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DTA Annual Conference

Your DTA Board of Directors are working hard to put together a memorable conference.

I am hoping each of you have put the DTA Conference on your calendars.

It is not too early to fill out the registration forms. All the information you can obtain is on the DTA website.

Jacque Senger,
DTA Executive
Director

Prairie Hills Transit Receives Federal Funding

Barb Cline, Director

Prairie Hills Transit - Spearfish, SD

Prairie Hills Transit will receive \$220,000 in Federal funding to expand services and increase customer access for transportation to medical and wellness appointments in rural and transit-dependent communities with a smartphone app for ride booking, updates, cancellation, and confirmation.

The intent is to make these resources more visible and easily accessible to citizens and bring down any perceived walls that “public transportation is not for me.” With easy access for all passengers, they can make their own transportation choices from the options available and make greater use of existing resources. This method will also allow PHT to be more efficient so the staff can focus on data driven planning for expanded routes.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced project selections totaling approximately \$9.6 million to 37 projects led by transit agencies, governmental authorities, and nonprofit organizations to support innovative transportation solutions to expand access to health care.

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Funding

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FTA's [Access and Mobility Partnership Grants](#) focus on transportation and technology solutions to reach medical appointments, access healthy food, and improve paratransit services. The program emphasizes better coordination between health care providers and transit agencies, as well as technology improvements such as mobility-on-demand shared transportation services and smart phone applications for booking services.

The FTA indicates that the selected projects will reduce barriers to critical healthcare in rural America, increase access to substance abuse treatment in response to the opioid crisis, and add new technologies to increase paratransit program efficiencies, among other solutions.

PHT is very excited to receive this award and looks forward to using technology to improve the rider experience. With a service area of over 16,500 sq. miles in western South Dakota, this will certainly be a long term benefit for all parties involved.

The grant will be managed by Lisa Johnson, Operation & Information Director for Prairie Hills Transit.

Training Update - Linda Freeman, PASS Coordinator

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Upcoming Session:

Dickinson, ND: July 25-27, 2019

July 25--8:00am to noon: Maltreatment Awareness Class

July 25--1:00 pm to 5:00 pm (at latest): Defensive Driving Class

July 26-27—8:00 am to 5:00pm (at latest) both days: PASS Class

July 27—8:00 am to 5:00 pm (at latest): PASS Recertification Class

All sessions will be held at Dickinson Public Transit, 361 26th St. East in Dickinson. Hotel Block is set up at the Dickinson Comfort Inn, 493 Elks Drive—Phone number: 701-264-7300. Be sure to state that you are making your reservation under the Dakota Transit Association block to get state rates. Register for classes on the DTA website.

As of now, there are no scheduled classes in South Dakota. Please let me know if any of you are interested in holding a session.

South Dakota Training & Program Meeting

Stephany Weed, Administrative Assistant
People's Transit - Huron, SD

The purpose of the meeting was to help applicants with grants that are monitored by The South Dakota Department of Transportation, Office of Air, Rail and Transit (SDDOT) understand procurement regulations. Jack Dokken (SDDOT) talked about a Discretionary Grant due June 12, 2019. He then introduced Barb Cline, the Executive Director of Prairie Hills Transit, who then spoke of an Innovative Technology Grant her team applied for through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Jack stated that 5311 funds have increased & SDDOT has started figuring out how the funds will be disbursed between the transit agencies. Single Audit & Risk Assessments are expected within many of the transit agencies. Jana Uhrig, DOT Auditor, explained the importance of ensuring the sub-recipients are acting in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and that they have comprehensive policies and procedures in place. Which ensure the terms and conditions of the grant are met.

Bob Hofer, Vehicle & Building Inspector, discussed his role in DOT. He mentioned that there were currently 15 projects within different transit agencies undergoing construction. Some of the construction updates included: River City Transit, Palace Transit, Yankton Transit, Prairie Hills Transit, Watertown Transit & Dell Rapids.

Terry Hoffman & Kathy Holman with Community Transit discussed the consolidation Watertown/Sisseton which now includes 8 counties. They discussed some of the challenges they had in



undergoing this process to get to where they are at today and the importance of keeping local identity.

Additional Transit News:

- Ride Line Transportation (Aberdeen) - Starting a summer program.
- Brookings Area Transit Authority - Discussed campus transit.
- Prairie Hills Transit (Spearfish) - New FTA Grant, New remote radios, and liquid springs on 2 busses.
- ICAP (Madison) - New buses coming.
- River City Transit (Pierre) - Upgrading to Optimization, online ordering & tracking of busses.
- Yankton Transit - Building addition.
- Vermillion Public Transit - Had transit week spotlighting drivers and riders & reconstruction of fares.
- Community Transit (Mitchell) - Facebook likes have increased. City Attorney helped collect past due bills from nursing facility.
- People's Transit (Huron) - Online sale of 5 busses. PT Passport expansion to 3 miles outside city limits.
- ROCS (Wagner) – VA Grant.

New Radios/Technology

Travis Bortnem, Resource Development Director
Brookings Area Transit Authority - Brookings, SD

The first week in July, Brookings Area Transit Authority received some new technology to replace their existing two-way radios.

Over the past couple months, we have been working hard to determine the best way to move forward with Our communication options. Having to comply with the change to meet P25 standards with our State Radio, we were looking at replacing all but two of our current two-way radios. Facing a dilemma such as this is a hard pill to swallow. While I'm sure there are agencies out there with more than 32 vehicles needing new radios; for us this wasn't going to be a time we just sat back and did the same old thing.

As I was talking with one of the vendors we have used in the past for our current radios, he mentioned a new option of Push-to-Talk Over Cellular. He happened to have one of his radios on him that worked with this system, and after using the radio...I was hooked on exploring this option. While there are very limited number of vendors for this rather new technology, we were able to find at least three that would possibly suit our needs.

The cool thing with this new technology, which all three vendors had, was the ability to have AVL with this new radio option. While when set for automatic update, it still has a three-minute lag; dispatch can ping each radio/phone for an accurate instant location.

I'm not even sure how we came across ePTT (Enhanced Push to Talk) with FirstNet by AT&T, but I think they came knocking on our door for getting our business for our current phones/tablets. Low and behold, their option was one that we probably could not afford to pass up.

Not only could their option run on our tablet, but we could purchase an inexpensive feature phone (Rugged "Bar" Phone) and have accessories that would allow it to run just like our current radios, with a very reasonable monthly cost. The one thing that gives FirstNet the edge is the dedicated channel for ePPT.



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Technology

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We are currently running with Verizon for our cellular service, and we could have switched and ran this off of tablets; breaking contracts and all the added accessories we would need for this to be a viable option just didn't seem like a good switch at this time.

The good news is we were able to upgrade all our radios with the new cell phone and integrated lockbox mount with external speaker and Push to Talk Mic for the cost of just a little over two new two-way radios running of our current State Radio. With the service fees, we should be able to run about 12 years for the same cost as replacing all our radios at this time.

FirstNet by AT&T is a program that is designed for First Responders and Emergency Management to give them dedicated coverage for communication. This is done through their own Priority Channel on the AT&T Cellular Network. Transit providers have been allowed to access this as we are included in emergency planning, whether we know it or not!

While we got these new phones/mounts in just yesterday; I have been itching to get them in the vehicles and trying them out for a few weeks now. I was going to start installing them, but I need to wait for the State DOT to come out and inventory our new equipment. The company for the mounts has graciously offered to come and install all/most of them for me (I guess it pays to be first every once and a while).

This is definitely a bonus I am willing to wait for! Hopefully I can give you all stellar reviews of our new system soon. I know there are several agencies in South Dakota patiently waiting to hear my experiences, because they need many radios for their new vehicles to meet P25 regulations.

With our initial leg-work the SD DOT allowed BATA to be the "guinea pigs."

Let the testing begin!!!



Leadership Training

Scott Fink, Transportation Manager

Inter-Lakes Community Action, Inc. - Madison, SD

On Wednesday, May 29th, SD DOT provided the opportunity to SD transit's leadership Management 1 training that was presented by NDSU's Jill Hough. Jill presented two of John C. Maxwell's leadership trainings sessions – "Becoming a Person of Influence" in the morning and "Everyone Communicates Few Connect" in the afternoon.

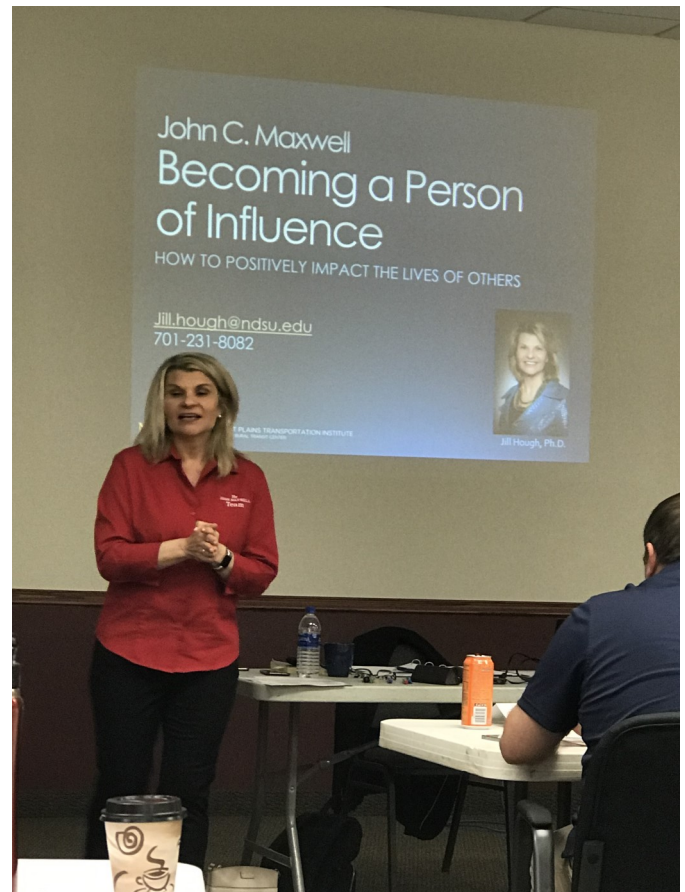
"Becoming a Person of Influence" had to do with the different types of Influence, how you influence others from worst to best – by Force, Intimidation, Manipulation, Position, Exchange, Persuasion and Respect. Jill then, using the presentation materials, asked the questions of who, what, when, where and why do you influence.

The final part of the morning session, Jill presented the 10 ways to increase influence – Integrity, Nurture, Faith, Listening, Understanding, Enlarges, Navigates, Connects, Empowers, and Reproduces Leaders. In each of the areas above, Jill went into detail of the meaning and challenges and opportunities of each one of the listed items above.

The second session "Everyone Communicates Few Connect" was about five connecting principles – Influence, Connecting, Communication, Energy and Skill.

The presentation then went on to the five connecting practices – Common Ground, Simplicity, Experience, Inspire and Credibility. Again, under each of these subjects, Jill went into them more in depth.

The materials in these two sessions were very good and really helped each of us to look at ourselves to see where we possibly are at in our management style, where we would want to be and ways to improve ourselves to get there.



*Thought for the
Month of July...*

*“You can’t go back and change the
beginning, but you can start where
you are and change the ending.”*

DTA
Dakota Transit
Association

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Thanks to all!

- Jacque

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