Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board
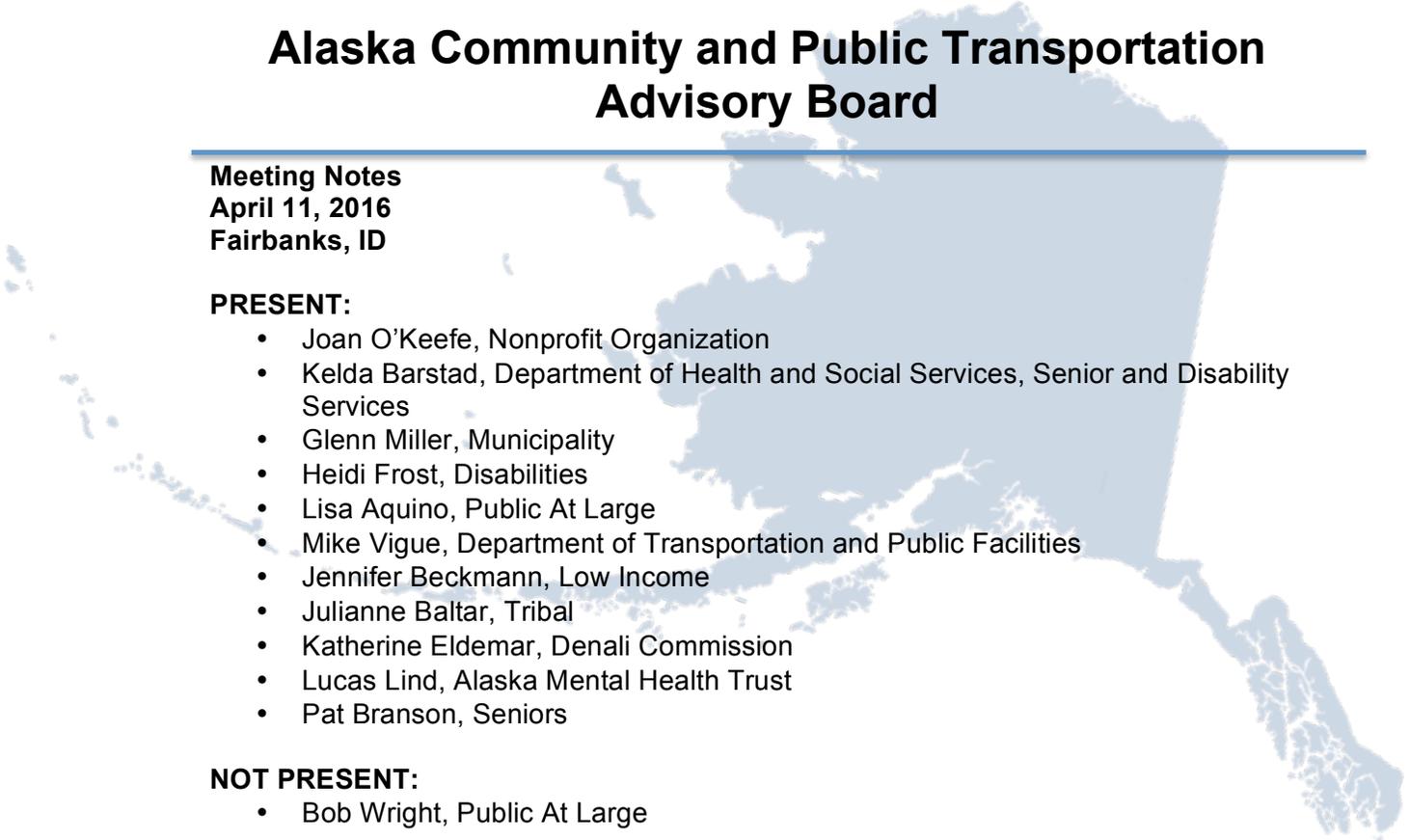
Meeting Notes
April 11, 2016
Fairbanks, ID

PRESENT:
- Joan O'Keefe, Nonprofit Organization
- Kelda Barstad, Department of Health and Social Services, Senior and Disability Services
- Glenn Miller, Municipality
- Heidi Frost, Disabilities
- Lisa Aquino, Public At Large
- Mike Vigue, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Jennifer Beckmann, Low Income
- Julianne Baltar, Tribal
- Katherine Eldemar, Denali Commission
- Lucas Lind, Alaska Mental Health Trust
- Pat Branson, Seniors

NOT PRESENT:
- Bob Wright, Public At Large

STAFF:
- Debbi Howard, DOT&PF
- Eric Taylor, DOT&PF
- Marsha Bracke, Bracke & Associates, Inc., Facilitator

SUMMARY NOTES

The Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB) met on Monday, April 11, 2016 in Fairbanks. During the morning session of the meeting, the group met at the Noel Wien Library and used the OWL videoconference system to engage members who were not able, due to state travel restrictions, to come to Fairbanks. Mike Vigue and Katherine Eldemar participated from Juneau, and Kelda and Lucas participated from Anchorage.

2016 WORK PLAN

C&PTAB used the morning session to do an updated version of its Strategic Plan. Summarily, the group is
- Pursuing implementation of the Coordination Recommendation
- Finalizing the Calculating Costs Methodology with plans for implementation in the next DOT&PF Grant Cycle
- Continuing its study and outreach related to Accessible Taxicab availability
- Pursing a pilot project to inform the development of meaningful local coordination efforts between communities, providers and tribes

The new goals and activities associated with implemented them will be transcribed in an updated Work Plan dated April 11, 2016 and distributed to the group for review and use.

Given travel restrictions offers the group only one chance to meet face to face in a given year, and agency restrictions prohibit state staff from traveling to these meetings specifically, the C&PTAB asked Marsha to generate a regular conference call schedule for all the Work Groups so each of the efforts can be pursued with intentionality and get done.

C&PTAB CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

C&PTAB spent its afternoon session preparing for the presentation it will make and the workshop it will conduct at the Alaska Community Transit Conference convening the next day. The group reviewed and refined its presentation and workshop process materials. The C&PTAB specifically seeks stakeholder feedback on its Coordination Recommendation relative to advantages and challenges to the recommendation and suggestions for addressing those challenges. Feedback secured at the conference is included as Attachment B.

C&PTAB also reviewed the Calculating Cost methodology, preparing for its presentation in a conference breakout session also scheduled for the next day. The C&PTAB seeks feedback on the existing version, will invite human service transportation providers specifically to test it, and set June 1 2016 as the deadline for providing that input.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gerry Hope, Sitka, spoke informally with the group about nuances of tribal transportation and efforts underway in Sitka.

ATTACHMENT A:
COORDINATION RECOMMENDATION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
APRIL 12, 2016

SUMMARY REPORTS (Table Top Facilitators)

1. **What advantages do you see to implementing these coordination recommendations?**

   a) Save time, money and improve efficiency for both providers and funders and method for agencies to work together
   b) Database will provide one stop shop for information providing better understanding of transit use and need
   c) Improved integration of service between providers
   d) Reduction of duplication of effort easier reporting and shared activities
   e) Better collaboration
   f) Better, more efficient leveraging of funding from a variety of sources. Ability to provide more service than if funds not leveraged.
   g) Possibility to collect good data
   h) Consistent processes and useful resources across the state thru coordination
   i) Consistent process across the state
   j) Streamline process – that would be good for the vender / standardized
   k) Language is dense – so if you coordinate then the language will be easier to understand and use
   l) Streamlined system will make it easier to report data, train personnel
   m) Streamlining services and reporting/sharing
   n) Remove duplication of efforts/more riders
   o) Addresses communication barrier
   p) Consolidation/standardization of things – whether process, reporting, data collection, reducing service overlap/duplication
   q) Gives us better data
   r) Lobbying/Advocating and educating legislators are easier because there will be one point of contact for transit
   s) Helps for training new staff

2. **What challenges do you see to implementing these coordination recommendations?**

   a) Need to have common and agreed upon understanding of terms. May require changes in law or policies. General resistance to change and internal cultural changes
   b) Conflict between state, regional and local plans and desires
   c) Determining what information will be collected for reporting and their ability to collect that information
   d) Initial resources and costs to implement coordination
   e) Accepting compromise – cultural change
   f) Different agencies have various funding and reporting requirements, which can make coordination difficult
   g) Because fixed route services and human services operate differently on an operational and political level, could be difficult to become consistent across the board

h) Regulations Day-habilitation; Medicaid vs. Medicaid waiver: DSDS
i) Geography and distance (Mat-Su)
j) Valley Mover – commuter riders – 4 different systems geographical area
k) In-house and outhouse culture – needs to be a willingness to let it go and try something new/revisit old ideas?

