



Hernando/Citrus
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Regular Meeting
 ~ Minutes ~

March 20, 2018 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m., on March 20, 2018, at the Hernando County Government Center, 20 North Main Street, John Law Ayers Chambers, Room 160, Brooksville, Florida. The meeting was advertised in the Tampa Bay Times and the Citrus Chronicle and the agenda was posted on the MPO's website at www.hernandocitrus.mpo.us.

Attendee Name	Title	Attendance
Wayne Dukes	MPO Chairman	Yes
Jeff Kinnard	MPO Vice-Chairman	Yes
Steve Champion	Member, Hernando County	No
John Allocco	Member, Hernando County	Yes
Nicholas W. Nicholson	Member, Hernando County	No
Ronald Kitchen	Member, Citrus County	Yes
Robert Battista	Member, City of Brooksville	Yes
Pat Fitzpatrick	Member, City of Crystal River	Yes
Cabot McBride	Member, City of Inverness	Yes
Jeff Holcomb	Alternate, Hernando County	Yes
Garth Coller	Hernando County Attorney	Yes
Dennis Dix	MPO Executive Director	Yes
Steven Diez	Transportation Planner III	Yes
Carlene Riecss	Transportation Planner III	Yes
Colleen Conko	Administrative Assistant II	Yes

Mr. McBride led the Invocation.

Mr. Allocco led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MPO board members and staff introduced themselves.

Proofs of publications of the Notice of Public Meeting were entered into the record by Mr. Diez.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (Limited to Board and Staff)

Motion: *Mr. Kinnard motioned to approve the March 20, 2018, Meeting Agenda as presented. Mr. Fitzpatrick seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jeff Kinnard, MPO Vice-Chairman
SECONDER:	Pat Fitzpatrick, Member, City of Crystal River
AYES:	Kinnard, Allocco, Kitchen, Battista, Fitzpatrick, McBride, Holcomb

CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

TBARTA - MPO Regional Coordination Study

Mr. Diez introduced Mr. Ray Chiaramonte, Executive Director of the Tampa Bay Regional Authority (TBARTA).

Mr. Chiaramonte provided the MPO Board with a presentation regarding a TBARTA study for the regional coordination structure of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (eight counties and six MPO's). He noted that the study will help identify opportunities to assist in the process of strengthening MPO's relationships to better build consensus.

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Update

Mr. Diez introduced Mr. Joe Bugel with the Department of Traffic Operations for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven.

Mr. Bugel provided the MPO Board with answers to the following questions from the January 30, 2018, MPO Board Meeting:

- **US19 at the entrance to The Heather (St. Andrews Boulevard/County Road) - Potential Safety Improvement** - Does not have enough volume at this intersection to warrant a traffic signal. Has the potential to get flashing warning beacons installed.

Mr. McBride stated volume should not be such a dominating criteria when there are elderly drivers who have slower reaction times. He noted that volume should be considered a secondary issue. Mr. Bugel responded that there are three items considered when deciding where traffic signals should be installed: (1) volume, (2) volume may be reduced by 80% if there are traffic accidents such as having twelve angle crashes or more and/or left turn crashes that can be prevented by a traffic signal, (3) alternative counter measures, instead of deferring to a traffic signal as a solution.

Discussion ensued regarding where the flashing beacons will be installed.

Mr. McBride asked whether FDOT has an algorithm that would help predict where traffic signals should be installed to help prevent traffic accidents. Mr. Bugel responded in the negative. He noted that he was unfamiliar with an algorithm that would help prevent traffic accidents. Mr. Bugel stated that there are other ways to help assist with predicting problematic intersections such as studies, road safety audits, and driver expectations. He noted that he was unaware of anything that would help predict where crashes may occur.

- **Status and/or timeframe of a signal light installation at the intersection of US19 and Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center** - A traffic light is already installed at this intersection. Stripping will need to be placed on the roadway before turning on the control for the traffic signal. It was noted that pedestrian features will need to be added and the prevention of left turns at the intersection. Mr. Bugel stated that the signal light should be turned on and operational within the next four months.

