



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

Marion County Growth Services, Training Room  
2710 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470  
Cisco WebEx  
June 17, 2021  
3:00 PM

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

Jeffrey Askew  
Tamyika Young (*via WebEx*)  
Tracey Alesiani  
Andrea Melvin

**Members Not Present:**

Michelle Stone  
Charmaine Anderson  
Tracey Sapp  
Susan Hanley  
Carlos Colon  
Iris Pozo  
Anissa Pieriboni  
Carissa Hutchinson  
Steven Neal  
Jeff Aboumrad  
James Haynes

**Others Present:**

Rob Balmes, TPO  
Shakayla Irby, TPO  
Elizabeth Mitchell, TPO  
Tom Wilder, Marion Transit

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

Vice-Chairman Askew called the meeting to order at 3:11pm. Secretary Shakayla Irby called the roll and a special quorum was present with 4 voting members in attendance.

**Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice-Chairman Askew led the board members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item 3. Proof of Publication**

Secretary Shakayla Irby stated that the public workshop had been published June 10, 2021 online on the TPO website and Facebook and Twitter pages, the City of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites. The public workshop was also published to the June 11, 2021 edition of the Star Banner.

**Item 4A. Presentation on Transportation Disadvantaged 101, an Overview of the Transportation Disadvantaged Program and Marion Transit. Presentation provided by Marion Transit: Tom Wilder, Transportation Director**

Mr. Wilder gave the presentation and said that Marion Transit had served Marion County, Florida since 1976. The paratransit service, provided public transportation to all persons within the service area of Marion County, Florida, however it was designated to maximize usage by “transportation disadvantaged” persons in general.

Some Fast Facts presented:

- 1982 Designated as the Marion County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) by Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Marion Senior Services, Inc. d/b/a Marion Transit had been the CTC since the program inception. In June 2020 Marion Transit had been selected again and designated by the Florida TD Commission to serve as Marion Counties CTC for another 5-year term.
- Service Area - All of Marion County Florida, 1663 Square Miles. (Larger than the State of Rhode Island)
- Average number of one-way trips per day: 350-450 (Pre-COVID19)
- Number of paratransit buses working per day: 25-35

Mr. Wilder explained the major grants that supported Marion Transit:

- 5311 – Rural Transportation (Operating Funds Grant – 50% Local Match)
  - Grant is awarded by FDOT
- 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (Capital Funds to purchase buses) – 10% Local Match
  - Grant is awarded by FDOT
- Transportation Disadvantaged Trip & Equipment Grant Program
  - TDLCB approved equipment purchases. TRIP Rates were reviewed by board. Funds were “formula” based throughout the 67 Counties.
- “Other” Grants were applied for as needed. i.e. Shirley Conroy Rural Assistance Grant, 5339 for Buses & Bus Facilities, etc.
- Local match funds were required for the grants and came as a budget request to the Marion County Board of County Commissioners, fare revenue & donations.

The percentage of TRIPS by funding source:

- Transportation Disadvantaged- 42%
- 5311 Rural Transportation Grant- 35%
- ADA Complementary Paratransit (SunTran)- 22%

Mr. Wilder explained the duties of the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

- Develop policies and procedures for the coordination of transportation services for the Transportation Disadvantaged.
- Designate the planning agency in areas outside the purview of an MPO.
- Approve the appointments of CTCs.
- Contract with the CTCs.

The Ocala Marion TPO was the Designated Official Planning Agency and duties included:

- Appointing members to the Local Coordinating Board
- Providing staff to the Local Coordinating Board
  - Quarterly meetings (meeting schedule, agendas, minutes, by-laws, grievance procedures, training)
  - Annual Public Workshop
- Recommend to the Commission a CTC
  - Competitive Procurement Process (Local Procurement Process or Chapter 287, F.S.)
  - Memorandum of Agreement between the Commission and CTC
  - CTC designation was to be for five years
- Evaluate the CTC (Planner and LCB) annually
- Review annually the Annual Operating Report prepared by the CTC and submits it to the Local Coordinating Board for approval.
- In coordination with the CTC and the Local Coordinating Board, develop a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)
- Appoint and staffs Local Coordinating Board
- Procure and recommends a Community Transportation Coordinator to the Commission
- Coordinate and conducts transportation planning at the local level for transportation disadvantaged.