3. **What suggestions do you have for addressing the challenges to make implementation most effective and meaningful from your perspective?**

   a) Combine recommendation 1 and 2. Make the document straightforward.
   b) Top down leadership. Have input from people providing the services.
   c) Identifying a facilitator(s) for the effort
   d) Understanding each partner's need
   e) Scalability depending on organization size
   f) Gaining cooperation from oversight organization
   g) Keep open dialog going to identify gaps in service to community
   h) Prioritization
   i) Go to other people events – not ask others to come to us
   j) Coordinate planning:
   k) Transportation authority – some coordinate/overlap
   l) Subcontract with mobility/rural provider
   m) Big in DHSS systems
   n) Top down mandate that all participate with incentive for participation
   o) Talking and dialogue begins around the needs because its easier to identify

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INDIVIDUAL INPUTS

1. **What advantages do you see to implementing these coordination recommendations?**

   a)   Mutual understanding of what's expected
   b)   Quicker process and understanding of process
   c)   Able to get full view of service
   d)   Some framework can help provide clarity moving forward for existing and future transit agencies
   e)   Time, money and communication
   f)   Time savings
   g)   Money savings
   h)   Better communication
   i)   Efficiency
   j)   Maximizes resource use – funding, personnel, time
   k)   Streamlining
   l)   Coordination into 'like' policies and practices will help the smaller entities to not reinvent the wheel
   m)   Pooling all agencies would help the little guys and smaller entities could help big entities stay within their means. Solid database of information
   n)   All have same goals – would be a part of the end result

o)   Having one consistent set of data will show a better picture of transit use (and need) in Alaska, as well as provide a method for agencies to work better
p)   It's better for everyone if we share information
q)   Better for doing business with the state
r)   Better for people seeking assistance with the state government
s)   Greater internal understanding of what the state requires
t)   Ultimate goal to be more effective and provide better services
u)   Numbers of people being saved can increase
v)   Better quality of service
w)   Organizations working together have a larger positive effect
x)   Getting other service providers to participate so we can increase the number of rides
y)   More services for the many
z)   The limited funds available are used to maximum effect in providing needed ridership services in the most cost effective manner and to serve the greatest ridership needs
aa) Shared definition of coordination among all agencies results in the greatest benefits to the largest number of customers served
bb) More bang for buck – more service for the same $
cc) Better quality of service
dd) Prioritize needs of all involved agencies
ee) Mobility manager – independent
ff) The advantages would be that agencies would combine efforts in receiving federal dollars to support an overall public transportation mission
gg) Less waste from duplicating services
hh) Knowledge and wisdom can be shared over various aspects of transit and transit-assisted services
ii) All agencies will know what they are reading. A translator will not be necessary. This will save many work hours.
jj) Work on projects and grants will be accomplished in less time
kk) Leverage funding sources
ll) No need for translation (saves time, labor)
mm) More effective leverage funding services
nn) Limited funding to greatest effect for ridership
oo) Agencies combine effects
pp) Let's just do it!
qq) Consistency in service across the state – ability to leverage funds and accomplish more thereby reducing administrative time and costs
rr) Increased coordination – more service
ss) Consistent process and service
tt) Ability to leverage funds
uu) Reducing administrative costs
vv) Easy administrative chores
ww) Gaining access to funding
xx) Having consistent and uniform grant and reporting paperwork would make the evaluation process easier and comparing year to year
yy) Allows everyone to be on the same level
zz) Breaks silos
aaa) Coordination helps with funding/grant application s and data collection
bbb) Funding will be allocated more appropriately/resources
ccc) Lobbying becomes more powerful and state will listen more

ddd)	More efficient service
eee)	More responsive service
fff)	Able to identify critical funding needs
ggg)	User friendly
hhh)	Agencies working together would be efficient
iii)	Data reported would be more accurate if agencies knew what was expected
jjj)	Ease for providers
kkk)	Creating standardized agency processes
lll)	Annual process streamlines reporting requirements
mmm)	More provider time/resources for direct service
nnn)	Streamlining, data
ooo)	Creates a dialogue around transportation needs
ppp)	Develops an inventory or transportation provides and assets
qqq)	Better streamlined funding and reporting
rrr)	Agencies are required to coordinate and so should state agencies
sss)	Streamlining processes and requirements standardization make it easier for all who share a common service
ttt)	Make provision of transportation easier, more streamlined
uuu)	Easier access to community resources for citizens
vvv)	Easier for state agencies to share data and coordinate agency to agency
www)	Encourages cost sharing to deal with budget
xxx)	Huge. Makes state agencies be responsive and be involved in planning.
yyy)	More receptive of paying toward it and find ways of having their staff use public transportation
zzz)	If state agencies and agencies within one department – DHSS – would actually coordinate it would save money for the state and improve transportation services
aaaa)	Consistency on a state level
bbbb)	Better ability for the SOA to apply and review federal funding and share resources around the state
cccc)	Creates a framework for future efforts
dddd)	Recognizing that current practices are not effective and billing willing to try something new
eeee)	Consolidation of fund distribution = taxpayer savings
ffff)	Streamlined access of services, reduce hurdles
gggg)	Consolidation of workflows and software
hhhh)	Everyone is using standardized forms/regulations
iiii)	That there is a solid uniform standard in applications and reporting
jjjj)	Faster/more expedient processes to stimulating new agencies and feeling funding secure for small operations
kkkk)	Sharing resources
llll)	Consolidating proposed outcomes/consistence
mmmm)	Better opportunities for users