Mr. Kitchen expressed a concern of not knowing the dates of when projects will actually be completed. He asked whether an ongoing list of updates for projects can be discussed at each MPO Board meeting.

- **The timeline of when a trail will be constructed in Phase 1 of the project on US19 in Citrus County** - There is an issue with the contract. The project has already been let and a contractor is in the process of building the project. This had already been set in place before there was a decision to build a trail. There needs to be a negotiation with the contractor to decide whether it is in the best interest of the public from a contracting mechanism stand point to pay the established contractor extra to build the trail or wait until the project is completed and build the trail afterwards in the next phase.

Mr. Kitchen asked whether the trail will be constructed in Phase I or Phase II. Mr. Steven Benson, Government Liaison Administrator for FDOT District Seven, responded that the goal is to build the trail in Phase I of the US19 project.

- **US19 and Hexam Road - Potential Safety Improvement** – FDOT is in the process of coordinating with Dollar General located at the corner of the intersection to see whether there will be a problem closing off Nicasio Road, the frontage road that runs alongside the east side of the US19. This project (installation of a signal light) should be under one million in cost and take a year and a half to be completed (winter of 2019).
- **US19 and Thrasher Avenue - Potential Safety Improvement** - No volume or crashes reported to indicate or warrant a north bound right turning lane.

Mr. Allocco indicated that there is a safety concern due to the speed that is being traveled on US19 at this intersection when making a right hand turn on to Thrasher Road. He asked what parameters would be needed to justify a signal light or flashing beacons. Mr. Bugel responded that there was no report indicating numerous crashes at this intersection. Mr. Allocco stated that there are skid marks from motorists jamming on their brakes at this intersection. Mr. Bugel stated that roads/intersections that have the most severe crashes are the first to be funded.

- **US98 and CR491 - Before the Roundabout is Constructed** - Rumble strips and flashing beacon lights have been installed to help reduce the speed, but there is no plan for a reduction in the speed limit at this time.

Mr. Kinnard inquired about the intersection at US19 and CR488. He noted that there is a history of crashes at this location. Mr. Bugel responded that there is a signal light

installed at this location and the signal will be activated within two months.

Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) - Update

Mr. Diez introduced Mr. David Cooke, Transportation Planning Manager for the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE).

Mr. Cooke introduced Ms. Alison Stettner, Turnpike Planning Manager for the FTE. Ms. Stettner provided the MPO Board with a Coastal Connector presentation.

Ms. Stettner stated that the study area for the Coastal Connector is in Citrus and Marion Counties. She noted the Coastal Connector will be a connection from the Suncoast Parkway to the I75/US301 area. Ms. Stettner stated the purpose of the study for the Coastal Connector is to evaluate the feasibility of a new transportation corridor in Citrus and Marion Counties and to help accommodate a hurricane evacuation route.

Ms. Stettner stated that the timeframe of the study will go from winter of 2016 to fall of 2018. She noted that after the study process has been completed it will then be determined whether the project should proceed into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase.

Ms. Stettner stated that initial public outreach meetings were conducted, data collection was completed, a public meeting had been conducted and a traffic analysis was performed. She noted that FTE is now in the process of identifying the preliminary corridor alternatives to bring to the public meetings, April 26, 2018, in Citrus County and May 1, 2018, in Marion County.

Mr. Holcomb asked what the alternative corridors were going from the Suncoast Parkway towards I-75. Ms. Stettner responded that a path is currently being refined at this time. Ms. Stettner stated that the connection will be up to I-75.

Mr. Holcomb asked whether the plan was to extend to Jacksonville. Ms. Stettner responded the study at this time is to extend and connect to the US301/I75 area.

Mr. McBride asked whether the construction for the Suncoast Parkway II had been started. Ms. Stettner responded that the construction to SR44 has begun. She noted that this is a four-year project. It was noted that the project from US98 to SR44 is thirteen miles, and from US98 to SR46 is another three miles.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked whether there will be any environmental issues. Ms. Stettner responded that all the environment issues have been cleared.

Mr. Holcomb inquired about the progression of SR50 extending east to Orlando. Mr. Diez responded that FDOT District Five is in the process of completing their PD&E study. He noted that the roadway will go from a two-lane roadway to a four-lane roadway to Orlando (Mascotte).

Mr. Kitchen asked whether the Coastal Connector was separate and distinct project from the Suncoast Parkway extension. Ms. Stettner responded in the affirmative and

noted that the two projects are two separate studies. She noted that the Coastal Connector will not be considered the Suncoast Parkway III. Ms. Stettner stated that information for the projects are available online on FTE's website by clicking on Major Projects.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 30, 2018

It was noted that the approval of the January 30, 2018, Meeting Minutes had not been done, and that the Board would do so now.

Mr. McBride stated that his comments commending Mr. Kinnard for his momentum to get a traffic light installed at the intersection of US19 and Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center for safety purposes should be reflected in the January 30, 2018, meeting minutes. He noted that he had also requested to do some type of research to see whether there was an algorithm or something akin to it that might be available to help avoid some of the calamities that have occurred on US19 at the medical center.

Motion: *Mr. Allocco motioned to approve the January 30, 2018, MPO Board Meeting Minutes as amended to reflect Mr. McBride's comment for Mr. Kinnard's momentum to get a traffic light installed at the US19 and Sevens Rivers Regional Medical Center intersection. Mr. McBride seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

RESULT:	ACCEPTED AS AMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Allocco, Member, Hernando County
SECONDER:	Cabot McBride, Member, City of Inverness
AYES:	Kinnard, Allocco, Kitchen, Battista, Fitzpatrick, McBride, Holcomb

MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION

Chairman Dukes introduced Ms. Cristi Charlow, Human Resources/Risk Director.

Ms. Charlow stated that the MPO Executive Director position was posted internally throughout Hernando and Citrus County Governments and Cities Offices for ten business days. She noted that the position was posted from February 6, 2018 to February 21, 2018. Ms. Charlow reported that there was only one internal qualified applicant, Mr. Diez from Hernando County. Ms. Charlow stated that the MPO Board had the option to either interview Mr. Diez or direct Human Resources to proceed with employment negotiations with Mr. Diez.

Mr. Allocco expressed his concern regarding the hiring process that the MPO Board had chosen to only post the MPO Executive Director position internally. He noted that to only have one qualified applicant was a mistake made by the MPO Board. Mr. Allocco stated that the position should have been advertised outside of the parameters of Hernando and Citrus Counties. Chairman Dukes stated that the County does go through the process of posting a position internally before posting externally. Chairman Dukes asked the MPO Board whether there was anyone opposed of the way the MPO Executive Director's position was posted.

Mr. Dix asked the MPO Board whether they were in approval of Mr. Diez acquiring the director's position.

Mr. Kinnard stated that he understood the position of Mr. Allocco's concern, but expressed that Mr. Diez is up-to-date with the Hernando/Citrus MPO process and the status of ongoing projects. He noted that Mr. Diez is the right person for the position. Mr. Kinnard commended the MPO Board for how well they work together as a two-county MPO.

Mr. McBride concurred with Mr. Kinnard. He noted that he was very comfortable with Mr. Diez taking the position.

Mr. Holcomb concurred with Mr. Allocco's view point regarding the hiring process. He noted that he was very confident that Mr. Diez would do a good job, but noted the hiring process position should have been advertised both internally and externally.

It was noted that Mr. Dix will be retiring in May 2018.

Mr. Dix stated that he was comfortable recommending Mr. Diez for the MPO Executive Director position.

Mr. Kitchen stated that he understood Mr. Allocco's position for the hiring process of the MPO Executive Director, but disagreed with him. He noted that whether the position was posted both internally and/or externally, Mr. Diez would still be the prime candidate for the position. He noted that he is comfortable with Mr. Diez assuming the position of the MPO Executive Director.

Mr. Fitzpatrick concurred with Mr. Kitchen.

Chairman Dukes stated that the MPO Executive Director should be familiar and knowledgeable of the Hernando/Citrus MPO and its procedures/projects. He noted that it would take months or even years to be educated/experienced on the Hernando/Citrus MPO.

Mr. Collier stated there is an advantaged to hiring a local. He noted that going outside of the district would be a disadvantage.

Mr. Kinnard stated that Mr. Diez's current position (Transportation Planner III) should be advertised both internally and externally, and the prime candidate for the position of Transportation Planner should be trained to be the successor of Mr. Diez.

Chairman Dukes asked for a recommendation from the MPO Board.

Motion: *Mr. Kitchen motioned to direct the Human Resources Department to begin salary negotiations with Mr. Diez for the Executive Director position. Mr. Kinnard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Collier clarified that staff is to begin salary negotiations with Mr. Diez. Ms. Charlow responded in the affirmative.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Ronald Kitchen, Member, Citrus County
SECONDER: Jeff Kinnard, MPO Vice-Chairman
AYES: Kinnard, Allocco, Kitchen, Battista, Fitzpatrick, McBride, Holcomb

2018 FTA CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

Mr. Diez stated that the FY 2018 Annual Certifications and Assurances are required to be executed in order to receive federal funding for transit planning.

Motion: *Mr. Kitchen motioned to authorize the Hernando/Citrus MPO Chairman to execute the FY 2018 Annual Certifications and Assurances that are required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in order to receive federal funding for transit planning. Mr. Allocco seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Jeff Kinnard, Ronald Kitchen
SECONDER: John Allocco, Member, Hernando County
AYES: Kinnard, Allocco, Kitchen, Battista, Fitzpatrick, McBride, Holcomb

COMMISSION FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (CTD) FOR THE COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Diez reported that the current contract with Mid Florida Community Services, Incorporated, DBA Trans-Hernando, the Hernando County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Transportation Disadvantaged Services will expire on June 30, 2018, and a new five-year contract with the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) is required by law. He noted that a Request for Proposals (RFP) had been issued and Trans-Hernando was the sole respondent to the RFP.

Mr. Diez stated that staff reviewed Trans-Hernando's application of submittal and recommends that Trans-Hernando continue to serve as the Hernando County CTC.

Motion: *Mr. Allocco motioned to approve that Mid Florida Community Services, Incorporated, DBA Trans-Hernando, continue to serve as the Hernando County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) for the next five years. Mr. Holcomb seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Allocco, Member, Hernando County
SECONDER:	Jeff Holcomb, Alternate, Hernando County
AYES:	Kinnard, Allocco, Kitchen, Battista, Fitzpatrick, McBride, Holcomb

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Mr. John Wade, Citrus County citizen, stated that the Hernando/Citrus MPO Board made the right decision when choosing Mr. Diez as the next MPO Executive Director. He noted that he currently serves on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and has worked with Mr. Diez for many years and thinks Mr. Diez will be a wonderful director. Mr. Wade complimented the MPO Board for their decision to hire Mr. Diez as the next MPO Executive Director.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Allocco congratulated Mr. Diez and expressed his support for him. He noted that he had only disagreed with the process of posting the position.

It was noted that all of the MPO Board members congratulated Mr. Diez.

Mr. McBride commended the stability of the meeting. He noted that Mr. Diez is a perfect candidate for the executive director position. Mr. McBride expressed his approval of how answers to questions from the last MPO Board meeting were formally answered. He asked MPO staff to have a specific line item on future agendas for questions that were asked at the previous meetings.

Chairman Dukes concurred with Mr. McBride.

Mr. Kitchen requested that staff draft a bullet point press release after each MPO Board meeting. He noted that the press will publish what is submitted to them.

Mr. Dix provided the MPO Board with the dates that the following documents will be brought to the MPO Board for approval:

- Draft FY 2018/19 to FY 2019/20 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
May 15, 2018
- Draft FY 2019 to FY 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
June 19, 2018.

Chairman Dukes congratulated Mr. Diez.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, 2018, beginning at 1:00 P.M., in the John Law Ayers County Commission Chambers.

The meeting agenda and back-up materials are available online at <http://hernandocountyfl.ig2.com/citizens> or at www.hernandocounty.us/mpo.