

MINUTES
ASSET Administrative Team

August 7, 2019, 12:15 p.m.

United Way of Story County, 315 Clark Avenue, Ames IA

The Analysis of Social Services Evaluation Team (ASSET) Administrative Team met at 12:15 p.m. at United Way of Story County, 315 Clark Avenue with the following members present: Jean Kresse, Lisa McCoy, Deb Schildroth, and Karla Webb.

APPROVAL OF JULY 3, 2019 MINUTES

Moved by Schildroth, seconded by Webb to approve the July 3, 2019 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The balance was reported as \$2,331.56.

NEW BUSINESS

2020 Needs Assessment – Ms. Schildroth said the Story County Quality of Life Alliance is working on this, and the process is driven by Mary Greeley Medical Center (MGMC) Home Health Services because of their requirement by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) for the assessment and the plan required after the assessment. She told the group that a couple individuals will collect data and analyze the data, and facilitate focus groups including users of services, agency representatives, service providers, etc. She said the committee is considering a survey as well. The assessment will be kicked off around February. Ms. Schildroth said this is important to ASSET because Funders desire a common way to identify needs.

Agency Training Agenda and PowerPoint – The agenda and PowerPoint were reviewed.

Training for New(er) Agency Directors – Ms. Kresse said with many new agency directors and some directors asking for additional information, additional training will be offered after the annual agency training on August 19. Erin will send an email to those attending to ask if there are any topics of interest.

HIRTA Funding Request to Story County Board of Supervisors – Ms. Webb said HIRTA representatives came to a Story County Board of Supervisors meeting to discuss cuts in funding, and Supervisor Olson asked them to put a request together for the Board. Ms. Webb reviewed the request and noted the Supervisors voted to approve funding to HIRTA in the amount of \$3,690 to reinstate the out-of-town trips that were reduced because of reduced revenue from Aging Resources. The Board did not take action on anything else until further information is received on the county's FY20 budget and to allow time for the ASSET Admin Team to review the request and provide further information to the Board. Ms. Schildroth said the Administrative Team staff submitted questions about that request to HIRTA in advance of this meeting for clarification.

Ms. Kresse said HIRTA didn't request an increase in funding for its services from ASSET for fiscal year 19/20. Ms. Webb said higher Medicaid rates were negotiated, which will help. It was noted that HIRTA Executive Director Julia Castillo believes, of the options given the Supervisors, the marketing and outreach staff person would be the most beneficial.

HIRTA Executive Director Julia Castillo and Business Development Manager Brooke Ramsey joined the meeting telephonically. Ms. Webb asked them to address the previously submitted questions.

Ms. Castillo said the County funding for the proposed year (19/20) has been reduced. She said in 18/19 HIRTA made 24 shuttle trips to Iowa City with Story County residents from Ames, Nevada, and Maxwell riding. She said no changes have been made to City rides. For Story County rides, the Ames to Nevada shuttle goes six times a day instead of every hour. The Ames to Boone shuttle was going every hour and now goes three times a day. Ms. Webb asked if the Ames to Boone shuttle was funded with Story County dollars. Ms. Ramsey said no. Ms. Webb asked if it is included in the budget. Ms. Ramsey said yes. Ms. Schildroth asked if that route is included on the ABF 4 as non-ASSET. It was noted reports are done based on residence of the rider, not the destination.

Ms. Kresse asked about reducing scheduled rides with Nevada and Boone, and how prospective riders will be impacted by the reduction. Ms. Castillo said they had to lay off some drivers, so they are down drivers (14 total, 6 Story County). She said fewer vehicles are available so buses are fuller. There are more riders on each bus now. Ms. Ramsey said they have changed the internal process of scheduling rides, and riders are told they will be picked up within a 20 minute window. She said there were some trips with only one or two people riding at a time, so now trips are less frequent.

