



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Marion County Commission Auditorium
601 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471

July 11, 2018

MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant (*arrived at 4:06pm*)
Commissioner Jeff Gold
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilwoman Valerie Hanchar
Commissioner Ron Livsey
Councilman Brent Malever
Commissioner David Moore
Councilman Matthew Wardell

Members Not Present:

Councilman Justin Grabelle
Councilman Jay Musleh
Councilwoman Mary Rich
Commissioner Michelle Stone
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Others Present:

Andrew Morris
Marie Schinman
Oliver Cromwell, SunTran
Tracy Straub, Marion County
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM. Secretary Shakayla Pullings called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof of Publication

Secretary Shakayla Pullings stated that the meeting had been published online on the TPO website and on the City of Ocala, Marion County, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites.

Item 3. Public Comment

Marie Schinman, 4500 NW 82nd Court, Ocala, FL 34482 asked the TPO board for a Resolution of opposition concerning the Coastal Connector.

Item 6. Consent Agenda (Chairman Moore moved Item 6- Consent Agenda up on the agenda to ensure a quorum was present for approval)

Mr. Gold made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Hanchar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 4a. Transit Realignment

Mr. Daniels presented the Transit Realignment and said that staff was proposing to realign the existing SunTran Bus Routes in order to maximize efficiency based in large part on the public involvement recommendations that came out of the 2018 Transit Development Plan (TD) Update and the 2016 SunTran Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA).

Mr. Daniels talked about the different changes to the SunTran Routes:

Blue Route – The proposed alignment of the Blue route would provide one-way service on the majority of the route, including a one-way loop along Blitchton Road that is currently serviced by the Purple route with 60-minute headways. The alignment would provide a more direct travel path between several important anchors:

the Health Department, the Ocala Regional Medical Center, SW 17th Street, Downtown, and the northwest area identified as an important transit market. The alignment would benefit ridership due to the directness of travel between major anchor points and the available transfers at the Downtown Transfer Station. This would also make service more efficient in the northwest, as it would provide a transfer opportunity to all other routes serving the Downtown Station before continuing to the Health Department.

Yellow Route – The proposed alignment operates similar to the current Yellow B route, with some segments with two-way service and a loop in the northeast. This route was redesigned to reduce out-of-direction travel, provide coverage service in the northeast, and provide more premium two-way service in the area. This route alignment provides

two-way service on NW 35th Street that previously only had one-way service every other hour by removing the out-of-direction travel that had served some very low ridership segments in close proximity to the current and proposed Green routes. This alignment maintains a substantial level of coverage in the northeast, increases efficiencies in service, and improves the frequency of the Yellow route.

Green Route – The proposed alignment operates similar to the current Green Route with a minor exception of expanding to provide service directly to the Marion County Library and removing a segment northeast of the Silver Springs Walmart by continuing on SR 40. The alignment then continues the current inbound alignment, returning to Downtown. This alignment has the effect of providing counter-clockwise loop service (opposite the Yellow route) on a few roadways, providing two-way transit service on those routes. This alignment reduces overall out-of-direction travel on the outbound trip by adding service where the current Blue route alignment had provided service on. Additionally, this alignment provides coverage to a significant portion of the northeast that was modified to increase efficiencies for the Yellow route.

Orange Route – The proposed alignment is a combination of the Orange and Yellow A routes.

This alignment uses N Magnolia/1st Avenue (one-way pairs) to exit/enter the Downtown area and station. This alignment removes some difficult turning movements from the current Orange alignment near the medical centers south of Downtown that are served by the Blue route in this recommendation, without the need to complete the difficult turn. This has the effect of reducing out-of-direction travel and providing two-way service along portions of the route. The future plans for the orange route would be to extend service past the I-75 corridor and provide service along the SR 200 corridor, which was a top request of current and potential riders and was identified as a sizeable transit market due to the employment density in the area. This alignment may also assist in attracting paratransit trips to fixed route service in an area with an already high number of paratransit trips. However at the present time, this expansion is not possible due to route timing. With the use of signal pre-emption, this may be an option to revisit in the future.

Purple Route – The proposed alignment is a combination of the current Purple, Orange, and Yellow A routes. It provides more direct service to the southwest and a second route option to the northwest, both important coverage areas. This alignment also provides coverage in the southwest where the Orange and Yellow A routes were assessed as being too close to each other. This alignment extends route service to Paddock Mall before returning to Downtown. This new alignment would serve several high-ridership stops in coverage areas while providing access to several key anchor points in the southwest.