2. **What challenges do you see to implementing these coordination recommendations?**

a)	Consistent framework and expectation – different rules to follow/meet, different processes to accept/adopt
b)	Formal/more in-depth needed for some to meet minimum – others won't want as complex form that others require

c) Getting them to agree and actively report
d) It won't work in all communities – could loose
e) Needs to be from the top down, should have a lead agency
f) Medicaid and ADA
g) Getting everyone on the same page
h) Getting all agencies to follow and agree on the recommendations
i) Different state agency goals and reporting requirements
j) Resistance to change
k) Getting all agencies to cooperate and not all agencies are at the same level. Some have state match and support; others have no means for match or local support
l) Breaking silos
m) In the definition the word "consolidation" would be a big change
n) Certification processes
o) Breaking silos
p) Resistance to change
q) Resistance to giving up information and personal power (information =>power)
r) What do we mean by consolidation? What will this look like?
s) Getting public to understand the need of services
t) Getting other agencies to be part of the system for greater benefit rather than each separate company benefit
u) Coming together in our community as one to pro provide the proper services to our seniors and disable d clients
v) Data collection – different agencies track this differential
w) Community needs to get more involved
x) One major roadblock may be the overall collaboration between agencies
y) Bringing awareness to the larger agencies who may view the collaboration as insignificant…at first specifically state Medicaid agencies
z) Differences in types of services
aa) POLITICS!
bb) Diversity of regional issues, i.e. weather, services available, etc.
cc) Lack of compromise from agencies; not willing to reduce/change the status quo
dd) To have a central point of contact in all the agencies – someone who is not getting ready to retire.
ee) Agencies believing they will lose a piece of the grant funding
ff) Get people to understand they are not losing funding; they are gaining by coordinating/increasing ridership
gg) Different funding sources have different requirements
hh) Different needs in different parts of state
ii) Collaboration between agencies
jj) Politics
kk) How to change large systems
ll) Too many cooks in the kitchen
mm) Multiple agencies have different funding specifications/rules, i.e. Older Americans Act Funding vs. FTA funding
nn) Political challenges
oo) Who statewide collects data?
pp) What do they do with data?
qq) Fiscal note?
rr) Explain coordination
ss) Different funding with different rules

tt) Political challenge or no political support
uu) Having a state wide form may not work for all types of transit agencies in Alaska
vv) So many moving pieces
ww) Getting everyone on board
xx) Duplication being found and eliminated
yy) Sharing resources and funding
zz) The biggest challenge would be getting consistent and accurate data from agencies
aaa) Intra and inner departmental disharmony
bbb) Fiscal challenges
ccc) Diversity of needs – guidance is national, not local
ddd) Getting buy-in to the value of coordination and reporting requirements, especially with smaller human service agencies
eee) Regional cooperation – why – sometimes rural vs. urban
fff) Data to show benefits and cost savings to other agencies, tribes and local governments so they are willing to coordinate transit services
ggg) Medicaid waiver decision not to pay for rides to/from medical appointments. Change to 7AAC 130.290 to allow Medicaid wavier payment reimbursement for medical transit
hhh) Federal regulations, including those from DMS
iii) State regulations such as prohibiting Medicaid from providing for transportation to day rehabilitation
jjj) Burden is placed on local government and non-profit/service providers to adapt to changes
kkk) Requiring other state agencies to understand and recognize transportation requirements and logistics
lll) That each agency has their way of doing things. Doing executive orders or mandates would work
mmm) DHSS not willing to do the work
nnn) SDS not willing to do the work
ooo) SDS staffers allowed to erect barriers based on incorrect interpretations of law/regulations – that the staff do not have the authority or legal knowledge to make.
ppp) Everyone agreeing to work together using these recommendations
qqq) Overcoming barriers between agencies that have their own agencies, user groups, and funding sources
rrr) Maintain service levels while at the same time consolidating agency responsibilities to reduce overlap in responsibilities
sss) Dealing with sharing/coordination
ttt) Generating data#3 costs
uuu) Internal resistance
vvv) Investment of time to create the standard format and time in local agencies in adopting new challenges
www) Addressing concerns of all agencies when building standard forms/plans
xxx) Silo effect
yyy) Agency environment
zzz) Duplication/overlap
aaaa) Different regulations/restrictions often in conflict
bbbb) All agencies not buying in
cccc) Internal resistance, unwillingness to change

