

**Eustis-Stratton**  
**Access to Resources/Transportation Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 22, 2023**

**In Attendance:** Jo Cooper, Bob Carlton, Wendy Boyle, Steve St. Jean, Pete Smith, Lorri Brown, Betsy Sawyer-Manter, Kat Blackstone, Patty Simpson, and Joyce Murray, Craig Zurhorst, Dawn Smith

**Overview/Summary:** Pete reviewed what we are learning about transportation, resource availability, and community engagement

**Reports and Discussion:**

- **Community Transportation:**

1. Craig informed us that WMT is considering sending a bus to Eustis one day a month to take people to Farmington and will stop at FMH, Mt. Blue Plaza, Walmart and Hannafords. Riders can use WMT's demand response buses in Farmington to go to other locations. If the demand increases, they might increase the number of days they come to Eustis.

2. Betsy informed us that Seniors Plus receives funds for medical rides-\$10,000 for 3 counties. She is considering ways that Seniors Plus can reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage.

3. Dawn, Pete, and Wendy reviewed what they learned from their visits with Rangeley Health Rides and the Roadhouse. Pete asked Steve if he had an appetite for purchasing a car and creating a program that models the RHR program. Steve said that he would first want to know the costs to run their program. It was decided that we will continue to gather information about the possibility of coordinating health rides with Rangeley and community rides with the Roadhouse.

4. Craig suggested that talking with the towns along the Rt. 27 corridor regarding teaming up for transportation might make sense geographically. However there is tremendous need in Salem that would need to be put into the mix.

5. Bob asked "how do we get the word out about services?" There is so much distrust in media channels that a person who is trusted and known is the best way. Craig agreed that trust is a big issue and that people want to know that you are going to be around long enough for them to invest their trust in you.

6. It was agreed that a place to start is to compile all the known existing transportation resources.

**Access to Resources:**

1. Lorri said there is a new resource navigator at Rangeley Health and Wellness and that maybe we should connect with her to see how she can help.
2. Steve will continue to see if a local person could apply for the HCC navigator position
3. Betsy asked if there is a place that her staff could meet one-on-one with citizens once a month to help them with questions/issues. Steve said that he'd take a closer look at the "ticket booth" in the community center. The idea is that staff from Seniors Plus and other organizations can have a set time each month that they can meet with people. Roadside signage, FB, Flyers, and other methods would be used to advertise.
4. The Food Pantry day is a good time for an organization to come and set up a table with information.

- **Community Demographics, Needs, and Communication:**

1. Wendy is compiling a list of people to mail the survey to. Betsy is interested in either mailing the survey or reimbursing the town once they mail it. She suggested it be mailed in a town envelope. The results from the survey will help Betsy too.

**Wrap Up/Next Steps:**

**Next meeting: July 10 at 5PM**

**Below is the agenda of the May 22, 2023 meeting that we followed**

**Report and Discussion Questions**

1. **Community Transportation-** Led by Pete, Dawn, Wendy, Janice
  - Local community transportation
  - Outside the community transportation

**What we have learned about community transportation:**

The needs for transportation for both in the local community and outside the community are met by a patchwork of solutions that include:

- Friends and family
- MaineCare rides
- VA (Gerry Barill) for Veterans to Togus on Mondays
- Carrabassett and Stratton taxis
- Limited, targeted transportation by CNA

**\*\*\*Information gathered about other programs:**

- Rangeley Health Rides
- Rangeley local Community Rides
- Roadhouse Hostel- possible solution for our local community rides

### **Questions about community transportation:**

- How well is the patchwork of solutions listed above meeting community needs?
- Who knows about the patchwork of solutions?
- What new information is available about regional transportation solutions?
- Do we continue to pursue discussions with Rangeley and Roadhouse to determine if they are viable options to add to the list of solutions?
- Can the community, or region, support a larger (beyond what is currently offered through the ad hoc network) volunteer-based transportation system to better meet community needs? Resources required would include:
  - Vehicle
  - Riders
  - Volunteer drivers
  - Paid coordinator

### **3. Access to Resources-** Led by Dawn and Janice

Citizens need help with:

- Medicare and other health insurance issues
- Medical needs; emergency, rehab, changing bandages, etc.
- Health care needs: routine visits and treatment visits
- Food assistance
- Heating assistance
- House cleaning/chores, yard work, snow shoveling, and misc. house projects
- Wills and advance directives

### **What we have learned about the resource needs:**

Like transportation, resources are met by a patchwork of programs and services:

- HCC, MaineHealth, WMCA, Economic Ministry, HeathReach, Seniors Plus, Pine Tree Legal, RHW, Lions, Wilton Career Center, Town of Eustis, United Way, Androscoggin Home Health,...and more
- Northstar Community Paramedical (potential to learn more)
- Telehealth (potential to implement)
- Meals on Wheel (Is it available for Stratton/Eustis?)
- Habitat for Humanity Home Repair (potential program to consider)
- Local elementary school to potentially formalize volunteer program
- Local Food Pantry

Citizens don't know about all the resources, who can access them, how, when, and where.

Pride, the need for independence, and concern that others need more help than they do often stop citizens from asking for help.

If we can find ways to help people receive more food aid it will free up money for heat

and other needs.

Citizens will work with people they know and trust.

**Questions about resources:**

- What is the status on the HCC Resource Navigator Position that will cover Stratton/Eustis as part of their territory?
- Will the above role of Resource Navigator fulfill all the needs of helping people know and navigate ALL resources available
- Might a Community Resource Navigator (Coordinator?) help community members address a wider scope of needs and resources? Examples:
  - How do we reframe “Food Pantry” and other resources so it is known they are available to all residents?
  - Work with the school to create a volunteer program to help people with yard work or other needs?
  - Serve as coordinator for volunteer transportation services

**4. Community Demographics, Needs and Communication-** led by Pete

**What we have learned:**

- There is a low response rate to the survey
- It was difficult to get 8 seniors to attend the Forum last Oct.
- Participation in the April 6th resource fair held at the community building was very low:
- Participation in “game day” at the community building is low. Attendance has ranged from 12 (high) to 6 people.

**Questions about demographics, needs and communication:**

*How do we engage and involve the community so that needs/wants are understood so that the correct services and programs are made available?*

- Do we mail the surveys to hopefully get more input?
- Do we convene a special community meeting to talk about needs and also how to best communicate with the citizens?
- Do we create a newsletter? If so, what is the content? Who is responsible for creating this? How is it distributed?
- What communities are informal networks of communication and should we be linking up with them? Ie. ATV club, snowmobile club, churches, Lions, Masons, Fotters?
- Would a community the Resource Navigator organically and deliberately get to know the citizens and through his/her face to face interactions either individually or in groups to learn what is needed, understand the best ways to communicate and to take action to let people know about existing programs/services and also to bring people together to solve problems?