An Administrative Team member asked what the plan is to address the shortfalls while providing necessary services going forward, and stabilize operations. Ms. Castillo said HIRTA is raising fares from \$2 to \$2.50 in town and from \$4 to \$5.00 in the County. HIRTA hasn't raised fares in eight years and the Board feels it is appropriate with the reduction in funding. She said the drivers had a safety check with 45 minutes before and 30 minutes after route to verify bus condition, and that will be reduced by 15 minutes. Ms. Castillo said morning trips were starting at 6:00 a.m. but HIRTA doesn't need to start in Story County until 6:30 a.m. because of the CyRide contract (they will be contacting the two riders that ride between 6 and 6:30 to see how changing start time to 6:30 a.m. will affect them). She said a grant from Iowa DOT to provide system redesign by looking at services to make them less expensive was awarded and the process will start next month to find cost savings areas. Ms. Castillo said they have negotiated most contract rates with CICS, CyRide, and the MCO's to increase rates and do more shuttle-type services that are less expensive for riders and for HIRTA.

A member of the Administrative Team asked for examples of outreach and education services provided by the Mobility Coordinator when that position was funded. Ms. Castillo said on August 1, 2018 that position was eliminated because of the cut in federal funding, so HIRTA hasn't had anyone to do outreach and coordination since then. Discussion ensued regarding donations per ride now and when outreach was being done. Ms. Ramsey said there are 20-50 new riders every month, and not everyone is put on the most appropriate funding source. She said some Ames residents would qualify for the Dial-A-Ride program. Ms. Kresse asked how many. Ms. Ramsey said 72 or 73 people. Ms. Kresse asked if the Mobility Coordinator was paid by federal funds. Ms. Castillo said 80% was paid by federal funds at first, then state funds, and now those funds have been eliminated. Some riders should be under an MCO or waiver program but the process is so daunting they sometimes just pay the \$2 fare. So instead of getting \$14/\$15 a trip HIRTA gets \$2 per trip because the rider doesn't understand the funding. Ms. Webb asked if they screen riders to get that information. Ms. Castillo said staff is not available to do that currently. Ms. Ramsey said HIRTA received a 10% reduction from Aging Resources and they questioned how low the donations have been and what HIRTA would do to increase donations.

Ms. Kresse asked if the marketing/outreach staff person being proposed is an updated version of the Mobility Coordinator position. Ms. Castillo said yes, that person would be out in the community to educate riders on the importance of donations so riders understand the downside of not donating anything. Ms. Ramsey said they also had a person that would do outreach like parades, booths, etc. Ms. Schildroth asked if this would be a position that could help HIRTA agency-wide. Ms. Castillo said the full-time mobility coordinator had a hard time reaching all seven communities, but spent a lot of time in Story County because of the meetings and networking opportunities. Ms. Castillo said the outreach position made a big impact on people because of the face to face interaction. She said more than one position would be ideal, but they know someone in Story County would be very beneficial. Ms. Kresse said she didn't see the Mobility Coordinator doing a lot of that in Story County, and saw her at the Transportation Collaboration meetings a couple times. Ms. Castillo said in looking forward the position would be structured differently. Ms. Castillo said this position would be very beneficial.

A member of the Administrative Team asked if HIRTA has lost riders for the trips to Nevada since changing from 12 trips per day to 6 trips per day. Ms. Castillo said no, the riders are getting to where they need to go, just at a different time. Ms. Webb asked how many individuals expressed concern on the reduction in trips. Ms. Ramsey said they heard about it in the sense it was different in the beginning. Ms. Castillo said they received around five complaints. Ms. Schildroth said the change is cost-effective, and more people per trip is the idea of public transportation. It was noted that \$78,000 in additional funds would be needed for the convenience of a few riders but does not appear cost effective. Ms. Kresse said HIRTA is a ride service, not an on-demand service.

