

Nebraska Transit Trends

2017 LEGISLATIVE EVENT

Registration for the 2017 Legislative Event is available on the NATP website. This event includes an afternoon of training and updates on March 7 at the Courtyard by Marriott in downtown Lincoln.

The afternoon will start off with a presentation about Nebraska's 150th Celebration by executive director Regan Anson and information about the Hildegard project from Donna Williams. Next, Tourism Development Consultant Micheal Collins will provide an update about Nebraska tourism. Following this, an update will be provided from NDOR and their consultant about the mobility management project. After a short break, the last speaker will be Rik Barrera from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln who will present on working with different generations in the workplace.



Last year, Governor Ricketts signed the 2016 proclamation declaring the second week in April as Public Transit Week.



Following the training, members are invited to participate in a special NATP membership meeting where we will hold the elections that should have been held in 2016 and discuss bylaw amendments proposed by the board. If you have any questions regarding the meeting or the bylaws, please call or email Tiffany Fougeron at the NATP office.

The next morning, attendees are invited to a free breakfast at the Ferguson House near the Capitol. Invitations have been sent to the Senators. Please contact your Senator and encourage him or her to attend.

Following the breakfast, we will move to the Capitol where we will witness Lt. Governor Foley sign a proclamation declaring the second week in April as Public Transit Week.

Register today for the event!



IN THIS ISSUE

NATP President's Message	2
Rural Transit, Community Benefits	3
2017 NATP Managers Workshop	4
National RTAP Conference	5
Kimball County News	6
NATP Executive Director Message	6
2017 Public Transit Week	7
NATP Hosts Booth at NACO	7
Dates to Remember/Board	8
Advance Open House	8

NATP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings to all,

It has been a busy couple of months at Saline County Area Transit since the new year began. The 2018 budget has been prepared and submitted. I was pleased to attend the open house that marked the commencement of Advance – an extended partnership created to promote, support and enhance public transportation statewide. I was invited to present a historical account of the development of Saline County's public transit system and all the services we currently provide at one of the senior centers and to the Chamber of Commerce members. We honored a retiring driver for 25 years of public service and we are preparing to host an annual soup luncheon for all of our patrons and business associates this weekend.

This time of year also ushers in another opportunity to tell our story of public service to our legislative representatives. In doing so, we need to relate the importance of our work – not just the number crunching aspect of funding for our budget, or even the mind-numbing statistics of passenger miles driven, passenger boardings, vehicle revenue hours, etc. – but more importantly, the outcome of

the services provided. Tell of the people who are employed because they have timely, reliable transportation for work. Tell about employers who are elated to have transit service for employees on workers compensation needing transportation for physical therapy appointments. Tell also about the elderly who can stay longer in their own homes because of the added security and independence that we help provide. Tell of medical patients who don't have family, friends or neighbors available to take them multiple times per week for treatment. And tell of students and their families who count on us for safe, secure transportation to learning centers.

Senators need to be aware that our drivers provide service and care that goes far beyond driving from point A to point B. Drivers become friends, listeners and even advisers to many who need social contact as much as they need a ride. Our drivers touch many hearts and lives and improve the quality of living for our passengers. And your senators want to hear from you. You are the source of knowledge and information that they need. So make it personal. For my Senator, the NATP breakfast invitation went unanswered until I sent a message stating that I respect her time and service and gave a gentle reminder of the event along with information that Saline County Area Transit frequently transports her mother-in-law to Lincoln. I received an immediate response that though she has an eight o'clock meeting, she will attempt to stop in. She has a genuine, even personal, interest in hearing from her constituents as to what their transportation needs are.

What is being provided? What is still lacking? How may she help to improve public transit? These questions may lead to her support and assistance for public transit systems all across Nebraska.

So for those of you who are able to attend, I look forward to seeing you in Lincoln for breakfast and the proclamation as well as for Tuesday's afternoon of training and NATP's special meeting to address elections and bylaw amendments.

Hope you all have an enjoyable Spring. Until next time, safe travels everyone.

Scott Bartels
NATP President

PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK

Mark your calendars for the 2017 Public Transit Week which will take place April 9-15.

We look forward to seeing what ideas you have for this year. If you need some suggestions, visit <http://nebraskatransit.com/activities.php> for ideas from other transit systems.

RURAL TRANSIT, COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Operations teams at rural transit agencies often find themselves wearing many hats, and Scotts Bluff County Handy Bus Transportation System in western Nebraska is no exception. The transit agency takes riders on 150-200 trips daily, each averaging 5-6 miles, picking up clients within the area of Scotts Bluff and Gering. The agency also conducts 15-30 mile trips at least three times a week.

"We are very much a rural system, and we're it for our community," said Carol Prince, Scotts Bluff County Handy Bus Transportation System Director. "We know how much we are needed, and appreciate how much our clients appreciate us, too. Just this past week, a gentleman with a knee replacement used our service and stopped me. He said he did not know what he'd do without our service when his knee was healing to get to rehab."



Scotts Bluff County Handy Bus Transportation runs six vehicles and serves 3,000 riders a month in its county of 36,970 residents. Though rewarding, running such a system is not easy, particularly when it comes to balancing scheduling, dispatching, reimbursements and client care.

For example, with trips linked to 24 different funding sources, it was difficult for Scotts Bluff County Handybus Transportation System to keep track of and properly bill each trip. Furthermore, the transit agency's long-time partner, the Nebraska Department of



Health and Human Services required detailed reporting for Health and Human Services trips, which accounts for 10% of all trips the system runs. Manual scheduling became time consuming for their staff of four, and there was little flexibility to schedule same day trips for riders who requested them. It was then that the agency sought out more advanced technology with RouteMatch, an Atlanta-based technology company.

By using RouteMatch, Scotts Bluff County Handy Bus Transportation System was able to streamline the booking process and both gain better insight into and the ability to manipulate client trip requirements. The agency can also now tag all 24 funding sources to each trip and run detailed ad hoc reports that capture configurable items such as number of passengers who need wheelchairs or car seats as well as reports that meet the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services requirements. What used to take half a day each day for reporting now takes a few hours.

"Having this type of information was important as we pick up mentally challenged youth from group homes so they can get to their job development workshops and back home," said Carol. "This way, when a vehicle shows up, we know it is the right match."

With tablets for automated vehicle location and software to automatically update manifests in real time, same day trip requests are now also feasible. While dialysis patients maintained standing orders, the majority of the agency's clients booked 24 hours in advance, and some clients would request destination changes right before boarding the vehicle or mid-trip. This made keeping on time performance and capacity management difficult. The agency is now able to accommodate those switches, which meant providing a higher quality of service to customers.

"Our customers want more freedom to travel and it's great that they can make those last minute changes when they want to," said Carol.

The agency has served the community so well as the only transportation provider that now, there is discussion of expanding into offering fixed route service. Trips to popular locations such as Walmart and Western Nebraska Community College have become more frequent.

"For years, I've heard comments that people would like a fixed route," Carol explained. "They would like to get on and off the bus whenever they want to instead of having to call 24 hours in advance. Sometimes, if they call too late, we are not able to get them on the bus. With the fixed route, they should be able to get on whenever they want and ride wherever they want."

Submitted by Daisy Wall, RouteMatch Software.

2017 NATP MANAGERS WORKSHOP

Save the date for the 2017 NATP Managers Workshop taking place June 20-22 in Scottsbluff. The event will take place at the Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel & Conference Center.



Potential presentations include:

- NDOR General Updates
- Mobility Management Updates
- FTA Updates
- Making the Most our of Your Facebook Page
- Ethics in the Workplace
- Working with Local Governments
- Strategic Planning
- Homeland Security
- Marketing Your Community
- Roundtable Discussions



The annual banquet and membership meeting will take place on the evening of June 20.

During the banquet we will hold elections for the West Central, East Central and At-Large positions. If you are interested in running for one of these positions, contact Tiffany Fougeron at the NATP office.

We will have exhibitor time and prize drawings for two hours on June 21. We encourage you to invite vendors that you work with.

The Managers Workshop is a great time for learning, but more importantly, it is a time for networking. Catch up with old friends and meet newer managers.

More information, including the registration brochure, will be sent soon.

See you in Scottsbluff!

2017 CTAA EXPO

Save the Date for the CTAA Expo and Rodeo on June 11-18 in Detroit. Detroit is America's great comeback city. Downtown has been revitalized and the city is buzzing with an infectious new optimism and entrepreneurial spirit. Join us in this great American Renaissance city for the annual Community Transportation EXPO, your chance to collaborate with colleagues from around the nation and across the full spectrum of transportation service providers in a setting dedicated to fresh ideas, innovative products and services, networking and learning. From traditional transit systems to NEMT providers, mobility managers to volunteer operators, EXPO is the confluence of the community transportation field. In addition to important legislative discussions, there will be dozens of training sessions, workshops and networking events that will allow you to advance your understanding of issues, and develop fresh solutions and new approaches.



**3rd
National RTAP
Technical Assistance Conference
TRANSPORTATION AT THE CENTER**

**Omaha, Nebraska
October 29-November 1, 2017**

Presented by the National Rural Transit Assistance Program

For more information:
nationalrtap.org/conference2017
conference@nationalrtap.org

NATIONAL RTAP CONFERENCE

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program is excited to host the third biennial Technical Assistance Conference: Transportation at the Center. The conference will continue the great momentum that was started in Denver in 2015 with content from FTA's Technical Assistance Centers, workshops, round-tables, and a focus on practical solutions for rural and tribal transportation.

Participating and cooperating organizations include the Federal Transit Administration, Nebraska Department of Roads, Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers,

University of Nebraska, the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, and the National Center for Mobility Management.

The event will take place October 29 - November 1 in Omaha.

There is a room block available for attendees at the Hilton Omaha. You can reserve a room online or call 1-800-HILTONS and use group code "RTA" to make your reservation. There will be preconference events on Sunday so NATP members are invited to make a reservation for Saturday evening as well.



More information will be coming soon! Check www.nationalrtap.org/conference2017 for updates and agenda.

We look forward to seeing you in Omaha!

KIMBALL COUNTY NEWS

Kimball County has a few exciting changes to our services. Kimball County Shuttle has a new name; we adopted the name KIMBALL COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES.

KIMBALL COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES has a new administrator and I would like to welcome Christy Warner to our transit services.

Christy wears many hats here: she is on the City Council, she is the new Kimball County Human Resources Official and she is a Kimball County 911 dispatcher.

I am now Christy Warner's assistant and in the office five days a week and a relief driver if needed.

This has allowed us to expand our hours and we are in the process of expanding our services to Scottsbluff and Potter. In the future we will see if we can expand to other areas as well. We are transitioning over to a computer software program to schedule rides and collect fees in our office, instead of the driver handling this. We want to make driving safer for our drivers and help keep their concentration on driving and our riders. It is a slow process, but we are getting closer and hope to have the service available in March.

We have a couple of new relief drivers and would like to welcome Karen Munoz and Terry Lovesee. They were able

to attend the recent PASS and Defensive Driving classes in Kearney. Some of you may have met them. We still have our full-time driver, Kelly Durbin, and our part-time driver, Cindy Backes, who are doing a great job for KIMBALL COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES.

I am excited to move forward with our changes and new crew. Thank you to those who have helped us learn how to make our services better for our community and be able to expand these services.

Louanna Gawith

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE



We've been given some great "winter" weather on this side of the state so I haven't complained about winter as much as previous years.

We'll see how March and April play out!

Temps are supposed to be in the upper 60's next week in Lincoln so there shouldn't be any weather-related reasons to miss out on the Legislative Event! If you still haven't registered and would like to attend, please give me a call. We have a great afternoon of training and updates and an evening on your own to explore the Haymarket (I recommend eating at LeadBelly, HopCat or Blue Sushi!). The next morning we plan to have breakfast with our Senators at the Ferguson House and then witness the signing of the proclamation at the Capitol.

We are holding a special

membership meeting (need 20 for a quorum) after the training event on Tuesday. We are holding elections that should have taken place in 2016. Since we didn't have a quorum at the event in Kansas City, we are holding the elections now. We will also hold elections at the Managers Workshop this summer in Scottsbluff.

During this meeting, we will also present an amended version of the NATP bylaws. The board has worked on this version for quite some time as the bylaws haven't been updated in a while. The updates are mostly to clarify, clean up and address certain issues that have come up. I encourage you to review the document prior to the meeting and send any questions to me or members of the board.

As always, I invite you to share information, photos and updates from your transit system. It's great to include member information in the newsletter. The next deadline for inclusion is May 23.

This week I attended the NDOR Statewide Coordination Committee meeting which provided members an update on what is being accomplished for the Statewide Mobility Management Project. Attendees were very pleased with the progress. I was excited to see so many people at the table who are passionate about public transportation. One of those people is a lady I met at the Nebraska Federation of the Blind Conference. She indicated she wanted to have more of a voice for public transportation so I asked that Kari invite her to participate. She provided a lot of great insight and reminded us that while we are making improvements, we need to include those who don't have access to the typical visual means of communication.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Lincoln next week and I'm excited to see what you have planned for Public Transit Week.

Tiffany Fougerson

2017 PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK

The second week in April (9-15) is Public Transit Week in Nebraska. This is a great opportunity for public transit systems to raise awareness of public transportation in Nebraska communities, diminish any misconceptions about public transit (i.e. "it's only for the elderly, disabled, or poor."), and provide an opportunity to celebrate your system and your community.



Draft press releases, flyers and other marketing items are available that you can easily adjust to fit your transit system's events. Advertising expenses related to Public Transit Week will be reimbursed under administrative costs under the marketing category (90% reimbursement).

During Public Transit Week, systems are encouraged to develop daily events that would encourage the public to utilize public transportation or thank current riders for their continued support.



Some ideas include: Buddy Days, Dump the Pump, passenger appreciation, staff appreciation, travel training, veterans appreciation, Stuff the Bus, discounted/free rides on a certain day, hosting an open house, and much more. Visit www.nebraskatransit.com for ideas from other transit systems.



We welcome any ideas that you may have so we can share with other members. You do not need to do something every day to participate. We encourage you to choose events that are achievable for your system.



We look forward to seeing what your system does for Public Transit Week. Send photos and "Save the Dates" to the NATP office to share on social media.

NATP HOSTS BOOTH AT NACO CONFERENCE

NATP hosted a booth at the Nebraska Association of County Officials' (NACO) 122nd Annual Conference. The event took place December 14-16 at the Younes Convention Center in Kearney.

Tiffany Fougerson and Charles McGraw were on hand to talk about the importance of public transit and answer questions from county officials and staff from across the state.

NATP also provided a giveaway prize at the end of the event.

The next event that NATP will be participating in is the Municipal Clerk Institute and Academy event in Kearney on March 22.

If you have ideas for events that NATP should be participating in, please contact the office.



Tiffany Fougerson and Charles McGraw spoke with county officials and staff at the annual NACO Conference.

NATP 2016-2017 LEADERSHIP

BOARD MEMBERS

Western Region
Carol Prince
1825 10th Street
Gering, NE 69341

West Central Region
Charles McGraw
PO Box 2288
Kearney, NE 68848-2288

East Central Region
Jeff Baker, Treasurer
320 S 14th Street
Seward, NE 68434

Eastern Region
Scott Bartels, President
Box 412
Western, NE 68464

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tiffany Fougeron
tfougeron@youraam.com

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Brenda Halstead
300 N 2nd
O'Neill, NE 68763

Jonnie Kusek
816 Flack Ave.
Alliance, NE 69301

Omaha Metro
Curt Simon
222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102

City of Lincoln - STARTRAN
Mike Davis
710 "J" Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

NATP OFFICE

521 First Street, PO Box 10
Milford, NE 68405

Phone: 402-761-2216
Fax: 402.761.2224
www.neatp.org



**Next newsletter deadline is
May 23, 2017**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **May 23, 2017**

We want to know what all of our members are doing throughout the state. Also, if you see something newsworthy, be sure to let the office know. Submit your typed articles via email (as a word document) to the NATP office at **tfougeron@youraam.com**. You may include pictures if you like, but be sure to save them as a .jpeg file or they may not be included in the newsletter. Documents received after the deadline will appear in the next newsletter.

Visit Us On The Web!
www.neatp.org

transit video online

Check out Advance's Innovation and Safety in Transit video on YouTube. Numerous NATP managers and drivers are featured!



Dates To Remember

March

7-8 - Legislative Event
Lincoln

April

9-15 - Public Transit Week

June

11-16 - CTA Expo & Rodeo
Detroit, MI

20-22 Managers Workshop
Scottsbluff

October

29 - Nov. 1 - Nat'l RTAP Technology Conf.
Omaha, NE

ADVANCE OPEN HOUSE

The Nebraska Department of Roads Intermodal Planning Division, the Nebraska Safety Center at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and The Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Public Affairs and Community Service held an open house on February 1 at the Nebraska Innovation Campus in

Lincoln.

The open house was held to mark the commencement of Advance - an extended partnership to promote, support and enhance public transportation statewide. NATP board members and staff were able to attend the event.