



United Way
of Story County

Story County Transportation Collaboration
April 12, 2023- 1:00 pm, via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Present: Sharee Huffer (Aging Resources), Lisa Heddens (Story County B.O.S.), Shari Atwood (CyRide/AAMPO), Linda Hagedorn (League of Women Voters), Linda VonHolten (RSVP), Chris Mondak (LWV), Nikki Fischer (Ames Chamber), Danny Schnathorst (HIRTA), Jenni Talbot (McFarland), Kathy Pinkerton (The Salvation Army), Sarah Mansell (The Community Academy), Kalen Petersen (RSVP), Anneke Mundel (United Way)

I. Introductions

Mundel introduced Sarah Mansell, Associate Director of [The Community Academy](#), a new United Way and ASSET partner agency. Mansell stated that TCA offers long-term projects and mentorships (for example/ students planted and maintained seeds over the winter; these will now get planted and maintained in City parks). These projects include a number of programs starting this summer. Mansell said that they have 6 tiers of their sliding fee scale, following the federal poverty guidelines. For those with most limited resources, camps would cost \$5 per week. Mansell asked Transportation Collaboration members to share with those who might benefit. She also wondered about transportation options to their location in south Ames. Schnathorst stated that HIRTA offers rides for \$2.50 one way in Ames and \$5.00 one way from outside of Ames. He said they can transport children ages 3 years and up. Schnathorst and Heddens also shared the [HIRTA On Demand app](#) as a tool to request same-day rides as well. Atwood said that CyRide comes close to The Community Academy location with their Brown route. Reduced fares are \$0.50 one way and summer passes also are available. Atwood said that their summer schedule will be coming out soon and posted on the [CyRide website](#).

Mundel also welcomed Jenni Talbot, new COO at McFarland (Roger Kluesner's replacement). Talbot said that she has been with McFarland Clinic for 15 years but in her current role for 7 months now. She looks forward to working with the Transportation Collaboration.

II. Review January 18 Meeting Minutes – Minutes accepted as written.

III. Transportation Collaboration Amended Purpose Statement – Mundel shared two versions of the proposed new purpose statement. Mondak stated that she liked the slightly longer, first option as it centers the community with the language “educate the community.” The Collaboration members in attendance overwhelmingly agreed and adopted this as the new purpose statement, effective today:

“The Story County Transportation Collaboration works to identify persistent and emerging transportation needs and to develop/strengthen partnerships to address them. It also seeks to educate the community about the transportation challenges Story County residents face and provide information/resources about the variety of transportation services available.”

IV. Story County Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Fund – Mundel explained that the idea of a Vehicle Repair Fund (previously explored in 2020) has been revived, with The Salvation Army offering to be the lead agency and proposing that the fund expand to include maintenance. The

Transportation Collaboration has various members who are part of a subcommittee to support this new initiative by figuring out logistics (including which mechanics and/or dealerships with which to partner), fundraising, and more. Mundel shared that Cornerstone already has provided \$5,000 of seed money for this initiative. In response to a question from Mondak, Pinkerton stated that she hopes to raise at least \$5,000 more before launching formally. With their pilot “What Ifs” program, The Salvation Army has found that the average repairs cost \$350 while maintenance costs (such as oil changes or tire replacements) are considerably lower. Those interested in learning more and/or supporting this new initiative are welcomed to join the next subcommittee meeting – April 26, 1 pm, via Zoom. Email amundel@uwstory.org for the link.

- V. **Aging Resources** – Sharee Huffer provided an overview of transportation services available to Story County seniors and adults with disabilities in Story County. They use the “Go-Go Grandparent” app to connect clients with Uber and Lyft rides, partner with HIRTA and Central Iowa RSVP to arrange transportation, and also offer Family Caregiver funding to help a loved one get transportation to doctor appointments. Aging Resources also has funds available for 1-time assistance (available to a client once per year if needed); these funds can be used for vehicle repair costs, as well as other unexpected expenses (eye glasses, etc.). To access the Family Caregiver funding or one-time funding, clients should call Aging Resources and ask for a specialist who will review income eligibility and other guidelines. For additional information, please contact Sharee Huffer, Programs and Projects Specialist Director, Aging Resources of Central Iowa (515) 650-9507 / (800) 747-5352 – toll free / (515) 255-9442 – fax or by email at sharee.huffer@agingresources.com. Website: www.agingresources.com