A member from the Administrative Team asked how the customer service representative would be devoted to Story County only. Ms. Castillo said there are five positions that work with all counties. Ms. Ramsey said six full-time schedulers were cross-trained for all counties, and since the budget issue they have not replaced the schedulers that left, so they are down to three. Discussion ensued and questions were asked about bettering HIRTA financial health. It was noted that filling a vacant customer service representative position would help all counties, including Story County.

Ms. Castillo said the Notification Module expense will be built into the cost per unit rate in the future. She said it pays for itself in benefits and costs about \$12,000. Ms. Webb said it could be added on the ABF 7A on the fees line. Ms. Ramsey said HIRTA has created a stand-alone 501(c)3 in order to accept other grant money. It was noted that other United Ways would be willing to contribute once that status is given.

Ms. Webb asked if rate increases have been approved. Ms. Castillo said HIRTA has to publicize new rates for 45 days, and if a hearing is requested they must hold a hearing. A public hearing is already scheduled for September 26. Ms. Castillo said the HIRTA Board approved rate increases provided the proper procedures are followed. Ms. Kresse asked if they have calculated what is expected with the new rates. Ms. Castillo said she can provide that information. Ms. Schildroth asked when the new rates would go into effect. Ms. Castillo said October 1, 2019. Ms. Webb said the Story County Transportation brochure would need updated if the fares are changed. Ms. Kresse said Sherri Atwood at CyRide updates the website and the information so it should be up to date.

Ms. Webb asked if HIRTA intends to request funding from any other ASSET funders. Ms. Castillo said they have talked about requesting an increase from the City of Ames during the budget process. She also noted other cities that could contribute and noted that Ms. Ramsey will be meeting with Nevada and other cities about assistance. Ms. Schildroth said the FY20 HIRTA contract with the City reflects a 2%

increase over FY19. It was noted that funding for Iowa City trips was not requested from the City for 19/20.

Ms. Castillo and Ms. Ramsey left the meeting.

It was discussed that the trips to Nevada are still working with less frequency. It was discussed that bringing back a customer service representative position that is region-wide is beneficial, as they are cross-trained. Ms. Kresse said she's unsure how the outreach can benefit the right people. Ms. McCoy said presenting to groups isn't going to connect HIRTA to the right people. It was noted that there has to be more community discussion on how a marketing/outreach position can benefit the community.

Human Services Council – Ms. Webb said Human Services Council (HSC) is struggling to fill committee positions and they are looking at surveying members on whether they would like the Council to continue. They are looking at disbanding or having a different format. Ms. Kresse said HSC thought it had to continue because of ASSET, and the collaboration hasn't been functioning as intended for some time.

VCSC Plan Update – This item will be discussed at the September meeting.

Budget Forms – it was noted that changes on the 5(O) will be made.

Liaison Assignments – Updates were made.

Funder Priorities – Ms. Schildroth said City priorities stayed the same, but the sub-bullets are now prioritized. Ms. Webb said the County priorities stayed the same. Ms. Kresse said with the vacant position of Community Impact Director, she expects the priorities will stay the same. Ms. Schildroth provided a draft of the joint priorities, and it was decided to discuss them at the September meeting.

Healthy Life Center Update – Ms. Schildroth said the vote will be on September 10, 2019. She said on next week's City Council agenda are the agreements between the City and Heartland Senior Services (HSS), Story County, and Iowa State University. She said the City is working toward selling the building being used by HSS currently and those proceeds could go toward the Healthy Life Center, or if it doesn't pass the future location of HSS.

Draft ASSET Agenda – The agenda was reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS

HIRTA Updates – Ms. Schildroth shared the questions sent to HIRTA regarding the audit and the answers. It was noted that HIRTA had been on Story County's health insurance, and that ended in 2017. There are questions on the health insurance being made available to retirees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS

- A. Next ASSET Administrative Team Meeting – September 4, 2019 at 12:15 p.m. (United Way)
- B. Next ASSET Meeting – August 15, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. (City Church)
- C. Mandatory ASSET Agency Training – August 19, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. (City Hall)
- D. Budget Requests DUE: September 27, 2019

ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.