

# Minutes

## Town of Acton Transportation Advisory Committee

Wed. Nov. 20, 2013  
Room 46, Town Hall  
730 pm

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### MEETING MINUTES

Town of Acton  
Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting of November 20, 2013

Meeting began 7:40 pm

Attending: Chair Franny Osman, Jim Citro, Bengt Muten, Selectman Mike Gowing,  
Michael Fisher

1, Citizens Concerns: none, except that TAC meeting was assigned to Room 46 but the advance announcement was that meeting would take place in Room 121.

2. Approval of July minutes

Next meeting will be on January 22 (or fourth Wednesday).

3. Update on what's new with MinuteVan service

Acton Life Magazine had an article about public transportation written by Franny Osman. Appeared in October issue as a cover story.

Transaction Dispatcher will soon be dispatching COA van and, we think, Boxboro's van, in addition to MinuteVan and RoadRunner.

Franny occasionally hears from citizens that our transportation doesn't work. One particular issue has to do with full van (or busy van) that wasn't available at time of need. Sometimes there are glitches.

The goal is to have same-day dispatch with use of any available van in Acton. Problem will be "when can you kick someone off" of COA van because senior citizen receives priority at any given time.

The MinuteVan system has been in operation since September 2010. TAC does not regularly receive activity reports from Transaction. TAC often does not hear about customer complaints because customers typically direct complaints to Transaction. MinuteVan recently added one hour in middle of day and reduced evening service from 7:15 pm to 6:15 pm. New schedule for afternoon is 1:15 to 6:15.

One concern about MinuteVan Rail Shuttle is that there is no van service from North Acton to train station. People in north Acton have to drive to parking lots in south Acton in order to use van.

Should we add another driver/van to cover needs in north Acton? A new route could avoid center of Town.

Or we could change the existing shuttle to a fixed route that runs on current route.

Costs of adding a loop at certain time of day from north side of town to train station: \$55/hour for a driver plus cost of another van.

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Right now town has about \$700K accumulated from metered parking at train station over the past ten or so years.

The Community Innovation Challenge Grant will be submitted two days from now. Seems as if we are on right track: more consolidation of service, more coordination between towns, etc. The grant will enable us to unite "transportation impact zones" clustered perhaps by type of use.

Crosstown Connect is now in existence, has an office in Clocktower Place. Five communities in first year: Acton, Boxboro, Maynard, Stow, and Littleton plus Clocktower place.

But now more towns and more commercial partners have wanted to join. Expansion has been supported by four of the five towns. Stow doesn't want to change things. COAs are reluctant to join because they don't want to commit their vans. Stow has four vehicles but fewer people.

They are able to pay for their vans with an assessment. Carlisle is considering.

Transaction would be the dispatcher. Right now they are dispatching MinuteVan and Road Runner and COA is dispatching the COA the van.

Starting Dec. 1 Transaction will dispatch Boxboro van. This adds another vehicle to the total of vans of available.

Maynard has 1 van and 1 driver working 3 or 4 days a week. They can take care of everyone getting around within Maynard but not if there's a trip to Emerson. Maynard selectman approved the new service but Maynard COA is objecting.

The fear is that seniors will not be served in a new system.

On Dec. 15 Acton joins the CC service.

The first thing that will be tested in "joint" operation will be the functioning of universal dispatch. Right now there are two hours of live dispatch, and then you leave a message, which means you can't get a ride today.

Question about weekend service. Would churches provide financial support for weekend pick-ups and drop-offs.

Easter Seals grant is a technology grant. Meanwhile the governor has issued Executive Order 530 that creates a mobility coordinator for the state. There also is a 22-member panel involved. A third element is Regional Coordinating Councils to pass information "up" to statewide officials. Originally the Easter Seals grant was for reaching out to other stakeholders for public transportation

Franny reports on her attendance at today's Smart Growth meeting. Panel discussion looked at public/private partnerships. One piece of information that came up is that ZipCar needs to have 35-40 subscribers per car in order to make the service viable.

Franny has been asked to join the LRTA Board as labor/rider spot. Mike Gowing currently is a member of the LRTA Board, but Board members are allocated percentage of vote according to size of the town. Acton has 4%. Lowell has 48%.

Franny will attend meeting in Worcester on Nov. 21 to investigate LRTA options further.

4. Discussion of letter from a resident about parking at train station

Letter-writer wants town to make more money from spots at the station that are not reserved for Acton.

Franny will respond, explaining why the parking fees are set the way they are.

TAC will prepare a proposal for parking fees that will be instituted when the new train station opens.

SATSAC has been asked by MBTA to provide some art/illustrations—5 panels--for use in the new train station. The choices seem to be Acton-centric so far, but Franny suggests that panels should represent regional use of the station.

4. No time to discuss bicycle next steps.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Notes taken by Michael Fisher, edited by Franny Osman