3. What suggestions do you have for addressing the challenges to make implementation most effective and meaningful from your perspective?

a) Meet highest requirements to cover all
b) Meet in a group with all to see if they can agree on language and get t heir agency to agree
c) Use and publish their data to promote their agency
d) Recommendation #1 needs to address the Medicaid waiver issues
e) #1 needs to say how
f) Coordination should include timelines
g) Central funding resource database
h) Implement some kind of regular meeting schedule, monthly, bi-monthly to discuss issues and outcomes
i) The state should not attempt this in a vacuum. They need input from client providers on what works, what doesn't and what could be better
j) Opportunity to share resources can come with fear
k) Request a coordination workshop for all state agencies that provide funding to streamline reporting requirements in consultation with the CUPTAB
l) Look at other states and what they are doing (Florida)
m) Share, include all, consultation method
n) Breaking silos, Get Governor, Lt. Governor, support
o) "Consolidation"
p) Networking, getting the city more involved in the programs provided.
q) Riders feedback on how we can provide better service
r) Neutral mobility manager to build trust
s) Don't make the process exhaustive
t) Designate one person to a region to meet face to face with these agencies (not very cost effective)…I'm not sure
u) Be able to identify advantages for each potential agency
v) Seek continuous input from all ridership groups that results in the greatest benefit to the needs of all potential riders on the system
w) Breakdown the state into regions or communities and use a liaison to communicate on the state level
x) Understand that there are major differences amount agencies, but instead of fighting them, try to identify the strengths and weaknesses and work together to utilize each other's strengths to bridge service gaps
y) Every agency could use the same reporting
z) Networking people who can make things happen at a cost effective price
aa) More staff at regional level (but increases costs…); interagency contractor/liaison
bb) Build regional network with people more to increase coordination
cc) Getting partners on same page *using data"
dd) Coordinated planning process
ee) Community studies to determine where people are riding to how to service them better
ff) Prioritization
gg) Mandate coordination = increase in coordination
hh) Coordination is a process not a result
ii) Adopt a uniform grant application and reporting form that is carried over more than one year
jj) Subcommittees
kk) Make it worth their while – training, discounts, networking events,

ll)   Think outside the box
mm)   One system – 2 ways
nn)   Medicaid requirements?
oo)   Training
pp)   One DOT, One Alaska
qq)   Streamlined process creates more fiscal transparence vs. time wasted chasing grant requirements
rr)   Partnering with multiple organizations that serve rural, urban, arctic populations
ss)   Meaningful data to leverage funding and use data to mange on a shoestring
tt)   State agencies using similar logic models to data collection requirements
uu)   Change CMS regulations, which impede coordination such as Medicaid waiver providers not being allowed to bill Medicaid for medical rides
vv)   Internal coordination at state agencies. Increased training/education for state-federal liaisons. Clearing up internal processes would really help improve coordination from agencies to non-profits and local government programs
ww)   Meetings of state agencies involved in transportation; educate on need and value of coordination
xx)   All agencies should have data management systems to measure success
yy)   Make SDS policy people sit down and learn from Division of Medicaid staff – both at high management, and then train management staff below the highest level.
zz)   Mandate from the Governor/State
aaa) Somehow incentivize participation
bbb) Agencies need to maintain a sense of humility and be aware of posturing their pride
ccc)   Reduce the obstacles for funding, but make that funding more competitive to give incentive for improving service and reducing operating cost
ddd) Training on #3 when these steps are implemented
eee) Economical means for doing upgrades to current data collection systems for nonprofits
fff)   Easing into concept to cooperation with fellow agencies
ggg) Change re-evaluate routes
hhh) Start fast with parallel process to find problems and troubleshoot until everything is resolved
iii)   Engage core agencies to actively participate
jjj)   Rely on user feedback
kkk)   Set realistic goals with timelines for implementation
          Involve users in planning
lll)   Identify failed past issues and either drop as goals or rethink importance of goal
mmm) Plan, then implement, don't procrastinate
nnn)   Embrace successes