

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Social and Environmental Committee

CHAIRPERSON: Don Hill, Chairman

DATE/TIME: January 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

☒ Don Hill	☒ Bob Heuerman (6:40 pm)	☐ Janet Checker
☒ Bill Bingham (6:16 pm)	☒ Hendrica Regez	
☒ Robert O'Connor	☒ Diane Allendorf	

A quorum was established.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Gallagher

OTHERS PRESENT: Nicole Hermesen, Sandra Schleicher and Scott Toot

1. Minutes Approval:

- a) Minutes of the April 8, 2021 Special Social & Environmental Committee meeting -
- b) Meeting of the May 11, 2021 Special Social & Environmental Committee meeting -
- c) Minutes of the May 24, 2021 Special Social & Environmental Committee meeting -
- d) Minutes of the June 17, 2021 Social & Environmental Committee meeting. – **Hendrica Regez made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2021 Social & Environmental Committee meeting, the May 11, 2021 Special Social & Environmental Committee meeting, the May 24, 2021 Special Social & Environmental Committee meeting and the June 17, 2021 Social & Environmental Committee meeting. Seconded by Bob O'Connor and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

2. Citizens' Comments: None.

3. Unfinished Business

- a) FY2021/FY2022 Strategic Goals and Plans – Hendrica Regez asked if anything was being done about the Mental Health plan. Don Hill responded that they have talked a little about it at the Health Department but we don't have anything going on over there right now. Regez would like a roundtable with the stakeholders to see what the needs are and next steps. Also, Rosecrance is opening an office in Freeport in March. People from our county can go there for services.
- b) Update on Jo Daviess County Health Department – Sandra Schleicher, JDC Public Health Administrator will update the committee during her staff report.
- c) Passenger Rail Feasibility Study Update – Hendrica Regez reported that they had a meeting in December to discuss the option that was chosen that was the 79 mph with stops in Galena and Freeport 3 hour and 58 minutes travel time and estimated capital cost of \$220 - \$300 million. Annual ridership [is estimated at 85,000 – 95,000 with an estimated annual revenue of \$2 - \$2.4 million. They explained the methodologies used to estimate O & M costs, ridership, passenger – mile and revenue mainly using comparable services and established policies. Preliminary O & M costs are \$7 - \$9.5 million with the highest costs for labor and maintenance. Ridership estimates are 91,000 – 111,000 trips (neglecting tourism). Annual revenue estimates are \$2.6 - \$3.2 million (without tourism). There would be two round trips per day with a projected fare of \$60 from Dubuque to Chicago. The next passenger rail committee meeting will be February 2nd.

- d) Update on the Jo Daviess County Transit Service Area Plan – Nicole Hermesen advised that as of yesterday the state is allowing her to bring the plan to committee at the meeting next month for review and input. That is the easiest way to do any changes otherwise we would have to amend all of the contracts and the board chair would have to sign off on all of the paperwork again. This next go round we take it to committee, take it to the board, see if the public has any input and then she is able to put it into the grants and that will be our new service plan.
- e) Review, discussion and possible action on fares/fees charged by JDC Transit – Nicole Hermesen stated she is going to have a breakdown of the cost analysis to see what we can feasibly do to increase the fares and fees. The state is pleased that we are getting so many additional service contracts. She is working on more with some organizations that we have never worked with in the past. She is hoping to make up some of those dollar amounts. When talking with the state the ridership has to increase significantly for the fares and fees if they were to increase the ridership would have to increase. They still want her to focus on increasing ridership before increasing the fares and fees.

4. New Business

- a) Discussion and possible action to approve sole/single source procurement of new software for transit platform – Nicole Hermesen commented that we have seen an increasing number of errors and issues with the current software that we have. When she runs annual reports all the numbers are different; nothing matches up. The state has told her we need to get different software that is accurate and can capture all of the data. It will be easier for us to report and do this because this is not a new issue. This has been going on for years. In order for us to continue to be funded by the state and the Federal government we need to have software that is accurate and keeping us in compliance as well as moving us forward so that we can update. This cost is all inclusive. This is a different software company. The company that provides our current software would not give her an updated cost on the software that they would need. **Bob O'Connor made a motion to approve a Resolution for sole/single source procurement of new software for transit platform at a cost of \$27,000.00 yearly from Modeshift. Seconded by Bill Bingham and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**
- b) Discussion and possible action on a Contract with Jo Daviess County Transit and City of Galena. – Nicole Hermesen commented that they did a pilot project that she brought to this committee last fall where we ran a Saturday service. We ran a bus from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. every Saturday through the end of October last year. It actually did very well. They ran it for nine Saturdays and they had almost 1,500 people ride. The drivers absolutely loved it. There was large variety of riders. We received quite a few donations because the people riding the vehicles were not charged a fare and a lot of them were just so gracious and wanted to tip the driver. We have talked with the City of Galena and decided that we want to continue with this service. WE are going to maintain the fee of \$20 an hour for the driver's time as compensation. We also have drivers that are willing to work on Sunday from 11 am to 4 pm which would be a shorter shift with the longer shift on Saturday. This will be an additional revenue for us. Hermesen has talked with the state in regards to this and they were overjoyed because this is an intergovernmental agreement, a local contract that will boost our ridership. The only changes to the contract are the length of time that this contract will run from December to fall and we will be adding an additional parking lot by the Foundry that will be included in the loop as well. **Hendrica Regez made a motion to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement for General Public Transportation between the City of Galena and Jo Daviess County Transit in the amount of \$20 per hour, per driver, for full performance of the terms of this Agreement. Seconded by Bob Heuerman and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

- c) Discussion and possible action on a Contract with Jo Daviess County Transit and Dupaco Advertising – Nicole Hermsen commented that we do not have a current contract with Dupaco for the advertising on the vehicles. Hermsen created this contract so that we can continue this at a revenue of \$15,000 a year for us. We do depend on this for the match money for the grant. We will not be adding any additional wraps to any vehicles and will continue with what we already have. **Bill Bingham made a motion to approve an Agreement for Advertising Between Dupaco Community Credit Union and Jo Daviess County Transit at a monthly advertising fee charge of \$1,250.00/\$15,000.00 per year. Seconded by Hendrica Regez and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**
- d) Discussion and possible action on a Contract with Jo Daviess County Transit and East Galena Township – Nicole Hermsen commented that we have never had a contract with East Galena Township and Jo Daviess County. East Galena Township seniors are able to receive a ticket that allows them to ride for free and East Galena Township pays for their ride. **Hendrica Regez made a motion to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement for General Public Transportation Between the East Galena Township and Jo Daviess County Transit for a sum of \$100.00 for full performance of the terms of this Agreement. Seconded by Bill Bingham and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**
- e) Discussion and possible action on a Contract with Jo Daviess County Transit and West Galena Township – Nicole Hermsen commented that this contract is similar to the East Galena Township contract except that West Galena Township is still being invoiced per rider. **Bob O'Connor made a motion to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement for General Public Transportation Between the West Galena Township and Jo Daviess County Transit; West Galena will be responsible for paying per invoice of Blue tickets at a cost of \$1.00 each ticket. Seconded by Bob Heuerman and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**
- f) Discussion and possible action on a Contract with Jo Daviess County Transit and Little Learners – Nicole Hermsen commented that we have not had a contract with Little Learners before. We have transported them to the library, the apple orchard and some fall activities. We have transported them several times and Hermsen thinks we should have a contract similar to ARC with a fee of \$1 per child and the aid or teacher rides for free. **Bill Bingham made a motion to approve an Agreement for General Public Transportation Between the Little Learners and Jo Daviess County Transit; Little Learners will be responsible for paying a fee of \$1.00 per child, per trip. Seconded by Bob Heuerman and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

5. Staff Reports

- a) Jo Daviess County PCOM – Nicole Hermsen, Jo Daviess County Program Compliance Oversight Monitor (PCOM) reported we are currently doing monthly trips to Dubuque. We have a group of ladies who wanted to do a trip to Aldi, so typically the third Thursday of the month we take them to Aldi, the driver waits and then calls the driver when they are all ready to be picked up. One of the great ideas that Transit personnel has come up with working with Dubuque to get residents to Dubuque for an extended period of time, anywhere from four to six hours. We will have a group of people that we take to the Dubuque transit station and drop them off. They then use Dubuque transit to go to the various locations in Dubuque. When they are done they return to the Dubuque transit station and we pick them up to return to Galena. We are working out the details of this partnership with Dubuque and hope to have this up and running in the next two to three months. We have been working on our marketing strategy to make people aware that transit does exist. In that process we have had to update our logo. The employees did get their uniforms so we will be updating the logo on

everything. Once we get the actual service map completed we will put that on the updated brochures. We will have those in all different areas. We have talked to several different businesses about that as well. With this new software our marketing company is overjoyed because with the new software comes a QR code and people who are tech savvy or know what that is you take your smart phone, take a picture of it that will take them directly to the app or website and at that point you can check out Jo Daviess County Transit, schedule rides and all sorts of things you can do. Hermesen is also working on four additional contracts with local organizations. We have a lot of veterans that work at Transit. They would like to see funding for veterans rides whether local or to the VA. We are working with veterans organizations to see what we can do to facilitate that. Hermesen discussed donations and uses for those donations. She is also working on getting all of the reports caught up to date. We are fully staffed at the moment and have six more potential applicants lined up that would like to work for Transit. We are only one of the only Transits in the region that is fully staffed and has this problem. On January 27th Hermesen will be giving a presentation to the HSTP Region 1 and 3 regarding how she got us fully staffed and why she has people waiting in the wings. That made its way to the State so this is exciting to showcase Jo Daviess County Transit and the changes we have made. There is a lot of new training coming down which has been delegated to the Office Manager so we are getting ahead of that so that we are compliant. There are new safety requirements as well. Hendrica Regez is really excited to hear about the Dubuque trips that are planned. Bill Bingham expressed his appreciation for all the work Hermesen has done in a very short period of time and looks forward to what is to come. Bob Heuerman added Hermesen has done a great job turning things around in the last year.

- b) Public Health – Sandra Schleicher, Jo Daviess County Public Health Administrator, reported that we have had a rough couple of weeks with COVID and have had a record number of cases daily. We are up over 300 active cases right now. The state has changed the way contact tracing is being done. There is a state surge center that is handling all of the contract tracing. We are only involved if the case is within a congregate setting such as a nursing home, jail or resident facility. This just started last Thursday and is causing a lot of confusion. We finally have an office manager in place. Marcia Christ left in October. Mary Jo Schoenberger started last week. We have also just hired a part-time nurse. We received another grant for COVID activities. One grant is ending and starting a new one so we hired a nurse part-time to help with COVID things such as vaccination clinics and community testing at the Health Department. There are some federal resources in our region working at the hospitals to help relieve the burden on staff. Hendrica Regez learned about free training for using naran. It is available through the government mental health and substance abuse service and it is grant funded. The training would be open to the public. There is interest from the Sheriff's Department and the mental health interest group that she is working with. Regez hopes that the Health Department could sponsor an event. Don Hill asked Schleicher to put this topic on their next Board of Health agenda.
- c) Mental Health Board – Hendrica Regez reported that they had a meeting in December and approved the 2022 provider contracts. First quarter reports were also reviewed.

6. **Citizens' Comments:** None.

7. **Board Member Concerns:** Hendrica Regez commented on solar at the County Highway facility.

8. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn was made at 7:27 p.m. by Bob Heuerman, seconded by Bob Heuerman. Motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.

Next regular meeting will be on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.