Red Route with Flex Service – The proposed alignment preserves the western portion of the existing route from the Health Department as it continues east but would connect directly to Winn-Dixie and Walmart using SE Maricamp Road and not bifurcate into A and B branches at the Winn-Dixie. Staff is proposing to eliminate the last trip of the day due to low ridership. Staff evaluated the possibility of operating the red route as a Flex service, within the general area served by the existing Red Routes. The Red route is presently the lowest ridership route and has the highest operating cost per passenger trip. However at the time, the expansion was not possible due to route timing. With the use of signal pre-emption, it could be an option to revisit in the future.

Silver Route to the Ocala / Marion County Commerce Park

The proposed alignment shall provide service to the Ocala/Marion County Commerce Park, which is a growing employment center for Fed Ex Ground, Chewy.com, and AutoZone. The route shall be coordinated to run during employee shift changes.

Item 5b. Coastal Connector Resolution (Chairman Moore moved the agenda item up)

Mr. Daniels said that on June 29, 2018 Mayor Guinn received a letter from Secretary Dew stating that the Coastal Connector had be postponed. Ms. Bryant followed up with a letter to the Governor requesting that the language in the letter state termination instead of “postponed”.

Ms. Bryant said she had a visit with Secretary Dew and also spoke with the Governor as a follow-up to the letter she sent and urged the board to send letters as well.

There was some board discussion about property values and the effect that the Coastal Connector had on the community.

Mr. Gold made a motion to approve the Coastal Connector Resolution. Mr. Malever seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5a. Intelligent Transportation Systems Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Odom said that the Ocala/Marion County through coordination with the Cities and Marion County were seeking to continue to improve traffic flow and the reliability of the transportation system through the application of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). The original ITS Plan was developed in 2008, and the update would re-affirm and adjust the earlier plan, and identify specific projects and equipment to deploy and operate ITS consistent with local, state and federal policies, regulations, standards, and guidelines. The recommended projects should contribute to a safe and efficient transportation system for the County addressing pressing operational needs identified in the study, as well as planning for specific needs for the next five years, and general needs for the 5 to 10 year timeframe.

Mr. Gold made a motion to approve the Intelligent Transportation Systems Strategic Plan Update. Mr. Wardell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5c. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Appointment

Ms. Bryant made a motion to approve the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Appointment- Mr. Travis Magamoll. Mr. Wardell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 7. Comments by FDOT

Vickie Wyche and Janna Taylor with FDOT introduced themselves as the new TPO liaisons and told the board if they had any questions on projects to let them know.

Ms. Bryant asked for an email with contact information for both liaisons. Both Ms. Wyche and Ms. Taylor said they would send the board their contact information.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Daniels said there would be a Public Hearing on the widening of NE 25th Avenue from NE 14th Street to NE 35th Street on August 23, 2018 and TPO staff would notify the board of the meeting closer to its date and also FDOT would be at the next TPO board meeting on August 28, 2018 to make a presentation.

Ms. Bryant said there could not be a meeting on August 28th. Mr. Daniels said we could revisit the date of the meeting.

Mr. Daniels said there was interest on another bus advertising wrap and there would be another bid taking place on August 10, 2018 and if all went well there would be bus wrap approval at the next board meeting.

Mr. Daniels also talked about a Billing Letter received from FDOT with concerns about timeliness and accuracy of the billing process and while he had some issues with the letter he did acknowledge that there was a struggle to make sure the billing requirements were met especially the timeliness issues.

Mr. Daniels said that since the letter had been since two billings were submitted to FDOT and approved without incident and had just submitted a rough draft of the next billing and that with the recent hiring of new staff members that had PL billing experience and he was confident and focused on making sure that there was compliance with all of the FDOT requirements.

Ms. Bryant said she was glad to hear that but wanted to know if the TPO was at risk of losing any funding.

Mr. Daniels said no and that the way FDOT had the risk assessment was high risk, low risk, and elevated risk and all of that was related to the billing process. He explained the billing requirements for the different risks. Mr. Daniels said that with the TPO being high risk all backup documentation was due and was currently quarterly billing and would be going to monthly billing and confident that it would help the billing process. Mr. Daniels said there was no impact on the billing and it was really just about how it effects what is submitted with billing.

Ms. Bryant said she would rephrase the question and asked if the TPO was at risk of not receiving any of the funding that the TPO was supposed to receive because of the problems with billing.

Mr. Daniels responded no.

Ms. Bryant asked if all of the issues were worked out so there was no risk in the future.

Mr. Daniels responded yes.

Mr. Daniels also said that he was thinking of was providing a report of were the billing was in the process so that the board knew what was going on and any inaccuracies.

Ms. Bryant said it would be good if it could be included in the meeting packet and if the board had any questions they can ask at the meeting.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Staff

There were no comments by TPO Staff.

Item 9. Comments by TPO Members

Ms. Hanchar said that the Dunnellon Community was excited about have transportation into Ocala and that the service would be utilized.

Item 10. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Item 11. Adjournment

Chairman Moore adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Pullings, TPO Administrative Assistant