



**Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB)**

**Workshop Meeting**

Marion County Senior Services  
1101 SW 20<sup>th</sup> Ct., Ocala, FL 34471  
June 13, 2024  
11:00 AM

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

Matthew McClain  
Jeffrey Askew  
Tiffany McKenzie  
Susan Hanley  
Jeanette Estes  
Andrea Melvin  
Steven Neal  
Donnie Mitchell  
Carlos Colon  
Christopher Carlisle

**Members Not Present:**

Gisela Ruiz  
Tracey Sapp  
Iris Pozo  
Anissa Pieriboni  
Angela Juaristic  
Elizabeth Alacci

**Others Present:**

Liz Mitchell, TPO  
Rob Balmes, TPO  
Shakayla Irby, TPO

Sara Brown, TPO  
Tom Duncan, City of Ocala  
Clayton Murch, Marion Senior Services  
Herman Schultz, Marion Senior Services  
Other attendees not signed in.

### **Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chairman McClain called the workshop to order at 11:10am. Secretary Shakayla Irby called the roll and a quorum was present.

### **Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman McClain led the board members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Item 3. Proof of Publication**

Secretary Shakayla Irby stated that the workshop had been published June 6, 2024 online on the TPO website and Facebook and Twitter pages, the City of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites. The workshop was also published to the June 6, 2024 edition of the Ocala Star Banner.

### **Item 4A. Tour of Marion Transit Facilities and Explanation of Services**

TDLCB Board members and TPO staff met at the Marion Transit facilities for the annual Workshop. The CTC gave everyone a tour of the facilities, providing a high-level explanation and an overview of the hard work that goes into transporting our most vulnerable citizens.

The first half of the tour consisted of information on Marion Senior Services.

Marion Senior Services was a nonprofit, charitable social agency that provided supportive care services to elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged residents of Marion County, Florida. They helped their clients to remain living in their own homes independently as long as possible by providing Meals, Transit, and In-Home Support services. A variety of public, private, and donor funding enabled them to provide services to most people in need, regardless of their ability to pay. Services were provided on a sliding fee basis from no cost to full pay.

### **Nutrition Services**

Marion Senior Services had been delivering meals to the homebound since 1973, starting with a small group of volunteers who recognized a community need and delivered 13 meals to senior neighbors. This compassionate initiative laid the foundation for the agency, which eventually provided over 400 daily meals.

Their goal was to deliver a hot lunch Monday through Friday, meeting 1/3 of an adult's daily nutritional requirements. Meals were delivered by both staff and volunteer support drivers, who also provided a daily check on clients' well-being, often a highlight for isolated individuals.

Some programs required a fee, which was assessed during the client's evaluation. Contributions were accepted if no fee was required. While special dietary needs could not be met for all clients, meals were low in salt.

Meals were prepared by a specialized caterer for Meals on Wheels programs and delivered to their facility each morning. They were kept at appropriate temperatures until deliveries commenced between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Marion Senior Services served all areas of Marion County. To begin the application process, individuals could contact them at (352) 620-3501.

### **In-Home Support Services**

In-Home Support services assisted eligible, functionally impaired elderly persons aged 60 and over in maintaining dignified and reasonably independent lives in their own homes or with relatives or caregivers through the coordination of various community-based services.

These programs aimed to eliminate individual and social barriers to personal independence, empower recipients with knowledge of best personal care practices, offer a continuum of care, and facilitate access to managed in-home and community-based long-term care services.

"Aging-in-place" described the ability of individuals to remain living at home as they aged, maintaining as much independence as possible. Consideration was given to the person's ability to manage Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), which were essential tasks performed daily to care for oneself and live independently.

Marion Senior Services provided Case Managers, Service Coordinators, and Consultants who worked closely with clients and their families by:

- Conducting initial assessments and developing care plans to identify needs and support service requirements.
- Arranging and monitoring in-home assistance and other support services.
- Providing crisis intervention and early intervention.
- Serving as liaisons for families at a distance, ensuring personal needs were met and alerting families to issues and solutions.
- Offering clients education, advocacy, counseling, and support.

Various support services could be arranged, including:

- Assessment and Care Planning
- Case Management
- Light Housekeeping

- Personal Care
- Home Delivered Meals
- Companionship
- Respite Care
- Transportation
- Emergency Alert Devices
- Adult Day Care
- Caregiver Support
- Medication Management
- Shopping Assistance
- Chores

The second half of the tour consisted of information on Marion Transit's services.

Marion Transit paratransit service provided public transportation to all persons in our service area of Marion County, Florida, although it was primarily designated to maximize usage by "transportation disadvantaged" individuals.

Fast Facts: In 1982, Marion Senior Services, Inc., operating as Marion Transit, was designated as the Marion County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. In June 2020, Marion Transit was re-designated by the Florida TD Commission to serve as Marion County's CTC for another 5-year term.

Service Area: All of Marion County, Florida, covering 1,663 square miles (larger than the state of Rhode Island).

Average number of one-way trips per day: 350-450.

Number of paratransit buses operated per day: 25-35.

SunTran Complementary ADA Transportation:

ADA complementary paratransit service was provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by public transit agencies that offered fixed-route services. Marion Transit and SunTran, the Ocala fixed route bus system, had an agreement for Marion Transit to provide this service. Complementary ADA Paratransit service was available to residents living within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of any SunTran fixed route who could not walk to a designated bus stop due to a disability. Eligibility was based on the nature of the disability and desired travel routes. Certification could be ADA Origin to Destination eligible, allowing use of both Origin to Destination service and fixed route service, with eligibility determined as permanent or temporary based on the disability and potential for using the fixed route system with travel training.

Goals:

- High Passenger Satisfaction
- On-time Performance
- Minimized Passenger Dwell Time (Wait Time)
- Passenger Safety
- Excellent Customer Service
- Safe Driving

How to Become Eligible for SunTran Complementary ADA Paratransit Services:

To apply for certification as ADA paratransit eligible, individuals were advised to call the Center for Independent Living (CIL) at (352) 368-3788 to schedule an appointment, typically lasting 1 to 1.5 hours. Marion Transit provided one round trip on paratransit at no charge for the appointment at CIL. They were instructed to call 352-620-3071 to schedule their Marion Transit ADA paratransit trip for certification.

Individuals received written notification by mail of their eligibility within 21 days. If ADA Origin to Destination eligible, their ID card specifying eligibility type accompanied the notification. SunTran made the final eligibility determination in all cases.

Note: Complementary ADA paratransit service for visitors to Marion County was available for up to 21 days during any 365-day period from the first use of the service.

**Item 5. Discussion**

*There was no further discussion.*

**Item 6. Comments by TDLCB Members**

*There were no comments by TDLCB members.*

**Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff**

*There were no comments by TPO staff.*

**Item 8. Comments by Community Transportation Coordination (CTC)**

*There were no comments by the CTC.*

**Item 9. Public Comment**

*There was no public comment.*

**Item 10. Adjournment**

Chairman McClain adjourned the meeting at 11:43 am.

Respectfully Submitted By:

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Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant