



HERNANDO/CITRUS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) BOARD

Thursday, October 5, 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

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
Blake Bell, Mayor, City of Brooksville Mayor
Jeff Kinnard, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Rebecca Bays, Alternate, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Cabot McBride, City of Inverness Council Member
Joe Meek, City of Crystal River Mayor
Brian Hunter, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Suzanne Monk, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ruthie Davis Schlabach, Chair, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Steve Champion, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Administrative Assistant III
Jon Jouben, Hernando County Attorney
Siaosi Fine, Florida Turnpike Enterprise

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Vice Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
- The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of Board and staff followed the Invocation.
- A quorum was declared, and the affidavit of publication was read into the record.

MPO BOARD MEMBERSHIP AFFIRMATIONS

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Bays to approve the appointment of Mayor Joe Meek as the representative on the MPO Board for the City of Crystal River. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 7-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Mayor Bell to acknowledge and approve the appointment of Council Members Robert Holmes and Ken Brown as Alternate Representatives on the MPO Board for the City of Crystal River. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and the motion passed 7-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Bays to acknowledge and approve the appointment of Council Member Christa Tanner as Alternate Representative on the MPO Board for the City of Brooksville. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 7-0.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Motion: A motion was made by Mayor Meek to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and the motion passed 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AUGUST 3, 2023

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Bays to approve the August 3, 2023, meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Allocco and the motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – VULNERABILITY AND RISK ASSESSMENT (RESILIENCE STUDY) FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE – PRESENTATION OF FINAL REPORT BY BENESCH & ASSOCIATES (General Planning Consultant)

[It is noted for the record that Commissioner Narverud arrived at the meeting.]

Rob Cursey, Benesch & Associates General Planning Consultant, made a presentation to the MPO Board on the final report of the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (Resilience) for Transportation Infrastructure Study. Commissioner Allocco asked why Bayport/Pine Island was not classified as Tier I. Mr. Cursey noted it was likely due to land use being residential versus containing major facilities such as hospital and emergency facilities; however, Mr. Cursey will review this area to confirm if the area is correctly classified.

There was Board discussion regarding the Suncoast Parkway designated as a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) designated facility versus US 19 for evacuation purposes. Mr. Cursey affirmed the Study identified that US 19 is vulnerable as a critical roadway during storm events and the Suncoast Parkway should be the priority corridor during such events. Siaso Fine, Florida Turnpike Enterprises, affirmed the Suncoast Parkway is a SIS designated facility. Brian Hunter, with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), explained the SIS system is used to showcase the importance of a road to move goods (freight) and people versus identifying evacuation routes. Mr. Hunter expressed that the SIS designation of US 19 could be reviewed but removing the SIS designation may not achieve the Board's goal. Mr. Hunter suggested using signage to direct the public to use the Suncoast Parkway versus US 19 for evacuation purposes.

Commissioner Allocco mentioned that historically the Hernando/Citrus coastal area has not experienced a direct hit from a hurricane but has encountered significant impact from storm surge. As such, Commissioner Allocco expressed future studies could benefit if the data was analyzed in terms of storm surge versus hurricane levels. Mr. Cursey affirmed future studies could feature storm surge impact but assured the Board the current study encompassed information which included hurricane level 5 data.

Commissioner Allocco asked if County Line Road in Hernando County was evaluated during the Study and why County Line Road is not being considered as a candidate for the SIS system. Mr. Hunter affirmed SIS is a limited network with strict criteria; one criterion for SIS is regional connectivity and connecting major population centers to each other. County Line Road falls short of regional connectivity. Commissioner Allocco asked if evacuation routes should be included as a criterion for SIS routes. Mr. Hunter relayed that state legislation defines SIS criterion, but he would review County Line Road for SIS designation opportunities. Ms. Elwin confirmed that County Line Road was included in the Study and is classified as Tier II. Commissioner Kinnard expressed the interest to evaluate the SIS network between Hernando and Citrus counties. Mr. Hunter indicated the SIS Coordinator for FDOT could provide further information on SIS designated facilities during a future Board meeting.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Kinnard to approve the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Study. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Narverud and the motion passed 8-0.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) Member Appointment.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Allocco to appoint Kathleen Winters to serve as a member for the Local Medical Community Representative on the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) effective November 8, 2023, through November 7, 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Narverud and the motion passed 8-0.

Commissioner Allocco encouraged people to serve on boards and committees and emphasized their volunteerism is important for board and committees to work effectively. Commissioner Allocco thanked Ms. Winters for applying to serve on the TDLCB again.

2. Review and Approval of the Proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule for the Hernando/Citrus MPO Board and Committees

Council Member McBride shared his preference to have a deputy present during MPO Board meetings and to conduct the 2024 MPO Board meetings at the Brooksville City Council for ease of accessibility. Commissioner Allocco relayed there is a second parking lot that provides easier access to the Hernando County Commissioners Chambers should the MPO Board meetings move to the Commissioners Chambers and staff can distribute a map to the second parking lot.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Kinnard to approve the meeting calendar for 2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Narverud and the motion passed 8-0.

3. Annual Roll-Forward Amendment to the Adopted Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2024-FY 2028

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Narverud to approve the Annual Roll-Forward Amendment to the Adopted Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2024 – FY 2028, authorize the MPO Vice Chair's signature thereon, and authorize staff to submit the TIP to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and required review agencies. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and the motion passed 8-0.

4. Review and approve an Interlocal Agreement between the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners and the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners for County Line Road with Support and Assistance by the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Florida Department of Transportation

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Allocco to approve the multi-agency Interlocal Agreement for the improvements to County Line Road as indicated therein and authorize the Vice Chair's signature thereupon. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 8-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

MPO DIRECTOR COMMENTS

- Mr. Esposito emphasized the need to have a quorum for the November 2, 2023, MPO Board meeting to approve the Apportionment Plan with its associated Resolution as the documents are required to be sent to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) immediately to meet the November 14, 2023, federally required deadline. FDOT is currently finalizing the functionally classified urbanized maps that are based on the 2020 census data.
- FDOT and Florida Turnpike Enterprises (FTE) will present their 5-year work programs at the November 2, 2023, meeting.
- The FDOT Safety Liaison will give a presentation at the November 2, 2023, meeting. As a reminder, annual grant applications are due in February 2024.
- In accordance with the adopted UPWP, MPO Staff completed a review of the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This is a safety sensitive document staff utilizes as reference during weather events, health events, and other types of situations that may occur.
- For the Board's information, Staff is in the process of updating the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and associated bylaws. These will be presented during MPO Board's meeting on December 7, 2023.
- As a point of information to the MPO Board and for the benefit of the public, the Withlacoochee Trail Bridge on US41 will be improved during the time of construction between the first and second segments.
- 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Scope A was completed, and Scope B is underway. The final scopes, C and D, will need to be issued immediately after the new GPC contracts are approved by the MPO Board which is tentatively scheduled for the November 2, 2023.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Commissioner Kinnard shared the Inverness school board's desire to schedule US 41 construction, in front of the middle school, during the summer months when school is in recess, if possible. Council Member McBride concurred.
- Council Member McBride asked Mr. Hunter for an update on work being performed on US 41 north of Inverness and Commissioner Kinnard suggested a ground-breaking ceremony with the City of Inverness should be scheduled. Mr. Hunter shared the following and subsequently, Mr. Esposito emailed this information to the MPO Board on October 10, 2023:

257165-3 US 41 from SR 44 to S of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge

- Design (PE) completed.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) phase has been completed.
- Construction (CST) started October 3, 2023, (anticipated to last 2 years).

257165-4 US 41 from S of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge to N of N Sportsman Pt

- Design (PE) underway with final plans expected in fall 2024.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) phase scheduled to begin this year upon MPO Board approval of the Roll-Forward Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment October 5, 2023.
- Construction (CST) scheduled for fall 2025.

257165-5 US 41 from N of N Sportsman Pt to N of E Arlington St:

- Design (PE) underway with final plans expected in summer 2026.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) phase scheduled to begin May 2024.
- Construction (CST) scheduled for fall 2027.

257165-6 US 41 from N of E Arlington St to E Louisiana Lane:

- Design (PE) funded in FY 2025
- Right-of-Way (ROW) funded in FY 2027
- Construction (CST) not currently funded.

257165-7 US 41 from E Louisiana Lane to S of CR 486:

- Design (PE) funded in FY 2029.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) not currently funded.
- Construction (CST) not currently funded.

257165-8 US 41 from S of CR 486 to N of SR 200:

- Design (PE) not currently funded.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) not currently funded.
- Construction (CST) not currently funded.

- Vice Chair Campbell shared that a blank annual performance evaluation form for Mr. Esposito was given to the Board members to complete and return to Mary Elwin by November 17, 2023. Staff will also provide a blank annual performance form electronically.
- Vice Chair Campbell shared that a copy of the Hernando/Citrus MPO Financial Report for the quarter ending June 30, 2023, had been distributed for the Board's review.
- Vice Chair Campbell expressed thanks and appreciation to the two attending Citrus County sheriff's deputies and Mayor Bell commended Mr. Esposito and Mr. Hunter for their work on a Brooksville project.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

Vice Chair Campbell adjourned the meeting at 2:33 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 2023, beginning at 1:30 pm, in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida.