

Intercity Bus Meeting Notes 8-28-2018

Pat H. asked about LRCC's 200 students and whether they have cars. SF said not sure of LRCC but about 50% of Franklin Pierce students are without cars and 25% of NEC students.

Alex B. asked if the student numbers referred to students on campus only. SF said yes.

SF mentioned another potential route not in the presentation was a connection from North Conway to Maine's Lakes Region Explorer in Bridgton, Maine to allow for access to Portland.

Shelley mentioned Concord Coach adding a Laconia stop on the North Conway route, rather than having a separate route start in Laconia.

CA noted that there are no connections to Manchester Airport. SW said new service must focus on connecting to intercity bus routes rather than to the airport. SF said that MHT airport access continues to be by automobile.

CL asked about the former service on Route 101 (East-West Express) and what lessons were learned from that service. SF mentioned lessons regarding fares, marketing, frequency... to name a few.

There was discussion about current intercity routes regarding trip purposes and passengers' ultimate destinations. No data is available as no passenger surveys have been done. We do know that most intercity riders are making infrequent trips, mostly for leisure, visiting family, occasional trips to major metro areas (NYC and Boston) for other travel and entertainment. Many are college-age. Some commuters may use intercity routes, but that is not the focus of this analysis. Medical appointments and government services may be other relevant trip purposes. SW said new service would be one or two trips per day for infrequent, long distance connections.

There was much discussion about the best option to connect Keene to the central part of the state. Jay M reiterated that the purpose of trips needs to be the driver. Who are the riders who want to go to Concord? Have a look at Greyhound route through Nashua and Keene for answer. MW referred to connecting service to Boston and why not send cross-state services to Manchester as it would be faster for people going to Boston. JBM noted that it is faster to get to Concord than to Manchester, and that most people from Keene would drive through Concord to get to Manchester. JBM said Manchester would be a bigger draw for jobs, Concord better for convenience and intercity connections. JBM said the Keene is underserved and more service is needed to Boston as well as access to more NH destinations. Not just about Boston. MW was concerned about the Keene-Concord ridership projections referring to them as theoretical. The projections are three times the number of riders on the current MTA Manchester-Concord route.

Expanding the Greyhound route through Nashua and Keene to daily is another option. SG talked about revenue from existing service and that access to bus transportation can drive demand.

DW asked if colleges and/or communities could contribute toward the match for bus service to their areas. SF said that Colby Sawyer has a large transportation service and the NEC pays for some transportation services too.

NM expressed concern that the Keene-Concord route and what factor did NEC, a private college, have on that route having a Tier 1 ranking. SF said that the intent was to serve an area that generates riders. SG said that instead of thinking about the route serving the college, we should think about the students helping the route by riding it and generating revenue. Subsidy is reduced by servicing colleges providing revenue flow.

JBM was concerned about Franklin Pierce not being included. SF said it was not easy to make a connection.

SG said (or asked if) the intent is to scale operating service/subsidy to ongoing availability of funds.

SW mentioned facilities and the ongoing cost to maintain them can be difficult. New facilities can add maintenance costs to the DOT. Operating service can be sustained easier.

JBM referred to the Hanover-Concord route and could it be done by Dartmouth Coach. It was noted that Dartmouth Coach was doing everything it could to minimize travel time to Boston and would reject the idea of diverting to Concord on its regular trips

SW said service is more about meaningful connections and not commuter need.

There was discussion about connecting Claremont to the intercity system. SG said that Greyhound can serve NH (Claremont and Charleston) if NH provides a subsidy. TP asked if it was possible to combine funds ("patchwork") to get the Claremont Route 120 to Lebanon service. CA asked if Greyhound would be able to serve Claremont as a diversion from its existing WRJ-Keene-Brattleboro service, rather than creating a new route from Claremont to Lebanon/WRJ. SG said it was not an impossible task.

SB asked if all Tier 1 service was funded under current budget. Answer: it could be.

SW asked what is the best hub for the Keene service and what are the potential stops along the way.

SG said if Greyhound provides in-kind match for any service, then interline ticketing is required. Greyhound requires an interline agreement. This allows the total cost of the ticket including connecting service to other providers to be quoted.

AB said that Littleton is actively looking at parking. Facilities are a lower tier and is there potential for funding for facilities.

FB mentioned weighting of service to colleges based on demand... Friday and Sunday service vs. daily as well as demand at semester breaks.

JBM mentioned that Keene is currently studying a new intermodal facility.