



TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

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Foxborough Committee for Disabled Citizens (FCDC) Minutes of November 28, 2011

Meeting held at Council on Aging, 75 Central Street, Foxborough, MA.

Present: Sue Collins, Cindy Curran, Margaret Chaisson, and Bill Casbarra

Guests:

Tony Williams

Charlie Hobbs

Vicki Lowe (Foxborough Council on Aging & Human Services Director)

Chuck Curran (Kiesling)

Joanne LaFerrara (Administrative Customer Relation for GATRA)

Frank Gay (Regional Administrator for GATRA)

Business of the Foxborough Committee for Disabled Citizens:

- Minutes of October 26- Motion by Margaret to accept the Minutes. Second by Cindy C.
- Sue stated that she wrote a letter to Selectmen requesting that 2 members of the Committee who had numerous unexcused absences be removed.
- New members Tony Williams and Charlie Hobbs introduced themselves.
- Tony Williams works with Independent Living. He is looking forward to joining our Committee and helping us create an environment in Foxborough that is all inclusive.
- Charlie Hobbs has expertise with ADA codes, especially with doors, and talked a bit about how Doors can be a huge obstacle to people with disabilities.

Introduction of guests:

Discussion of transportation issues for Foxborough residents who are disabled:

Margaret C. began by saying she would like to clarify availability of transportation services for the disabled and the elderly. She is involved with various groups and boards that deal with people with disabilities and sees an increased need for transportation for the disabled. Foxborough's Veterans Agent Mike Johns has expressed a need for vets to get to appointments at the VA hospital in Brockton as well.

She noted that she had been introduced to a Foxborough resident, Jim Oliver, who has a lot of knowledge on the subject of transportation at the Para-transit Hearings in Boston recently. He agreed to come before this committee to share his information, but he was unable to come today.

Frank Gay explained that Foxborough began receiving services from GATRA about 5-6 years ago, and is allocated \$100,000-105,000 annually from a fund supported by fees

from cities and towns that host railroad tracks. The services are limited to a program called Dial-A-Ride and a program called "Miles for Health."

Dial-A-Ride provides free door-to-door transport for short distance trips, but is mainly able to provide service only to and from the Norwood area due to constrictions of funding and vehicles. (This is in contradiction to the stated parameters of the Dial-A-Ride program, which is intended to provide transportation to an area of 15 miles in any direction).

Miles For Health provides door-to-door transportation for longer trips to specific geographical areas (Boston, Framingham) for medical appointments.

Frank Gay explained that the current arrangements were crafted by the Regional Board of GATRA, and they would have to approve any modifications. Additional services would require additional funding, which would have to come from the Town and would require approval of various Town Boards and personnel.

A rough estimate is that services cost about \$55/hour.

Chuck Curran from Kiesling, the GATRA subcontractor that actually provides the transportation, explained that the original model for services was to provide transport in a 15 mile radius, but that they had to abandon that model in favor of serving the greatest number of people, which meant generally limiting transport to the Norwood area and back.

There are only 4 vehicles to serve a multi-town region. The majority of patrons are elderly.

There are a few grants that provide some additional services, but none that currently cover Foxborough residents.

Margaret listed several long-term goals for expanded services:

- Travel Training for students with special needs
- Saturday service
- Transport to Brockton for veterans
- Transport to areas other than Norwood
- Commuter transport for disabled persons to supported employment centers

Sue added that Gary Talbot who works for the MBTA as Assistant General Manager for SystemWide Accessibility may be interested in coming to a meeting (just found out Gary was promoted to a position at Amtrak in PA).

It was agreed that proper needs assessment must be done. Bill Casbarra recommended contacting Foxborough Town Planner Sharon Wason for assistance, and Frank Gay suggested contacting a regional agency for help. Margaret agreed to take the lead on this project.

Motion to Adjourn- Margaret. Second by Cindy. Motion passed.

Next Meeting-January 18 at 3 PM at Town Hall