



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY  
REGIONAL PLANNING  
COMMISSION

## Champaign County Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG)

**Date:** Wednesday, August 14, 2019  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District  
 Maintenance Department Building  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
 803 E. University Ave., Urbana, IL  
**Members Present:** Aaron Esry, Lori Larson, Nathan Montgomery, Shirley Evans (Proxy for Mary Sleeth), Tawanna Nickens  
**Members Absent:** Nancy Greenwalt, Mary Sleeth  
**Staff Present:** Rita Morocoima-Black, Kristen Gisondi, Debbie Peterik  
**Others Present:** Drew Bargmann

### MEETING MINUTES

Subject to Review and Approval

- I. Call to Order  
Mr. Montgomery called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
- II. Roll Call  
The roll was taken by written record and a quorum was declared present.
- III. Audience Participation  
None
- IV. Approval of Agenda  
**Mr. Esry made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Nickens seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**
- V. Approval of Minutes  
**Ms. Larson made a motion to approve the RTAG minutes from the May 8, 2019 meeting. Ms. Nickens seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**
- VI. New Business
  - A. Approval of C-CARTS FY19 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (April – June) Service & Fiscal Reports.  
Ms. Gisondi provided the following highlights of the reports:
    - There was a slight decrease in trips causing a slight decrease in the daily average.

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- Employment and Medical trips remain the top two trip types. Social trip numbers are increasing but not enough to be one of the top two trip types.
- Lift use percentage remains approximately the same.
- The senior trip percentage remains about half.
- There was a decrease in denials from last quarter to this quarter.
- Slight increase in efficiency for trips/mile and trips/hour.
- Time was not available was the reason for the 193 denied trips, trip being requested was either not during the service hours or a driver was not available.
- There are remaining funds of approximately 30 percent to complete the fiscal year. That compares to last year's 27 percent.
- C-CARTS does not have the matching funds to expend down the whole allocated grant amount. The state and federal grant require a percentage of local match for operations and administration. C-CARTS also does not have enough drivers to expend the funds. Mr. Esry inquired if not expending down the grants hurts C-CARTS' ability to receive grants in the future or increase the requested amounts. Ms. Morocoima-Black commented it does not apply to these grants.

**Mr. Esry made a motion to approve the C-CARTS FY19 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (April - June) Service and Fiscal Reports. Ms. Larson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

B. Presentation of FY19 Rural Transit Annual Report

- Grant applications were completed in March. Ms. Gisondi presented the grant amounts applied for.
- The Federal amount does not change from year-to-year.
- The Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP) increases by 10 percent each year.
- There is a one percent increase for the service contract.
- Farebox revenues remain about the same.
- The County contributed local match funds that expired in the FY2019 budget. That grant fund is not available in FY2020. Public transit account funds will be used for local match in FY2020. The Public Transit Account includes any farebox revenue or service contract revenue that C-CARTS doesn't use.
- Champaign County received their state and federal grant contracts this summer. The grant agreements require full execution from the County Board. Since the contracts were received earlier than usual, the FY19 annual report was also presented and approved by



the Highway Committee. The grant contracts will be presented to the County Board for final approval.

Ms. Gisondi presented the service report for FY19 sharing the following highlights:

- The deviated-fixed route ridership has increased, surpassing the demand-response route ridership and leading to efficiency in service, and reducing miles and hours.
- Overall, the demand-response route contributed to 45 percent of all trips. The demand-response route average per day remained the same for FY18 to FY19, but the deviated-fixed route increased by 22 trips a service day from last year. Mr. Montgomery inquired if they would see the revenue breakdown of the two services – demand-response and deviated fixed-route. Mr. Bargmann commented that he would provide a breakdown.
- Overall ridership was presented for FY16 – FY19 showing an increase with each year.
- There was a slight increase in farebox revenue.
- There was a slight decrease in service hours due to the ITS system installation.
- There was a significant increase in trip denials compared to last year. The increase is contributed to the FTA having new requirements with their medical card, which inhibited MTD's ability to hire new operators and keep existing drivers.

C. Update on Rantoul Service & Outreach Efforts

- Eagle Express ridership has remained stable. When you compare June of 2018 to June of 2019, the ridership increased by about 400.
- C-CARTS switched two ITS modules. The ITS system was acquired in September of last year. At that time, certain modules were chosen to use. The passenger counter module was the replacement of a module that had not been used. There were no extra capital funds expended. The passenger counter will allow C-CARTS to do passenger counts by trip, time and what routes people are using most frequently.
- Yard signs and brochures were distributed around the community at locations such as post office, churches and libraries.
- Champaign County set a goal of attending three community events annually. So far this year, C-CARTS staff has attended two. Mr. Bargmann attended the Disability Expo. Ms. Gisondi attended the Farmer's market.
- Buses are usually obtained through the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) Program through IDOT. To date, the application has not yet been released, and it is not anticipated to be released. C-CARTS decided to apply for competitive funding 5339b through the FTA



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for bus and bus facilities. The application was submitted in June for three vehicle replacements and one bus expansion with the thought in mind that C-CARTS might expand to Mahomet. The grant application required 20 percent local match. C-CARTS was able to cover the 20 percent local match with part of an insurance settlement from an accident that occurred in 2016, and the remaining funds to be covered from the Public Transit Account. Eight letters of support were received for the application. The reason this application was due before the FTA date is that C-CARTS rolled this application into IDOT's. IDOT put together all the rural applications in hopes that it will make C-CARTS application stronger. Although this funding is nationwide, ten percent of what Congress allocates must go to rural funding. MTD also applied for 5339b funding, but C-CARTS won't be in competition for buses.

D. Presentation and Approval of the Champaign County Public Service Plan

Ms. Gisoni discussed the following:

- The last plan was approved in 2014.
- The PTSP is completed on an as-needed basis as a requirement for C-CARTS federal grant.
- The plan measures the transportation service quality by looking at all the trip destinations such as medical, grocery or employment, to help IDOT and C-CARTS better understand the current social, economic and environmental conditions in their service area.
- The plan shows a list of all the transportation options for Champaign County, which include human service agencies, taxi, public transit and inter-city (i.e. Greyhound), as well as complete public transit information.
- Strategies and initiatives to increase mobility and accessibility are defined as follows:
  - Short-term – little or no planning to implement in one to three years
  - Medium-term – may require a planning study or grant fund to implement
  - Long-term – would require a planning study and a larger amount of funds
  - Overall strategy – to increase the number of deviated fixed-routes along high frequency corridors in the service area which would include Mahomet or Bondville
- Short-term goals:
  - Expand service hours to 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday – Sunday
  - Implement two driver shifts per day for each vehicle
  - Increase marketing and outreach
- Medium-term goals:

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- Decrease advance ride request to 24 hours (currently 48 hours)
- Extend the discount fare to low income persons (for routes going between town)
- Long-term goals:
  - Expand employment transportation service for the rural population
  - Accommodate shift workers
  - Involve collaboration with major employers
  - Increase number of service contracts

**Mr. Esry made a motion to approve the Champaign County Public Transportation Plan. Ms. Nickens seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

VII. Announcements

Ms. Gisondi commented the next RTAG meeting will be held on November 13, 2019.

VIII. Adjournment

**Mr. Montgomery adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.**

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