were handed out for review. Motion made by Matilda Larson and seconded by Klaus Proemmn. All in favor, motion carried.

## Old Business

The three colleges: SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, and Clarkson have agreed to the new college connector schedule that was put together. It is scheduled to start in January and they agreed to the additional expense to go towards this. It is in the contract amendment phase and will finalize soon. Starting January 2, 2020, all college shuttles will be running Monday through Friday 7 AM till 10:30 PM. On weekends it will be from noon till 10 PM. With this new service, it will open up for more First Mile Last Mile riders: to get to employment and onto campuses for cultural enrichment. Also, Matilda approved that all three college students listed above can ride any transit bus for free by showing their college ID card.

The SUNY Canton bus stops are being looked at to make some changes. A possibility is not to go into the parking lot in behind Sergi's restaurant. A location on Lincoln Street near the playground is going to be checked out to see if a bus stop will be added there. The bus that stops at the Riverside Drive second tower is going to be moved to the first tower. Where it will offer a covered stop and also going to be a meal site for seniors.

St. Lawrence University is looking forward to a meeting to firm up details for a college bus route.

The University Plaza name in Canton is going to be replaced with Savalot Plaza. To make it easier for people to recognize.

## New Business

A presentation was given on Access to Care by Cassie Dodd, Christine Richardson, Rachel Lapoint and Jerome James. The program has been successful and hopefully grant monies and/or other sponsorships will continue to roll in.

Star Lake is losing its only grocery store. Frank is going there on Friday 11/22/19 to meet with the folks there to listen to their concerns about to drive several miles to get groceries from Gouverneur, Potsdam or Harrisville.

MEP Grant for St. Lawrence County Public Transit - Frank was told it should be 6 to 8 weeks last November was going to be released. Since then he has met with the commissioner of NYSDOT and they are waiting for the NYS Governor to release a press release for the awards. The 2019 5311 grant will be out the last week of December or first week of January. Over the summer of 2020, the 5310 and 5311 grants will come out for 2 years (2020 – 2021).

A bus stop in Ogdensburg is being changed. It no longer will stopping at the Vetern Affairs location in Commerce Park but will be stopping at Northwood Manor in that same area location. It has shown an increase in ridership so far and hoping that it continues. Also, the old Lincoln school has been transformed into apartments which should increase ridership as well.

A Grant for Technical Assistance was submitted to help Frank write grants for people with substance abuse disorder having access to social determents of health. They need access to locations when a bed opens up and to get to that location (either in county or out of county) to get the care they need. Frank got notification in the first part of October that they found some money to help get the Technical Grant Assistance and it had to be completed within 3 weeks. A company came up and met with Frank and some constituents. Frank explained about the Unite Us platform and they we had the infrastructure all in place and all we need is the money. We need a Grant written to start submitting it out for the program which is being called Rides to Recovery. The numbers for possible clients is much higher than originally thought. Frank would like to see it combined with the Access to Care so that there is a bigger pot to help these folks out.

Concerns/Complaints: Carolyn White from The Grace House in Canton stating the seemed to be a waste of services with Medicaid when a couple of ladies were going to the same place and at the same time and MAS had sent (2) different cars. Instead of using one car. One lady was stranded by her driver while the other was being picked up. They

asked if she could catch a ride since going to the same place and the driver so no. The lady had to wait for the house mother to come and pick her up over an hour wait time.

Frank had Reverend Mike from the Canton Presbyterian Church lodge another complaint about the buses stopping in front of the church again. The name has been changed to the Village Green. Between Matilda and Frank they have eliminated about 20 stops from that location. Reverend Mike wants the bus stop to be located onto the other side of the park-onto the Main Street side. After speaking with the county highway department and they in turn talked to the NYSDOT department in Potsdam. And it was learned that the village had an opportunity to widen the road by 2 feet a couple of years ago when the new main street was re-done and they chose not to do it. Because of that decision, the main street parallel parking cannot accommodate the public buses. It also was determined that there needed to be a deceleration and acceleration lanes which would mean losing about 8 parking spaces. So, that possibility is not viable. Frank is exploring more options for bus stops in the downtown area. He is looking at Hodskins Street which is a one way street. Also checking to reach out to the owner of the downtown (old Jubilee/Rite Aid) plaza.

Floor opened for comments.

### Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made to adjourn by Ron McDougall and seconded by Tim Welpé at 2:24 PM.