

# NE Region 2020 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meeting Minutes

	Overnight
	Regular Mail
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Name of Project: NDOT NE Region Coordination Committee  
Meeting Location: Conference Call  
Date and Time: Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020; 11:30 – 14:00  
Attendees: Bill Biven; Matt Harrington; Katie Salerno; George Gallardo; Mike Piernicky; Alex Buskohl; Corinne Donahue; Bob Bourne; Dani Wright; Kari Ruse; Talia Villalpando; Janice Johnson; Jeanne Doernerman; Nikki Pinkelman; Larry Vortherms; Dana Klabenes

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1. Introductions and roll call.
2. Corinne provided an update on how the virus has been affecting public transit.
  - a. Ponca is on lockdown due to a tribal state of emergency. They're still working on what that looks like in transportation.
  - b. Some agencies have stopped working for protection. Many have suspended fares to not touch money and are updating their websites with more information.
  - c. If states have declared a state of emergency, the FTA has released guidelines to cover 80% of operating experiences. Kari clarified that it will be 80-10-10 for operating and non-operating.
  - d. Jeanne has cut down on staff.
  - e. Janice and Alex: charter has gone to a standstill. Express is on reduced hours. They are monitoring it daily to see if there are further reductions they need to do.
  - f. Nikki has cut back on hours and increased cleaning of the office and vehicles. Their go to has been bleach water for now.
  - g. Corinne was curious how far charter cancellations have gone. Alex says that he's seen cancellations mainly through March/April. He has one in Aug that canceled, but then again, several in April haven't canceled.
  - h. From the University: Matt and Bill have had agencies call in and ask but the majority of the guidance has been coming from the University
  - i. The hope is that May/June will be the start of normal travel.
  - j. The FTA is working from home exclusively.
  - k. Corinne stated that it's important to continue updating clients and monitoring the situation for your staff. Health and safety are most important
3. Updated Reference Guide
  - a. Please use the reference guide in case someone should call, and you're closed. There might be an agency that can help them out.
  - b. Matt has made several changes since the 2019 Q4 Meeting.
    - i. Avera St. Anthony's was added
    - ii. Nikki's number has been corrected.
    - iii. There are more changes to come!
    - iv. If you have any changes, send it through the portal. The information goes to Matt so he can update the website, the guide, and more. Otherwise, a quick email to Matt works just as well! [mgharrington@unomaha.edu](mailto:mgharrington@unomaha.edu).

4. Public Awareness
  - a. There was a video and article published related to rural transit.
  - b. The article highlighted David Mentzer and Winnebago Transit.
  - c. The video highlighted Bill and Kari and covered improving transportation in Nebraska.
  - d. There is also a video by Olsson that will be sent out.
5. Northeast Regional Goals/Objectives
  - a. By communicating, we can continue and create coordination that can foster creative solutions to meeting the needs of our clients.
  - b. Community Engagement: this includes not only our clients, but government officials.
  - c. Technology is coming! There will be a list coming from NDOT for qualified software that can help trip planning and making reporting easier.
  - d. Dani said it wasn't hard, you just had to learn it. The biggest challenge was teaching drivers how to use the new software and hardware.
  - e. Jeanne agrees that it wasn't hard to learn. The struggle was learning how to ask what you needed. The software can do it, it was knowing what to ask so it would do what you wanted. The reporting has been so easy!
  - f. Nikki asked about how others implemented the hardware. Dani said that the Ponca bought the hardware/iPhone and it's owned by Ponca. Jeanne bought tablets and got direction from the company for exact specifications.
  - g. Larry hasn't yet gone to software because of their Medicaid trips. They would need a software that can blend three different software.
  - h. Jeanne uses NBTS for the tickets, so interlining is easier. They have another software for other things.
6. Goals
  - a. Nikki knows that coordination is needed because she needs help identifying needs in her current service area.
7. Northeast Region Summary
  - a. Corinne reviewed data from last December.
  - b. The F stands for needed facilities.
  - c. The Stars represent all the places that we've heard a need (NDOT, Mobility Management, agencies).
  - d. Larry goes where he needs to. Their biggest issue is outreach/marketing/branding. Their wrap says Avera and most assume they are hospital only.
  - e. Dani says her expansion really depends on what happens in Norfolk.
    - i. Stephanie with Ponca is no longer on the Transportation side of the Tribe but has moved to economic development.
  - f. Jeanne is unsure because, like Dani, expansion will be part of the plan. She also sees the Medicaid trips becoming a source of expansion.
    - i. Larry doesn't want to go to Norfolk because he'll get many of those trips.
  - g. Bob reviewed how the grocery stores might be a good expansion point.
    - i. Some agencies have made it an almost scheduled route. They'll have several towns they grab from one location and then go to a larger city (like Norfolk) and drop them at shopping and then pick them up for a lunch trip and there might be a medical trip as well.
    - ii. Three days a week has been found to be the most efficient.
    - iii. Jeanne likes the idea, there's definitely a need we just need to find it.
    - iv. Larry agrees with Jeanne. They want to go to Yankton and Norfolk. There currently aren't any flex/fixed route and it could be a good idea for the region.
    - v. Corinne wondered if this could be something Ponca do because they already serve all the areas.
    - vi. Dani said it's a possibility!
    - vii. The mobility management team will look into it.

8. Travel Training/Marketing
  - a. The team needs more agency feedback. Is assistance with marketing/travel training something we need in the NE?
    - i. Larry says yes. He knows marketing is something Avera needs, and he expects to get more into marketing, but he does have the issue of having everything approved by the hospital.
    - ii. Jeanne knows she needs to do more marketing. They're currently waiting on the changes in Norfolk before starting outreach again. They have gotten free advertising during transit week.
      1. The radio and the newspaper have run it as a PSA during the week (WJAG).
    - iii. Dani uses her Facebook page and similar.
  - b. The team will continue to focus on this in the coming quarters.
9. Creating Profiles: The team will work to identify short, realistic goals and action steps for the different agencies.
  - a. Continue quarterly meetings
  - b. Update and disseminate reference guide
  - c. Agency profiles
10. NE Public Transit Week
  - a. Matt has been working on different promos.
  - b. Buddy days, Veteran days, little public transit, free/reduced fares
  - c. Selfie days/contacts are great (*FREE!*) marketing
  - d. Ponca has a game of very competitive rock paper scissors. Dani said that they do it at each team meeting, the winner gets a certificate and a prize.
  - e. Matt has facts that each agency can download and post to social media. He expects to use it as a did you know series with prize with those who guess the right answer.
  - f. Matt newest idea is to do infographics on the agencies in Nebraska.
  - g. A special thanks to all who attended the Transit Manager's Workshop!
11. Next steps
  - a. Niobrara/Ponca offered to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter meeting potentially in July/Aug 2020 (if COVID-19 allows).