

MINUTES
SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

Mar. 7, 2013

ROLL CALL

Present: Andy Kehr, Chairman, Betty A'Brial, Jeanne Duntz, Richard Franklin, Nick LaCourte, Don Peterson, Rose Rider, Ed Sandfort

Absent: Betty Bader, Nancy Finkle

Also Present: Cynthia Ruiz, Dutchess County Transit Administrator, Brenda Cagle, Town Board Liaison. Several members of the community were also in attendance at the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Andy Kehr called the meeting to order at 9:28 A.M.

OPENING REMARKS

Andy welcomed Dutchess County Transit Administrator, Cynthia Ruiz and thanked Brenda Cagle for arranging for Cynthia to come and speak to the Committee. He noted that transportation has been an ongoing concern of the Committee.

Andy welcomed the newest members of the Committee, Ed Sandfort and Don Peterson, who were voted in at the last Town Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES, FEB. 14, 2013 MEETING

Andy asked if there were any changes or other modifications to the Minutes. Hearing none, Rose made a motion to accept the Minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Jeanne and all were in favor.

FOOD DRIVE

Andy explained that the Food Drives have been moved to the Spring due to frequent problems caused by inclement winter weather. The last drive, which was an overwhelming success, had been targeted at providing summer meals for needy children in the Red Hook School District. The theme was "Give a Child a Summer Meal."

Jeanne said she had spoken to the President of the Seniors group, who said that the Drive could be held on either June 4th or June 11th. The Committee decided on the June 11th date at the Firehouse between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M.. Jeanne raised the question of whether it would be possible to arrange for evening hours as well. Andy suggested use of the Firehouse between six and eight PM. Rose said that Community Action would then have to pick up donations both in the afternoon and the evening. Andy will call Community Action to make the arrangements. Dick left the room for a few minutes, contacted the Firehouse and obtained approval for its use in the evening. Brenda and Dick volunteered to be present for the evening hours.

Andy summarized the arrangements. The Give a Child a Summer Meal will take place at the Firehouse on June 11th from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. and 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.. Andy will confirm the evening pick up of donations with Community Action.

The following PR for the event was decided upon. Sheila will contact the Observer two weeks prior. She will contact the newspapers at the end of May. Jeanne will update the previous announcement and put it up at the Town Hall. Dick will arrange for use of the Mason's sign near the baseball field. Betty will arrange for use of the Hold Cow sign. She will also put an announcement in her church newsletter. As soon as the announcement is updated, Sheila will send it to the Sampler. She will also check to see if she has a template for the announcement. Andy will contact Paul Finch, Superintendent of the Red Hook School District. Last year, he wrote a letter in support of the Drive which was very helpful. Andy will also call Micki Strawinski and ask her to help spread the word.

TRANSPORTATION

Andy said it was a pleasure to have Cynthia Ruiz back to discuss transportation opportunities and he gave her the floor. She said that she has been working on the Red Hook situation and trying to make it possible for Red Hook to have transportation for shopping and medical appointments. A stop at Hannaford on the C Route was considered; however keeping the bus on schedule would pose a problem.

One option is the Flex bus, which is sponsored by Dutchess County. It is like Dial A Ride in that it will pick a person up once a reservation has been made. Reservations can be made Monday to Friday between 9:30 AM and 2:30 PM. They must be made at least three days in advance, but can be made up to thirty days in advance.

She said that it might be possible to try a pilot program in Red Hook; however it must be used or Red Hook would lose it. She brought with her Dial A Ride forms which can be used to apply for this new program. The form can be filled out and brought back to her or it can be filled out on line. The Dial A Ride application is being used at this time because there is no application form for the new program as it is not yet an official service of Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation. The intent is to see if people will subscribe to such a service and use it.

The service will be focused on getting people to grocery stores. The bus would start in Poughkeepsie and come up Route 9G. It will be a point deviated service, i.e. it will have specific fixed stops but people can be picked up at points other than the fixed stops. The bus will travel north to Red Hook, stopping at Hyde Park. Anyone who has a reservation will get picked up. It will go to Red Hook Commons and then to Hannaford to drop people off. While Red Hook passengers shop, the bus will bring Hyde Park passengers back. If a passenger wants to go to a morning doctor's appointment, it may be possible to drop that person off after the Hannaford stop and pick them up after the other passengers have come back from doing their shopping. The bus will stop at the Town Hall two or three times during the day. Red Hook will be the end of the line. It will not go to Tivoli at this time. A similar program is running in Ulster County and has been successful.

Rose asked how far out of the Village the bus would go. Cynthia responded that it would go as far as time permits. Her purpose today, she said, is to get people signed up. Jeanne asked about stopping at housing developments. Cynthia replied that the bus would stop if it can get in and out of the development safely.

Dick said that the Medical Building is next to Stop and Shop, which would provide an alternative for food shopping. He also asked if it might be possible for people to call orders into Hannaford and have them ready for pick up. Cynthia said that they would have to give people time to shop. Ed asked if it would be a daily service. Cynthia said that it would be offered two to three times a week and would go different places on different days. Perhaps once a month a special trip, such as Walmart, might be offered.

