



## TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 134

APRIL 2023

### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2023

Think spring!



### UPDATE OF THE 2023 DTA CONFERENCE

Jacque Senger  
Executive Director, Dakota Transit  
Association

Your Board of Director's has been diligently working on the upcoming DTA Conference. The agenda will

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be placed on the DTA website in May. Dates are September 15<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The Sleep Inn & Suites will be the host hotel, phone number 701-837-3100.

### TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information  
Rod Grafiing 701-840-1405  
e-mail: [rod@southcentralseniors.org](mailto:rod@southcentralseniors.org)

“Learn continually. There’s always ‘one more thing’ to learn” – Steve Jobs

PASS training classes were held in Valley City and Devils Lake, ND. On March 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> respectively. Thank you to the trainers and all who attended.

There is still an option for a potential a PASS training class in western North Dakota this summer. There are no specifics at this time other than classes will most likely take place sometime in June or July of 2023. If you have drivers or staff in need of training or recertification, please email or call Rod using the contact info above.

North Dakota needs PASS trainers. If you or someone from your agency is interested in becoming a certified PASS trainer, please contact Rod at 701-840-1405.

## National RTAP

### Review Board Update

Brenda Schweitzer, Board Member  
Transit Program Coordinator, City of  
Sioux Falls

The Spring 2023 National RTAP Review Board Meeting was held in Washington, DC, March 28-30, 2023. Serving on this Review Board has been one of the greatest opportunities I've had in transit in terms of collaboration, staying current on federal updates, technology and gaining perspective from many other state and transit management members.

The meeting began with member updates for the 14 board members, handing the gavel to the new board Chair, Deborah Bach, (NM DOT), and election of the new Vice Chair, Jeremy Bell, (Choctaw Transit, MS). National RTAP staff as well as FTA Staff and additional guests also attended.

I've shared before and I'll emphasize again, National RTAP is the greatest resource for rural transportation's many training, technical, logistics, guidance and support needs. Learn about TACL! Please keep their website [www.nationalrtap.org](http://www.nationalrtap.org),

bookmarked and read their 'e-News' that comes to your inbox monthly!



#### *The Spring Meeting included:*

- Technical Assistance and Outreach Updates
- Rural and Tribal Transit Survey Analysis
- FTA and US DOT Updates
- Compliance and Technical Assistance with Partners
- Review Board Breakout Groups
- Transportation and Economic Development, Tourism, and Electrification program Planning
- TCRP Improving Rural and Tribal Transit and NRTAP Transit Managers Toolkit Tribal Pages
- RideSheet Updates
- 5<sup>th</sup> National RTAP Conference Updates (Myrtle Beach, SC; December 2023)

#### **Upcoming Webinars to consider adding to your calendars:**

- Succession Planning 101 ----- May 9<sup>th</sup>
- How to Find Anything Toolkit ----- June 13
- NCHRP Challenges & Successes with Shared-Use Mobility in Rural, Frontier, and Tribal Areas, with SUMC and TTI ----- June 29

The eLearning program is completing a module on Active Shooter Training. Under development are ADA, GTFS, ELDT (Entry Level Driver Training Theory Course).

**National RTAP Resource Center Stats:** Did you know in 2022 –

- 5,687 Training Modules were shipped.
- Over 35,000 views of our Toolkits, with ADA and Transit Manager's Toolkits being the highest.

- 99,293 visits and 176,064 pageviews of the website – Top Pages Viewed:
  - Training Overview 11,002
  - Resource Library 4,316
  - 2TP Training 3,974
  - Webinars 3,835
  - GTFS Builder 3,557
  - ProcurementPRO 3,331

**All transit programs need to be aware of this FTA requirement:**

### NTD Changes – GTFS Related Reporting

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law amended [49 U.S.C. 5339\(a\)](#) to require FTA to collect "geographic service area coverage" data through the NTD.

