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Tuesday, Jan 1, 2013

THE TIMES-TRIBUNE A3

## COLTS tackles new duties

### System now handles transit for seniors, disabled

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Lackawanna County's coordinated transportation service officially becomes part of the County of Lackawanna Transit System today in a merger that has been in the works for more than a year.

Officials of both systems anticipate a seamless transition — at least from the public's perspective.

"There are still little bits and pieces that need to be completed, but as far as the transfer of services, that's pretty much done and ready to go," coordinated transportation director John Tomcho said Monday.

Under the new setup, COLTS will become the provider of the paratransit and shared-ride services previously offered to senior citi-

zens and people with disabilities through coordinated transportation.

The consolidation, which was recommended by the state Department of Transportation and authorized by the county commissioners in October 2011, is expected to save county taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in subsidies for coordinated transportation services.

COLTS Executive Director Robert Fiume said there will be no cutbacks in service. Coordinated transportation's familiar blue minibuses will continue to shuttle seniors and those with disabilities to medical appointments and the like, he said.

Through the merger with COLTS' fixed-route service, however, there will be more alternatives "for people to get

where they need to go," Mr. Fiume said.

"I think people will see a difference shortly down the road — the difference being better service and more opportunities for them," he said.

Coordinated transportation's 32 full-time workers will leave the county's payroll and become COLTS employees, Mr. Fiume said. No layoffs are planned.

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