



State of Wisconsin

Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities

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Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities (GCPD) Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 19, 2019

2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Via Teleconference

Welcome and introductions by: Dan Idzikowski, Committee Chairperson

Committee members present: Dan Idzikowski (chair), Margaret Kristan, Rhonda Staats, Ramsey Lee, and Benjamin Barrett, and Dan Laatsch

DHS staff support present: Maia Stitt, Department of Health Services (DHS), Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR).

Meeting Called to Order

I. The meeting was called to order by Dan Idzikowski.

- The meeting was available via teleconference. It was also available via Zoom.
- Committee Chair Dan Idzikowski reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Sandy Popp made a motion, seconded by Dan Laatsch, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
- There were no comments from the public.
- Dan Idzikowski referred to the draft letter to encourage Governor Evers to reconvene the Interagency Council on Transportation Coordination (ICTC). He provided some background on the ICTC noting that the ICTC was initially created during the Governor Doyle administration. The impetus for creating the ICTC was a federal law enacted at the time that encouraged coordination among transportation funding sources. There was a need for this type of Council because transportation services and funding were, and continue to be, very fragmented and confusing for consumers needing to access transportation services. There was recognition that while it might be difficult to change multiple laws, rules and statutes governing transportation funding, there was still significant opportunity to create efficiencies in contracting and delivery of services and making access to services more seamless for consumers. In addition to the ICTC, a Transportation Advisory Group comprised of advocacy organizations, providers, counties and municipalities, was established. A statewide transportation summit was held. There were recommendations to create regional and local planning commissions to focus on transportation. Then, following the gubernatorial election, the ICTC was never reconvened.
- The draft letter from GCPD to Governor Evers asks that the ICTC be reconvened and membership be expanded to include Department of Safety and Professional Services since

they are responsible for licensure, Department of Administration since they oversee state procurement and contracting, the GCPD and representatives of aging community. In addition, the letter requests that the Governor allocate staff to support the work of the ICTC.

- Rhonda Staats thanked Dan for his work on this letter. She commented that the Governor held a Stakeholder Transportation Summit earlier this year; however the stakeholders represented were mainly roadbuilders and not people with disabilities or other people who need to use the transportation systems. She indicated it is important to specifically request that people with disabilities and older adults be represented in any transportation council or committee noting that “we are as important as the roadbuilders.”
- Ramsey Lee also expressed support for the letter. He suggested that language be added to the letter to briefly describe the role of the GCPD and also strongly supports language to ensure that people with disabilities are represented.
- Dan requested that Maia provide him with the standard language used to describe the GCPD.
- Maia Stitt offered input on behalf of DHS. She summarized options for moving forward as Dan editing the letter and advancing it to the Executive Committee for final review and signature by the Chair or submitting it to DHS for review and editing. She also suggested that the letter reference other Committees and Councils that have a focus on transportation, specifically mentioning the Long Term Care Advisory Council (LTCAC) and the GCPD may not want to duplicate work being done by that Council. She also noted the LTCAC is looking for representatives from the disability and aging communities, as well as individuals not on Medicaid who need to access transportation systems and services.
- Dan noted that the LTCAC is a DHS Secretary-established Council and the GCPD is seeking support and action from the Governor on this critical issue.
- Sand Popp made a motion, seconded by Ramsey Lee, that Dan finalize the letter with suggested modifications from Rhonda and Ramsey and submit it to the Executive Committee. The motion carried unanimously.
- Dan addressed the next agenda item related to an external advocate for Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) services. He provided background regarding DHS procurement for NEMT vendors, noting that following initial implementation of a contract with MTM, there were many problems with the services they provided. As a result, advocates urged creation of an external advocate role; an individual independent of the transportation vendor who would have authority to investigate and take action on complaints from consumers. DHS did a procurement for an external advocate and Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) was awarded the contract; however DRW later declined the contract because of a diminished role of the external advocate. DHS has not since rebid for an external advocate. There was a subsequent Legislative Audit Bureau audit that identified quality issues with the transportation vendor, including rides not being timely or not showing up at all. DHS imposed penalties on the vendor.

- Dan indicated that he had sent an open records request to DHS requesting an update on the status of the external advocate and DHS has not yet responded, far exceeding the required 30-day period to respond to an open records request. Dan subsequently asked Maia Stitt to look into when a response might be expected.
- After some discussion about reasons contributing to the delay in a response for DHS, Maia indicated she will follow up in January, when the individual she needs to consult with will be back in the office.
- Sandy Popp asked if GCPD should send another formal letter to DHS. Maia advised that GCPD not send another request, indicating that these can be viewed by DHS as confrontational. The Committee members agreed to wait to determine next steps after Maia's report back in January.
- There was brief discussion about transportation public policy issue priorities with the external advocate for NEMT and the reconvening of the ICTC being identified as top priorities.
- The next meeting of the Transportation Committee will be held January 24, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

II. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned.