



Hernando/Citrus
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Regular Meeting
 ~ Minutes ~

August 19, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 19, 2021, at 3600 W Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto Government Center, Lecanto, Florida.

Attendee Name	Title	Attendance
Joe Meek	Alternate, City of Crystal River	Present
Elizabeth Narverud	Member, Hernando County	Absent
John Allocco	Member, Hernando County	Present
Robert Battista	Member, City of Brooksville	Absent
Steve Champion	Member, Hernando County	Absent
Jeff Holcomb	MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County	Late/Present
Jeff Kinnard	MPO Chairman, Citrus County	Present
Cabot McBride	Member, City of Inverness	Present
Ruthie Davis Schlabach	Member, Citrus County	Present
Garth Coller	Hernando County Attorney	Present
Steven Diez	MPO Executive Director	Present
Carlene Riecsc	Transportation Planner III	Present
Cayce Dagenhart	Transportation Planner II	Present
Theresia Saenz	Administrative Assistant III	Present

Invocation

Councilman McBride led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman McBride led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MPO Board & Staff Introductions

MPO Board members and staff introduced themselves.

Please Silence Electronic Devices

Chairman Kinnard asked everyone to silence their electronic devices.

Enter Proof of Publication into the Record

Ms. Riecsc read the proof of publication into the record.

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

Motion: Mr. McBride made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Meek seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [5 TO 0]
AYES:	Meek, Allocco, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT:	Narverud, Battista, Champion, Holcomb

APPROVAL OF MINUTES**Approval of Minutes – MPO meeting June 17, 2021**

Motion: Mr. McBride made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mrs. Davis Schlabach seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [5 TO 0]
AYES:	Meek, Allocco, Kinnard, McBride, Schlabach
ABSENT:	Narverud, Battista, Champion, Holcomb

MPO RESOLUTION**Resolution Honoring Garth C. Collier**

Mr. Diez read the Resolution 2021-05 into the record commemorating Mr. Collier on the occasion of his retirement.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Commissioner Kinnard asked for public comment. Mr. Peter Cuccuro, Pine Ridge resident, discussed his continued opposition to the interchange proposed at CR 486 and the Suncoast Parkway.

MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION**MPO Executive Director - Candidate Consideration**

Commissioner Holcomb was running late to the meeting; consequently, the Board moved to correspondence and informational items (Item G) at this time.

CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan Update**

Secretary Gwynn from FDOT District 7 addressed the Board regarding the status of the construction on US 19 in Citrus County. DAB Construction was working on 7 projects within District 7 and progress had fallen behind. FDOT defaulted DAB on a project in Pasco County. The construction company subsequently self-defaulted on the remainder of their projects. FDOT is working with the surety bonding company to complete the contract requirements. FDOT is working to ensure maintenance along the roadway (silt fence, erosion control, mowing etc.) is addressed.

There were complaints regarding erosion control as it relates to Halls River. SWFWMD issued a violation to the FDOT because they were not meeting permit requirements. Typically, sedimentation control is set up to handle normal conditions. Over time, sedimentation builds up in some of the canals, some from the FDOT project. There was a lot of rain which washed some sedimentation out into the river. He indicated that they are working with SWFWMD to address the situation.

Mr. Allocco asked Secretary Gwynn about the directional arrows along US 19. He indicated the reflectors make a lot of noise when vehicles drive over them. Secretary Gwynn stated the arrows were intended to address wrong way drivers, but they will look into modifying to reduce noise.

Mr. Allocco also indicated County Line Road continues to be a major problem. He stated that Pasco County is not as concerned as Hernando with improving the roadway. He asked Secretary Gwynn for suggestions. He brought Justin Hall from the FDOT to address the issue. Mr. Hall stated they are investigating funding alternatives to include matching state grants and Pasco County appeared receptive. An interlocal agreement with Hernando and Pasco County will be required to move forward, the state is willing to work with us. FDOT will put the interlocal agreement together.

Mrs. Davis-Schlabach asked Secretary Gwynn what steps will be taken in the future for roadways close to the coast. He responded that with the dissolving of MCORES, funding to construct alternate projects on 19 may be considered.

Mr. Allocco mentioned concern about a bypass going through Citrus on US 19. He did not think taking traffic away from the downtown is good for businesses. He observed that once 589 is completed, an option to bypass the city will exist.

Roger Roscoe, liaison for FDOT District 7 made a presentation regarding the strategic intermodal system (SIS). He explained that the SIS is a statewide network of high-priority transportation facilities. These facilities represent the State's primary means for moving people and freight. The SIS policy plan is required to be updated at least once every 5 years pursuant to Florida Statutes. Mr. Roscoe further stated that there is a comment form in the MPO Board packet, and he would collect comments at the end of the meeting.

Commissioner Holcomb joined the meeting at this time.

After completion of item G 1, Commissioner Kinnard returned to Item F, MPO Executive Director Position.

MPO Executive Director - Candidate Consideration continued

Mr. Joel Graeff was introduced as a candidate for the MPO Executive Director position. Commissioner Kinnard outlined the process the Board would follow starting with opening the meeting to the Board to ask questions. Once question session was completed, the Board would have the candidate leave the room and the Board would engage in open discussion. The Chairman noted that there had been 2 candidates scheduled for consideration; however, Ms. Lee Beasley had withdrawn her application.

Mr. Graeff indicated transportation planning was his specialty. He stated he is uniquely qualified because he has public sector, private sector and non-profit sector experience. He has worked for MPOs in Pennsylvania. Most recently, he was a project director for Atkins Consulting.

Commissioner Allocco reviewed Mr. Graeff's resume and requested clarification regarding timelines associated with his employment. He responded that he worked with the North Florida TPO through a contracted position (HNTB). He explained that he also worked in Miami/Dade involved in corridor and transit analysis, and Osceola County's Local Agency Program. He has worked with the Space Coast MPO as well. Mr. Allocco stated that Mr. Graeff's resume included many different projects and positions over a short period of time and requested additional explanation. Mr. Graeff stated HNTB hired him to be a planner, but he worked as a consultant and found his own jobs under the auspices of HNTB. Most of the work experience listed on his resume was under HNTB. Commissioner Allocco stated his concern was consistency for the MPO Director position.

Commissioner Holcomb asked about Mr. Graeff's leadership and budgeting skills. He responded he was a planning team leader and successfully worked with FDOT and private clients. He stated that he would set goals and assign projects with the staff of the MPO. He would make their roles clear. In terms of budgeting, he has experience in marketing, budgeting and sales. He mentioned the UPWP guided the budget. Commissioner Allocco indicated that budgeting was a major issue in the past. He needed to have a director who would be able to explain budget related issues in a concise manner. Mr. Graeff noted the UPWP is critical. He advised the Board he processed invoices for FDOT District 5.

Commissioner McBride asked whether he knew anything about the priorities of the Hernando/Citrus MPO. Mr. Graeff stated he is doing his research and noted that there are a lot of studies in process. He would get a handle on the MPO priorities in his first 30 days if hired. The Chairman asked Mr. Graeff to step outside while the board discussed.

Mayor Meek requested clarification regarding the interview process. Commissioner Kinnard requested Hernando County's Human Resources Director Michelle Posewitz to explain the process. An interview panel was assembled pursuant to the MPO Board's direction. Ms. Posewitz indicated there was a first round of interviews, they decided it was best to readvertise. A second recruitment was conducted in July and interviews took place on August 4, 2021. There were 4 applicants during round 2 of the process, 2 candidates were brought forward to the MPO Board.

Garth Coller inquired why Ms. Beasley withdrew her application. Ms. Posewitz stated primarily due to salary. Commissioner Davis Schlabach stated that an applicant would know what the salary range for the job is upon application. Commissioner Holcomb thought Mr. Graeff had a lot of leadership experience even if he has not been an MPO director.

Ms. Posewitz stated the position was advertised locally and nationally. The MPO needs to be comfortable with the hire. If the Board is not comfortable with one candidate, they may wish to readvertise. She specified there were 3 candidates in the first set of interviews, but one withdrew. There were 10 total applicants, and 5 were determined qualified. Commissioner Kinnard indicated he was not comfortable with only having one candidate. He stated that the MPO Board may wish to revisit the salary range. He stated he was looking for a dynamic director.

Commissioner Davis Schlabach deferred to historical knowledge but noted she did not feel it was fair to portray Mr. Graeff as the only candidate. There were 2 top candidates and one pulled out. He has worked in some pretty big markets which she considered a positive but would defer to the board.

Commissioner Holcomb asked about the background check process for applicants. Ms. Posewitz stated you cannot do a detailed background check until a conditional offer is made. Commissioner McBride indicated he did not have a comfort level with only having one candidate and did not think that they should hire the individual unless there was consensus among the Board.

Commissioner Kinnard summarized Board options, either hire Mr. Graeff or readvertise. Mr. Meek stated he agreed with Mr. McBride and did not have a comfort level with the candidate. Ms. Posewitz said they would start the recruitment again; the Board could consider a wider salary range. Ms. Beasley wanted the high range of the position. Even though Mr. Diez is close to retirement, Commissioner Kinnard felt that we should wait. Commissioner Allocco said based on the discussion, the position should be readvertised.

Motion: Mr. Allocco made a motion to readvertise the Executive Director Position. Mr. Meek seconded. The motion passed 5-1 with Mrs. Davis Schlabach voting nay.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [5 TO 1]
MOVER:	John Allocco, Hernando County
SECONDER:	Joe Meek, Alternate, City of Crystal River
AYES:	Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride
NAYS:	Davis Schlabach
ABSENT:	Battista, Champion, Narverud

Mr. Graeff was brought back into the meeting and advised of the Board's decision. Mr. Graeff was encouraged to reapply.

CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS - CONTINUED**MPO Meeting Summary from June 17, 2021, and Updated Issue List**

Mr. Diez outlined the meeting summary from the June MPO meeting. He stated that with regards to the issue list, Secretary Gwynn had updated the Board regarding the status of US 19 construction.

Letter from Florida Department of Transportation - Multiuse Trail Request on US 98 from Hernando County to US 19 in Citrus County

Mr. Diez advised the MPO that a letter was sent to the FDOT requesting a multiuse trail as part of the US 98 project. The FDOT indicated the request would be studied in more detail. A copy of the FDOT's response is in the Board's packet.

Letter from Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)

A letter from the Department of Economic Opportunity was provided to the Board indicating approval of the FY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) Report

The FTE's construction update for July 2021 was provided to the Board.

MPO Quarterly Report - April 1, 2021, to June 30, 2021

Mr. Diez presented the Quarterly Financial Report. There were no questions from the MPO Board.

MPO ACTION ITEMS**Interlocal Funding Agreement between Citrus County, Hernando County and the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Mr. Diez introduced the Interlocal Funding Agreement between Citrus County, Hernando County and the Hernando/Citrus MPO for approval. The MPO is the final party to review and approve the agreement. Commissioner Allocco stated that he was pleased the agreement was moving forward because there are some major projects coming forward and Citrus County will benefit.

Chairman Kinnard opened for public comment, there was none. Chair opened the item for Board discussion.

Mr. Diez indicated that the approval of this agreement demonstrated the cooperation of this Board.

Motion: Mr. Allocco made a motion to approve the Interlocal Funding Agreement as presented. Mr. Holcomb seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

RESULT: ADOPTED [6 TO 0]
MOVER: John Allocco, Member, Hernando County
SECONDER: Jeff Holcomb, MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County
AYES: Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT: Narverud, Battista, Champion

Tindale Oliver and Associates - Complete Streets Scope Approval

Mr. Diez introduced the Complete Streets Scope of services for approval. Commissioner opened to public input, there was none. Commissioner Davis Schlabach asked about phasing of the project. Mr. Diez explained it was due to funding availability.

Motion: Mr. Holcomb made a motion to approve the Complete Streets Scope as presented. Mr. McBride seconded the motion and it carried 6-0.

RESULT: ADOPTED [6 TO 0]
MOVER: Jeff Holcomb, MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County
SECONDER: Cabot McBride, Member, City of Inverness
AYES: Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT: Narverud, Battista, Champion

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FY 2021-FY 2022 - Amendment

Mr. Diez introduced the FY 2021-2022 UPWP amendment which includes \$300,000 in 5307 Transit funding. Commissioner Allocco expressed concern that the \$300,000 estimate would impact the final cost. Mr. Diez stated that the studies would be conducted by a consultant selected by the Planning Department, and he was not certain how much the studies would actually cost.

Commissioner Kinnard asked for public comment, there was none.

Motion: Mr. Holcomb made a motion to approve the UPWP Amendment as presented. Mr. Allocco seconded the motion and it carried 6-0.

RESULT: ADOPTED [6 TO 0]
MOVER: Jeff Holcomb, MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County
SECONDER: Cabot McBride, Member, City of Inverness
AYES: Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT: Narverud, Battista, Champion

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) - Amendment to Bylaws

Mr. Diez explained that there are issues gaining a quorum in part due to representatives from the Sheriff's Office. The amendment would keep them on the committee but in an

advisory capacity. Commissioner Holcomb asked whether they had any objections, Mr. Diez stated there had been none.

Commissioner Kinnard opened the item for public comment, there was none.

Commissioner Allocco stated that he hoped that legislators who mandate committees and boards realize there is no mechanism in place to mandate attendance.

Motion: Mr. Holcomb made a motion to approve the amendment to the BPAC Bylaws. Mr. Allocco seconded the motion and it carried 6-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [6 TO 0]
MOVER:	Jeff Holcomb, MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County
SECONDER:	John Allocco, Member, Hernando County
AYES:	Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT:	Narverud, Battista, Champion

MPO Meeting Schedule Changes - 2021

Mr. Diez reviewed the changes to the calendar for the remainder of 2021. The next MPO meeting is September 23, 2021, followed by November 18, 2021. Commissioner Davis Schlabach stated she would not be able to attend the September meeting due to a conflict.

Motion: Mr. McBride made a motion to approve the MPO Meeting schedule changes for the remainder of 2021. Mr. Holcomb seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [6 TO 0]
MOVER:	Cabot McBride, Member, City of Inverness
SECONDER:	Jeff Holcomb, MPO Vice-Chairman, Hernando County
AYES:	Meek, Allocco, Holcomb, Kinnard, McBride, Davis Schlabach
ABSENT:	Narverud, Battista, Champion

DIRECTOR'S CUT

Mr. Diez stated he had no comments at this time. He would save his final comments for his last meeting on September 23, 2021.

BOARD COMMENTS

The Board collectively thanked Garth Coller for his service to the MPO and wished him well.

Commissioner Allocco requested staff begin working on the 2022 calendar. Ms. Riecsc stated the calendar was drafted and should be brought before the board either September 23, 2021, or November 18, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

UPCOMING MEETING: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, BEGINNING AT 1:30 P.M. AT THE LECANTO GOVERNMENT BUILDING, 3600 W. SOVEREIGN PATH, ROOM 166, LECANTO, FL 34461.