



HERNANDO/CITRUS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) BOARD

Thursday, June 1, 2023

MINUTES

The Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board held a regular public meeting beginning at 1:30 p.m. at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. The meeting was advertised in the Hernando Sun and Citrus County Chronicle newspapers and the agenda was available on the Hernando/Citrus MPO website.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ruthie Davis Schlabach, Chair, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Jerry Campbell, Vice Chair, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
John Allocco, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
Beth Narverud, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
Rebecca Bays, Alternate, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Cabot McBride, City of Inverness Council Member
Blake Bell, City of Brooksville, Mayor
Suzanne Monk, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

Steve Champion, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
Jeff Kinnard, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Pat Fitzpatrick, City of Crystal River Council Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Administrative Assistant III
Kyle Benda, Hernando County Attorney

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Chair Schlabach called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.
- The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of Board and staff followed the Invocation.
- A quorum was declared, and the publication affidavit was read into the record.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Motion: A motion to approve the modified agenda to add Item E3, A Presentation on the Lake Lindsey Roundabout given by David Guttenplan, Florida Department of Transportation Project Management Engineer, was made by Commissioner Allocco, seconded by Commissioner Bays, and carried 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –APRIL 6, 2023

Motion: A motion to approve the April 6, 2023, meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner Bays, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and carried 6-0.

CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/INFORMATION ITEMS

Quarterly Financial Report for the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board for period ending March 31, 2023.

Mr. Esposito introduced the quarterly financial report and confirmed no action was required from the MPO Board. Commissioner Allocco asked for confirmation on if there was sufficient money to fund all MPO activities and informed MPO staff that the Hernando Board of County Commissioners had agreed to make funds available from the County's reserve to ensure all planning projects moved forward if the MPO reimbursed Hernando County as funds became available. Mr. Esposito affirmed the MPO has funds to proceed with all planning activities using a phased approach and expressed his appreciation for the County's support. Ms. Elwin also shared that the Florida Department of Transportation can reimburse the MPO for completed work more frequently than at the end of a fiscal quarter, if needed.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation on the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scope A Socioeconomic Forecast Data by Kimley-Horn, General Planning Consultant

William Roll, Kimley-Horn General Planning Consultant, made a presentation to the MPO Board on the status of Scope A involving the socioeconomic forecast data being prepared and analyzed for the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan due in 2024.

Commissioner Allocco asked for clarification on Mr. Roll's comment pertaining to the Bureau of Business & Economic Research's (BEER) estimates being low. Mr. Roll affirmed the "medium" category that is typically used in the studies is an underestimate of the actual population. Since the data being used started with 2019, Commissioner Bays asked if the estimates would include the population increase due to the Suncoast Parkway. Mr. Roll affirmed the increase due to the Suncoast Parkway would be taken into consideration and BEER estimates are a starting point for the data analysis, but additional data is collected from the building/planning departments. Commissioner Allocco noted that there were large developments in the planning process in eastern Hernando County that may not be reflected in the data contained in Kimley-Horn's Powerpoint presentation. Mr. Roll indicated he is still collecting data from Hernando County and the data will be adjusted accordingly. The Board members shared a variety of perspectives on the challenges to managing population and economic growth.

It was noted for the record that City of Brooksville's Mayor, Blake Bell, arrived at the meeting.

Presentation on the Comprehensive Operations Analysis for Citrus County Transit by Joanne Granger, Citrus County Transit Services Director

Ms. Granger, Citrus County Transit Director, presented the final report of the Comprehensive Operations Analysis of Citrus County's Transit system that was completed by Benesch and Associates, General Planning Consultant, and approved by the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners at their regular meeting on April 25, 2023. Chair Schlabach asked if mobility-on-demand (MOD) would be available for the Homosassa line that was discontinued during COVID-19, and Ms. Granger affirmed that including Homosassa would be an option and it was a recommendation in the report for future implementation, but Homosassa was not included in the current analysis.

Commissioner Allocco asked MPO staff for confirmation on a statistic shared at a recent Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) meeting that the fares collected from a single day in Hernando County would not cover the costs of a single bus route in Hernando County. Ms. Elwin affirmed that Oliver Cromwell, RATPDev LLC General Manager, Hernando County's Public Transportation Contractor, did share that information and the importance of federal subsidies, and toll revenue credits to help offset these challenges in a rural community. Ms. Elwin also noted the importance of conducting a comprehensive operations study to identify efficiencies. Ms. Granger also shared that Citrus County has two transit minivans on order that should be available in eight weeks that will enable Citrus County Transit to pilot Mobility-on-Demand (MOD).