- VI. **Some New Data to Mobilize Action** –Mundel shared that United Way of Story County continues to pull county-level indicator data in the areas of Health, Education, and Financial Stability, as well as to aggregate program-level data from its 34 partner agencies in the county. This data can be viewed at the “Scorecard” links viewable at www.uwstory.org/financial-stability ; www.uwstory.org/health ; www.uwstory.org/education. The two transportation-related indicator data points pulled annually are:

FS-Ind.1.5 - % of all Story County workers 16+ with no vehicle available to them

FS-Ind. 1.6 (edited) – Average commute time for Story County workers (minutes)

Trend data is available by moving the blue bar at the top to the right. Feel free to reach out to Mundel with any questions: amundel@uwstory.org

- VII. **Transportation Brochure** - Mundel reminded TC members to review and send any updates to the Collaboration’s brochure to Shari Atwood: satwood@cyride.com

VIII. **Updates from partners:**

- **Heartland of Story County** – Mundel shared that Deb Schildroth is leaving the City of Ames and transitioning to a new role at Heartland. Schildroth stated that she plans to continue attending the TC in her new capacity.
- **City of Ames** – Atwood shared that CyRide receive 2 new electric buses on Monday abd is planning an open house for later this month (more details to come). She also shared that the AAMPO is required to update its Passenger Transportation Plan in February 2024; she asked to be on the agenda for the next 2 meetings to obtain input from the Transportation Collaboration on projects (particularly to serve individuals with disabilities and seniors). Mundel asked if it would be possible to receive materials in advance for review; Atwood said yes and also provided

the link to the [current Passenger Transportation Plan 2020-2024](#) . Public input also will be sought through a meeting on May 15, 10 am.

- **McFarland Clinic** – Talbot stated that staff at McFarland have been distributing the TC brochure. A persistent need they are working to address is transportation for oncology and other wheelchair bound patients who do not have a ride home after their appointments; MGMC has been an important partner in this effort.
- **HIRTA and Story County BOS** – Heddens shared that she has actively been doing outreach for HIRTA in the rural communities of Story County. She has been meeting with clerks and sharing brochures, magnets, business cards, etc. She also has provided information for clerks to include in their social media posts and city newsletters. The Farm Bureau also will be publishing a write-up by Julia Castillo shortly. Heddens also has been partnering with Greg Piklapp of Ames Chamber/Economic Development Outreach to promote HIRTA/public transportation in the smaller communities in the county. Heddens said that HIRTA has since seen an increase of ridership by 30% and has added 3 new part-time drivers in Story County to accommodate this need. She has requested data on where specifically the need has increased and will have this information available to share at the next quarterly meeting. Heddens said she would be open to sharing the TC brochure when she meets with county clerks and others. Mundel said she would get this resource to Heddens shortly. – Schnathorst added that HIRTA’s “Beyond The Bus Symposium” is being held April 19th starting at 9 am. This free, online symposium has the theme “It Takes A Village” and will be focused on volunteer transportation. You can register and learn more [here](#).
- **The Salvation Army** – Pinkerton said TSA continues to offer food pantry delivery on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays, as well as on a case-by-case basis.
- **Wheels for Work** – Mundel said that they were able to give a Toyota Corolla to an applicant referred by TSA last week. There have been fewer donations this fiscal year, so individuals are often on the waiting list for quite a while.
- **Central Iowa RSVP** – Linda shared that they continue to add new clients for grocery and food pantry-related transportation, including in Sheldahl, Story City, Huxley, Collins, Maxwell, and Ames. She said they continue, also, to transport individuals for medical, transport commodity food boxes, etc. Petersen added that Central Iowa RSVP is nominating their volunteer drivers collectively for a Governor’s Award.
- **MICA & Construction – Question from Grant Olsen (community member and CyRide bus driver):** “Has anyone heard from people who have faced any challenges with walking or rolling to/from MICA or nearby businesses because all the crosswalks at South 16th and Duff have been temporarily closed for construction activities?” Mundel said that she heard from MICA food pantry that visitor numbers were down a bit, likely due to the construction. Pinkerton also said that she had heard from several clients who work in the area (Old Chicago and Marriott) that they had “nearly been run over” trying to get to work on bike or foot.

2023 Meeting Dates: July 12, October 11 (*Zoom format until otherwise announced*)