Betty A'Brial asked if the bus would go to the middle of Red Hook and Cynthia said that it would. Jeanne asked if the service would be door to door. Cynthia said that it would be curb to curb. Passengers would be permitted to have up to four packages each and would have to ask the driver for assistance with those packages. The driver can take the packages out of a cart and put them in the bus. Packages cannot be kept on seats or on the floor, as this poses safety hazards. The driver would also assist a person using a walker and would store the walker. The drivers are not allowed to accept any tips.

In response to Andy's question, Cynthia said that the bus would make designated stops plus stops for those who have made reservations. She said that up to 50% of the seats on the bus could be reserved. That would be about ten people. A reservation for a single trip must be made within three days of the scheduled trip. Cynthia said that if a seat has been reserved and the passenger no longer wishes to make the trip, the passenger must cancel the reservation at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled trip or s/he would have to pay the fare. A weekly reservation is called a subscription. A single trip or a subscription can be cancelled by simply calling.

Andy asked about the pickup and drop off times. Cynthia said that they would be similar to those for Dial A Ride, i.e. mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Jeanne asked what happens when the weather is bad. Cynthia said that if the bus trip is cancelled due to snow, ice or other inclement weather, this would be announced on the radio (on the Cumulus group) and would also appear on the website.

Cynthia said that if enough people sign up for the service, a large bus or two buses might be assigned to the route. She handed out her card and made registration forms available to the group. She said that if a person has a disability which makes it impossible for them to get to the route, they can apply for ADA if they live within a quarter of a mile of the route. The cost would be \$3.50 one way.

Jeanne asked how much time the Committee has to get this information to the public. Cynthia said that the information should be disseminated as soon as possible. Everyone who registers will be called when a trial run is arranged. Jeanne said that she could contact the Council of Churches and suggested that the newspapers be contacted. Cynthia said that she would have to rely on the group to tell people to register and to

make contacts; however she did not want the papers to be notified yet. She stressed that if the service is not used, Red Hook will lose it. In order to get budgeting, she has to show that the people want this service and will use it. She asked the group to get people to submit the forms so that she has addresses and then she will make an announcement. In response to Ed's questions, she said that the sooner the forms are submitted, the sooner Red Hook will have the service.

In response to questioning, Cynthia said that if the bus arrives at a pick up point and the person who has the reservation does not come out, that person's designated emergency contact would be called. If necessary, the police would be contacted after that. Nancy asked how much time the passengers would have at a stop. Cynthia replied that it would be about 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours. The exact amount of time would depend on how many people have signed up for the trip. In response to questions regarding the fare, Cynthia said that she could not give a definite answer, but it might be \$1.75. Ed asked if there would be any subsidy from the town and she said there would not be. If there are any questions after someone has registered, they can contact Cynthia.

Andy noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be at Red Hook Commons and questioned whether there are potentially a lot of people there who would be interested. He felt that the group must go out and get people on board because people do want to use this service. He suggested setting up a list of people who will make various contacts, e.g. churches, Red Hook Commons, etc. Cynthia said that she will develop a generic registration form. She has the funding and has done the planning. All that is needed now is the people. We are ready to go, she said. In response to Brenda's question, Cynthia said that she only needs five people to register. She said that these services are most frequently used by senior citizen complexes and areas where there are people with disabilities.

Betty A'Brial and Nancy took forms to bring to their churches. Betty will contact the Council of Churches. Dick will contact the Masons. Rose will contact AARP. Brenda suggested that Hannaford might be asked if they would provide coffee and cake on the days on which scheduled stops will be made there. Jeanne offered to contact Hannaford and Stop & Shop. Andy felt that they would want to see the service start before making any commitments. Don offered to contact the groups he belongs to and his neighbors.

Andy asked Nick if he would spearhead this at Red Hook Commons and Nick agreed to do so. Nick said that he has the list of the fourteen people who used Dial A Ride and he will be contacting those people. In response to questioning, Cynthia said that the service would be limited to Red Hook proper, not Upper Red Hook or Tivoli. Once she has all the paperwork, the addresses can be plotted and she can determine exactly what can be done.

Andy asked Cynthia if she might be available to go to a special meeting of the Committee at Red Hook Commons. As she did not have her schedule with her, it was agreed that Nick would call her in this regard.

Cynthia said that all information which is submitted on the registration forms would be kept private. No information is sold or shared. She said that on the registration form one can name a contact person; otherwise the County will not let anyone know you are riding the bus. She said that the form is on the website and can be filled out on line. Rose urged the members of the Committee to take some of the forms which Cynthia had brought and to give them to others.

The question of bus stop signs was raised and Cynthia said that an agreement has been submitted to Red Hook and when it is signed, signs and shelters or benches will be provided.

As there were no further questions, Andy thanked Cynthia for coming to the meeting and presenting this transportation plan. He said that the Town appreciates the opportunity to establish this important service.

CHANGE IN TIME AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING

Andy announced that the next meeting would be held on April 4, 2013 at 10:00 A.M.. at Building 17, Red Hook Commons.

ADJOURNMENT

Dick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Don and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 A.M.

Minutes submitted by:
Sheila Franklin, Secretary
Sr. Services Committee