Motion: A motion was suggested by Commissioner Allocco to approve the Comprehensive Operations Analysis for Citrus County Transit. A motion was made by Commissioner Bays and seconded by Commissioner Allocco and it carried 7-0.

Presentation on the Lake Lindsey Roundabout

David Guttenplan, Engineer, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Project Management, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the need to add a roundabout at US 41 and Lake Lindsey Road to minimize crashes, especially angle crashes. Mayor Bell asked for the timeline to complete the roundabout to which Ms. Monk, Government Liaison responded that the timeline for the project will be published when funds become available, but it is being presented to add the project to the List of Priority Projects (LOPP) that is on this agenda as the next item. Commissioner Bays asked what the criteria was to select this location. Mr. Guttenplan indicated that even though this location did not have high traffic volume, if a location has five angle crashes per year in a 24-month period, the location qualifies for improvement. Commissioner Allocco commented on the benefit of a roundabout during power outages. The presentation was well received by the MPO Board, and the Board agreed with the recommendation to add this project to the List of Priority Projects (LOPP).

Review and Approval of the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) List of Priority Projects (LOPP)

Mr. Esposito reviewed the recommended updates to the List of Priority Projects. He noted that Project #1 continues to be US 41 in Citrus County. Mr. Esposito indicated that he and Carl Mikyska, Pasco County MPO Executive Director, have a meeting scheduled with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on July 25, 2023, to discuss the possibility of swapping Item 2, County Line Road with another project. Commissioner Allocco asked if MPO staff is regularly communicating with state representatives and senators to keep them abreast of key

developments to transportation priorities prior to such meetings. Mr. Esposito acknowledged. Mr. Esposito reviewed with the Board that Item 6 was new to the list which is the roundabout at US 41 and Lake Lindsey Road presented by Mr. Guttenplan. Item 13, a roundabout at US 41 and North Citrus Springs Boulevard, was added taking our LOPP from 15 to 17 items.

Commissioner Narverud asked why Item 8, adding two additional lanes to US 41 between Spring Hill Drive and Powell Road, was a congestion management (CM) priority. Mayor Bell and Commissioner Campbell mentioned the expansion of the airport and that Pasco County is widening US 41 up to County Line Road and it would not be conducive to lane shift from six lanes to four. Commissioner Allocco asked for clarification on the one-way pairs in the Brooksville area and if it would change the designation of that road, requiring Cobb Road to become the truck bypass. Mr. Esposito affirmed the City of Brooksville would assume responsibility of the one-way pairs thus allowing the City to post *No Truck Traffic* signs and divert truck traffic to the designated bypass versus Cobb Road.

Commissioner Bays suggested moving Item 14, Croft Ave, to Item 17, which would allow Item 15, Rock Crusher Road, to move-up on the list. Chair Schlabach agreed with Commissioner Bays especially with the development of 900 homes on Rock Crusher Road. Commissioner Bays also suggested that as Rock Crusher Road gets funded, to consider putting in a roundabout where Rock Crusher Road intersects with Venable Street and Crystal Oaks Drive.

Mr. Esposito reviewed three change recommendations for the Transportation Alternative (TA) List of Priority Projects indicating that all TA funding is currently allocated to the Withlacoochee State Trail. During the May 24, 2023, joint meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (BPAC) meeting, the CAC recommended Item 2, Rock Crusher Road, be moved to Item 10 allowing Item 10, N. Independence Highway Sidewalk, to become Item 2. Chair Schlabach agreed with this move.

Commissioner Bays recommended moving Item 6, Ft. Island Trail, to the bottom of the list and voiced her concern of building new trails when the county does not have the money to pay for maintenance. Council Member McBride indicated he is not hearing from his constituents that Ft. Island Trail is a priority of the public. Commissioner Bays indicated the need to improve the narrow, two-lane road prior to committing money to a trail.

Mr. Esposito noted that the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) would like to see more shelters/restrooms on the Suncoast Parkway; therefore, items 36a and 36b were added. Commissioner Allocco is comfortable with the order of the TA LOPP and noted that Item 3, Sunshine Grove Road sidewalk, is a priority due to the proximity of the school and that no school buses run in this area. He agreed with Item 5 for California Street and Powell Road sidewalk as there was a pedestrian struck and killed by a car last year.

Ms. Monk advised Citrus County commissioners that N. Independence Highway Sidewalk (new Item 2) did not have an application submitted and cannot be funded until an application is received. Chair Schlabach will reach out to Walt Eastmond, Citrus County Engineer, to begin the application process.

