



## TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 159 July 2025

### THOUGHT FOR JULY 2025

A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.

### THE 2025 DTA CONFERENCE

Our 2025 DTA CONFERENCE will be held September 12<sup>th</sup> through September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Host City – Jamestown, ND

Host Hotel – Gladstone Inn & Suites

Phone - 701-252-0700

Rodeo and Conference will be held at the Jamestown Civic Center

### JAMESTOWN WELCOMES YOU!

Maureen Wegenke, Transit Director

James River Public Transit

Howdy from Jamestown!

See you in September!!

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### TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

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Are you or someone from your agency Interested in becoming a PASS trainer? CTAA now offers PASS – Train the Trainer certification 100% online. It's never been easier to become a PASS trainer. Please contact Rod for more info.

If you have drivers/staff in need of training or re-certification and would like to inquire about or schedule a class, please contact Rod using the information listed above.

## TRAINING REPORT

### Procurement II – Rutgers NTI

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



Attendees: Terry Hoffman, Jennifer Boehm  
(Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton,  
Inc.)

Location: SEPTA Training Facility,  
Philadelphia, PA

Dates: July 14–17, 2025

Duration: Four full days (9:00 a.m.–5:00  
p.m.)

#### **Training Overview:**

The Procurement II course is part of a four-level series presented by the Rutgers University National Transit Institute. Designed for public transportation professionals, this course focused on two key areas:

- **Risk management** in the procurement process
- **Basic cost and price analysis** procedures

#### **Instructional Format:**

- PowerPoint presentations
- Instructor-led case studies
- Group scenario discussions
- Printed handouts and activities

#### **Attendee Composition:**

Approximately 35 participants from a range of roles, including:

- Executive directors and assistant directors
- Procurement and contract specialists
- Controllers, purchasing agents, and maintenance supervisors

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- Perform cost analysis only when absolutely required
- Prioritize agreements that support all stakeholders
- Rigorously evaluate all offers and documentation

#### **Participant Feedback:**

The course was praised for being “excellent,” “fast-paced,” and “informative,” with content that provides a solid foundation for future procurement decision-making.

#### **Next Steps:**

Both attendees plan to continue with **Procurement III**, which will focus on negotiation techniques.

## **SOUTHWEST TRANSIT HOSTS PASS TRAINING IN BOWMAN**

Stephanie Fuchs, Director

Bowman, ND – June 17–18, 2025 – Southwest Public Transit held a specialized training program earlier this week to enhance the skills and knowledge of its transit operators. The program, known as PASS—Passenger Assistance, Safety, and Sensitivity—is a nationally recognized certification that ensures transit drivers are equipped to provide safe, respectful, and effective service to passengers, particularly those with disabilities or special mobility needs.



The two-day training, hosted in Bowman, was attended by transit employees from across the region. It was led by certified instructor Chris Lundebly, who brought both expertise and practical insight to the sessions. The

curriculum included hands-on instruction in wheelchair securement, lift operation, emergency procedures, and best practices for passenger interaction, with a strong focus on dignity and customer care.



Certification through PASS is required for all transit drivers across the nation, either as a part of new employee onboarding or as a bi-annual recertification for current staff. “The safety and comfort of our passengers is always a top priority,” said Lundebly. “PASS training ensures our drivers are prepared to meet a wide range of passenger needs with professionalism and compassion.

Southwest Public Transit serves the counties of Bowman, Hettinger, Adams, and Slope, helping residents access healthcare, employment, and other vital services through reliable public transportation. Like all transit agencies across the state, Southwest Transit is committed to maintaining high standards of

service through ongoing staff training and development.

By investing in programs like PASS, Southwest Public Transit continues to prioritize safety, accessibility, and excellence in community transportation.



## GRADUATION CEREMONY

Submitted by the Transit Staff at  
Community Transit of  
Watertown/Sisseton, Inc.

The courtroom was filled with emotion, pride, and hope as Codington County Treatment Court honored its largest graduating class to date. Five individuals walked across the stage, each completing a rigorous program grounded in accountability, integrity, and personal transformation. Since its inception, the Treatment Court has now seen 61 individuals graduate – each with a unique journey marked by resilience and renewal.

Among the graduates was Lizette Strutz, a part-time dispatcher for Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton, Inc. (CTWSI), whose story is one of remarkable strength and quiet determination.

Lizette’s connection to CTWSI began in a very different capacity – as a rider. While navigating medical appointments and attending meetings related to her addiction recovery, she relied on the public transit system to stay on track. In December, she joined the CTWSI team as a part-time dispatcher. Although she came to the position with limited computer skills, she approached the challenge with the same mindset that helped guide her through recovery: **“Show up, be honest, and try.”**

And try she did. Lizette worked diligently to learn dispatching systems and procedures and has become a dependable part of the CTWSI team. Her work ethic and heart for service did not go unnoticed.

At the graduation ceremony, Lizette celebrated **500 days of sobriety**, proudly signing the Treatment Court’s symbolic 500-Day Board. Even more impressive, she was **one of only three graduates who completed the program without a single sanction or violation**, earning the distinguished **yellow cord** in recognition of that achievement.

Throughout her recovery, Lizette faced significant health challenges, yet she never allowed them to define her. Instead, she focused on giving back—volunteering in her community, caring for her grandmother, and

becoming a role model for her sons. Her **gentle strength, unwavering faith**, and dignity in service have touched those around her and inspired others walking the same path.

At CTWSI, we are proud to have Lizette on our team. She is living proof that transformation is possible, that second chances matter, and that courage comes in many forms – often soft-spoken, yet unshakably strong.

Congratulations to Lizette and her fellow graduates. Your perseverance is a beacon of hope for all!



Jacque Senger, Executive Director, DTA

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### **Tidbit Articles**

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