Section C: General Transit Feed Specifications Feed	Section D: Collecting Geospatial Data for Demand Response Modes
<p>Reporters with fixed route modes must create and maintain a public domain GTFS dataset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Maintain a web link from which the GTFS dataset can be collected.</li> <li>✓ BY 2023, establish and submit a web-hosted GTFS dataset for their fixed route service.</li> <li>✓ BY 2024, certify annually via the D-30 certification form that their previously submitted web links are up to date.</li> </ul>	<p>Reporters with demand response modes must provide data to related to their service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Do you service residents in other states</li> <li>✓ Counties service is provided</li> <li>✓ Census 'places' you serve</li> <li>✓ ADA complementary paratransit</li> <li>✓ Schedule and reservation data</li> <li>✓ Fee information</li> </ul>

While attending this meeting, I was able to meet with staffers of Senator Thune and Senator Rounds to discuss transit challenges and opportunities. We shared great conversation and I appreciate National RTAP staff arranging this and making it happen.

**TripSpark Conference in New Orleans**  
**Rose Drake**  
**Operations Manager**  
**Dickinson Public Transit**

Erin Humphrey and I attended the TripSpark conference in New Orleans at the beginning of April. Overall, we enjoyed learning about the possibility of

new advanced features that may help us to grow our services. We also enjoyed meeting the TripSpark staff and were excited to see they are incredibly open to feedback and suggestions. Some features we enjoyed learning about were the ability for riders to schedule their rides via an app, the ability to pay without cash, and the self-healing capabilities that the dispatching software utilizes to maintain doable rides continuously.

## BROTHERS & SISTERS BEHIND BARS

**Terry Hoffmann**  
**Co-Executive Director**  
**Community Transit of**  
**Watertown/Sisseton, Inc.**

The Watertown Area Community Foundation is a strong supporter of non-profits including Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton. The Foundation has several annual grant programs CTWSI applies for annually including the Giving Back 365 grant.

CTWSI has been successful the last two years in being awarded funds from this grant to transport clients of various non-profit organizations in Watertown, including the Brothers and Sisters Behind Bars organization.

“We consider our program a success any time we have the opportunity to serve individuals and be able to lift them up,” said BSBB Director Stacy Hendricks. “When they come to us there is no pressure on them, it’s all up to them what they want to do, what challenges they want to meet.”

BSBB is faith-based organization working with people dealing with addictions and trying to get their lives back on track. Getting the members to and from appointments, employment opportunities or even personal shopping trips was identified as one of the biggest needs since many do not own a vehicle or are prohibited from driving.

Discussions between CTWSI administrators and BSBB Director Stacy Hendricks eventually resulted in the submission of successful applications to the Foundation’s Giving Back 365 grant the last two years.

“We try to provide the clients with their essential needs and encourage them to get the help they need,” said Hendricks. “We try to fill in the gaps and transportation was identified as a major issue.”

The message they try to put out to members is they are not alone and that there is always hope for breaking free from the cycle of addiction. BSBB wants those in their program to feel loved, supported, understood, and challenged to pursue mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health so that they can become productive members of their community.

In 2018, BSBB began meeting with inmates in prisons and jail cells to speak with and mentor individuals. Listening to their issues, and frustrations about life in general created bonds. When the Covid-19 pandemic moved in, Hendricks and her seven member staff turned to Zoom and were able to continue their work with inmates.

“Watching these people work through their issues grabs at your heart, they are not bad people,” said Hendricks. “I was afraid of them at first, I quickly realized, we are no different, just in a different place.”

There have been many success stories directly related to the efforts of the BSBB. As a United Way applicant, CTWSI is required to identify and write about a success story as part of the application. Watertown resident Samantha Schave is living proof of the success of the program and how the transportation grant has played a role in her life.

“BSBB saved my life literally and transit played a major role,” said Schave. “I was not too interested in what they had to say when I first got here, but now I have a job, a car and a home. I still have obstacles to clear, but I’m in a better place.”

CTWSI provides rides daily for BSBB clients and Schave was one of the initial users using transit to and from work daily. Hendricks said she has conquered

many of the challenges put before her and continues to make steady progress as she moves through the program.

“Samantha has set many goals for herself and has met most of those, but she still has issues to deal with,” said Hendricks.

Since being awarded funding for transportation of BSBB clients, CTWSI provided 83 rides in Fiscal Year 2020; 153 rides in FY 2021 and 299 Rides in FY 2022.

Tidbit Articles:

Please contact me with articles for your agency.

Recycle:

Please share your Transit Tidbit with your staff and any interested persons.

Address:

Directors, please check with your bookkeepers as well as the rest of your staff to assure they have the correct DTA Mailing Address.

Thanks to all!



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