Chair Schlabach asked if there was anyone wishing to speak on this matter from the audience. No one came forward.

Commissioner Bays questioned the length of Item 1h, the last segment of the Withlacoochee State Trail project. Commissioners indicated they thought it went to SR 200; however, it was later clarified that the project does end at the Citrus/Marion County line border.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Allocco to approve the updated List of Priority Projects (LOPP) with above modifications and subsequent renumbering. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and it carried 7-0.

Public Hearing on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY 2024 – FY 2028 Adoption

Mr. Esposito presented the Hernando/Citrus Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2024-FY 2028 for adoption with the List of Proposed Projects that was just approved by the Board. He noted that this is a Public Hearing and that a Roll-Call vote was required.

Chair Schlabach asked if there was anyone in the audience wishing to speak on this matter. No one from the audience came forward.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Narverud to adopt the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for FY 2024-2048 per MPO staff 's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and a Roll-Call vote carried the motion 7-0.

Review and Approval of Fiscal Year 2024 Resolution 2023-05 (Hernando County) and Resolution 2023-06 (Citrus County) for Grant Applications for Transportation Disadvantaged Services for Hernando County (Agreement #G2190) and Citrus County (Agreement #G2176)

Chair Schlabach asked if there was anyone from the audience that would like to speak on this matter. No one came forward.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Allocco to approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant Applications, Resolutions, and agreements per Staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Narverud, and it carried 7-0.

Review and Approval of Revision 2 of the Hernando/Citrus MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FY 2023-FY 2024, Adoption of Resolution 2023-07 Amending PL Contract G2774 to Recognize Additional Funding
Chair Allocco inquired if the movement of dollars between tasks is being driven by the time needed in those tasks and Ms. Elwin affirmed the movement of dollars is due to personnel changes and consultant services.

Motion: A motion was made by Mayor Bell to adopt Resolution 2023-7 recognizing the additional funding in the amount of \$228,784 for Contract G2774, the amendment to PL Contract G2774, and to approve Revision 2 to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Fiscal Year 2023 through Fiscal Year 2024 per Staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and it carried 7-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

MPO DIRECTOR COMMENTS

- The next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Committee (MPOAC) is July 27, 2023. Commissioner Kinnard is scheduled to attend. Commissioner Champion would attend as the Alternate if Commissioner Kinnard is not able to attend or an emergency arises.
- The Hernando/Citrus MPO is the host MPO for the next regional meeting of the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance. The next meeting is June 23, 2023. The MPO Board Chair, Commissioner Schlabach is scheduled to attend. The Vice Chair, Commissioner Campbell, would attend if the Chair is unable or an emergency arises. Chair Schlabach indicated that she did not have this on her calendar and for MPO staff to reach out to Doug Wright, their administrative assistant, to ensure this is added to her calendar.
- A list of current vacancies existing on the MPO Boards and Committees was shared and the MPO is actively recruiting members for these positions. Chair Allocco asked for clarification on the Hernando Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinator Board (TDLCB) Citizen Advocate and Medical openings. MPO Staff affirmed there are two Citizen Advocate positions on the Board and Gary Whitted recently filled one position, but the second Citizen Advocate positions remains open. Ms. Elwin provided the following examples of who could represent the medical position: nurse, EMT, paramedic, doctor, or someone in the medical community that can assist in providing guidance in making decisions for the transportation disadvantaged. MPO Staff will provide at a future date, after consultation with the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged, a better description of entities that would fit the Private Not-for-Profit position.
- 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scope A – Is wrapping-up and will be completed by June 30, 2023. The consultant will begin Scope B efforts.

- Vulnerability & Risk Assessment (Resilience) Study – Stakeholder meetings were conducted on April 19, and May 17, 2023. These meetings were extremely well attended. The consultant, Benesch, is working with the data and feedback from the stakeholders.
- Traffic Counts – Annual traffic counts were completed, and data is being finalized by Benesch, General Planning Consultant.
- Brooksville Truck Traffic Study – FDOT is examining available options.
- Upon discussion by the Board members, the July 6, 2023, MPO Board Meeting was cancelled.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mayor Bell commended Mr. Esposito on his responsiveness to requests and what he has been able to accomplish during his 1.5-year tenure as MPO Executive Director.

Chair Schlabach announced her stage 2 cancer diagnosis and will be undergoing medical treatment in the coming weeks.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

Chair Schlabach adjourned the meeting at 3:29 p.m. The MPO Board cancelled the July 6, 2023, meeting. The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, August 3, 2023, beginning at 1:30 pm, in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida.