***Forest County Commission on Aging***

***DOT 85.21 Public Hearing Summary***

December 8, 2015

11:00 a.m.

County Board Room, Courthouse, Crandon, WI

Prior to this hearing, notice was published in the Forest Republican on November 26 and December 3, 2015. A copy of the notice of meeting and draft plan were sent to all five Forest County Senior Nutrition Sites and to all Commission on Aging Committee members. Notices were sent to WHDG Radio-Rhinelander, The Northwoods River News and posted on the Forest County Website and on the West and East doors of the courthouse. The plan for public transportation has been available for public inspection prior to the hearing.

The following individuals were in attendance: Larry Berg, Edith Huettl, Bill Connors, Richard Ackley, Jr., Danielle McLaughlin, Kate Schultz and Vicki Lemerade

No community members other than the Commission on Aging Committee Members were present. The hearing is presented to the Commission on Aging Committee Members present. There were no phone calls or written comments received prior to the hearing.

The Public Hearing was opened by Edith Huettl, Commission on Aging Chair at 11:12 a.m.

Tammy Queen gave an overview the 85,21 DOT Transportation Grant The plan will remain the same this year as we are not going to be part of Tri-County Transit Commission.

Comment: There was a concern that we’re taking out monies and not putting money in would be a problem later. Where would we be without the trust fund? Danielle McLaughlin Fiscal Manager stated cuts would have to be made to the overall transportation budget. Trust fund is strictly for transportation. County cannot take anything out of it and put it somewhere else. Tammy Queen explained that the trust fund is budgeted yearly for major repairs and when we purchase a van or bus it is used to make modifications to the vehicle to meet the county’s needs. Tammy stated the routes may have to be changed as the buses are poorly utilized and is working to increase participation in the next year with more education to the public.

There are now new policies and procedures in place regarding Medical Escort Cost Share Rates and Medical Escort Volunteer Driver Program.

Medical Escort Cost Share Rates Policy has new parameters for the public to be aware of, including an increase after participants have reached a milestone of greater than 2000 miles traveled for medical care. After the 2000 miles are reached by individuals they will be charged $1.05 / mile for all further miles regardless of income for remaining calendar year. Before the 2000 mile point they are charged dependent upon participant’s income.

The procedure will be for participants wanting to use Medical Escort Volunteer Driver program to fill out an application; submit household income and medical insurance to ensure they are not on Medicaid. The clients cost share is based on monthly income. Clients are charged mileage starting from time volunteer driver leaves their residence until the time the driver returns to their residence. Clients will pay a rate per mile related to their income for the first 2000 miles traveled in a calendar year. Mileage after the 2000 milestone will be charged at a rate of $1.05 per mile for the rest of the calendar year.

Comment: Concerns that the new change would affect seniors who truly need Medical Escort Services. Tammy and Danielle ensured that seniors in need won’t be affected. The policy was put in place to avoid unnecessary usage of the program and to keep the budget balanced if possible.

MTM will handle all Medicaid participants.

Medical Escort Volunteer Driver Policy is used for participants without other means of obtaining transportation to medical appts. Transportation is available upon availability of volunteer drivers only. The entire procedure is reviewed per the written policy.

Tammy Queen, Director of the Commission on Aging, reports the vehicles are all in good working order and running; the Headwaters Contract is signed; Tammy stated that the clients will be encouraged to use local services when able for such things as labs, Physical Therapy, etc. This will make the program more efficient and not waste funding.

The policies in their entirety are available to the public for inspection.

The Public presentation is completed at 11:35 a. m.

Submitted by Vicki Lemerande, Secretary Commission on Aging/ Tammy Queen, Office on Aging Director