Mr. Wilder also highlighted the purpose of the Local Coordinating Board “TDLCB”:

- Identify local service needs
- Provide information, advice and direction to the CTC on the coordination of services to be provided through the Coordinated Transportation System
- Serve as an advisory body to the Commission regarding a particular service area
- Assist CTC in establishing eligibility guidelines and trip priorities
- Evaluate CTC annually
- Review and approve Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- Appoint Grievance Committee to process and investigate complaints
- Provide guidance for the local coordination of services
- Oversee Community Transportation Coordinator

Mr. Wilder also spoke about the duties of the CTC.

- Plans, administers, monitors, coordinates, arranges and delivers coordinated Transportation Disadvantaged services originating in their designated service area
- Operates centralized call center (aka Reservations)
- Determines transportation eligibility (for TD riders)
- Schedules trips (scheduler)
- Performs gatekeeping duties (with regards to TD)
- Develops a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan with Local Coordinating Board & TPO.
- Prepares and submits Annual Operating Report (AOR)
- Recommends eligibility guidelines and trip prioritization to the Local Coordinating Board for non-sponsored trips.

Mr. Wilder explained each type of trip offered.

TD Trips- trips defined as “Non-Sponsored” trips

The riders could include older adults, persons with disabilities, persons with low income, and at-risk children. Providing services to medical appointments, work, school, and the grocery store.

Minimum qualifications included:

- No other funding available
- No other means of transportation is available
- Cannot utilize public transit
- Physical or mental disability
- Age (60+ 16 under)
- Income status is a specified percent of the poverty level (150% below)
- No self-declarations allowed (must show proof or provide affidavit)
- Ability to pay (we offer a fare waiver for fares)

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service for SunTran (Fixed Route System) - trips defined as “Sponsored” trips

The City of Ocala the administrative agency for SunTran and had contracted with RATP Dev to perform day-to-day operations and management of the fixed route system. Fixed route systems are required to provide ADA complementary paratransit service to riders who live within ¾ of a mile of the fixed route system and cannot walk to a bus stop. Marion Transit had the agreement with RATP to provide that service for them. Note: Center for Independent Living was the designated agency who qualifies riders for MT.

5311 Program – Rural Public Transportation- trips defined as “Sponsored” trips

The 5311Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provided capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas. Residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The TRIPs by appointment were considered “Public Transportation” for rural areas. The criteria to ride was different than TD. Marion Transit also offered 2 “deviated” services serving Dunnellon “Blue Line” & Marion Oaks “Gold Line”. The services follow a schedule but could deviate to provide door to door service.

MT Services – Other AKA – Sponsored Trips

The agreements with MT to provide transportation for eligible riders. In 2020 Marion Transit signed an agreement with the Marion County School Board to provide homeless children rides to school until they could be scheduled on a normal bus route. Prior agreements were with Medicaid brokers (i.e., MTM, Access2Care, etc.) providing trips such as pediatric babies to their daycares.

Mr. Wilder concluded his presentation quoting the Marion Transit Mission:

“Is to provide public transportation that offers riders a high-quality safe, reliable, and efficient paratransit experience.”

Ms. Melvin said that she found the majority of the presentation very helpful and felt that the presentation should be shared with any new TDLCB member upon joining the board.

Mr. Askew asked about brochures with the information for his office (Marion County Veterans Office), the VA Clinic, the Cascades, and also the Tourist Development Center.

Mr. Wilder said that he would provide Mr. Askew with some brochures.

#### **Item 5. Comments by TDLCB Board Members**

*There were no additional comments by the TDLCB Members.*

#### **Item 6. Comments by TPO Staff**

Mr. Balmes said that the presentation provided was “great” and he felt it would be beneficial to also include on the TPO’s website for anyone that would like to know about the program and services offered.

Mr. Balmes also said that the Census had proposed a rule making to redefine an urban area and base the area on households per areas. The Census had received a lot of comments and feedback but no word on if the proposal stood or had been withdrawn.

Mr. Wilder mentioned concerns for the Marion Oaks area that had been classified as a rural area if it became a small urban area it would require more TD money to pay for trips with no other source of funding.

Ms. Melvin inquired if Belleview and Summerfield were considered rural areas.

Mr. Wilder said yes, both areas were considered rural. Marion Transit provided service in Belleview for citizen that called and scheduled service. There were also two buses in Summerfield that provided service. All considered rural trips.

**Item 7. Comments by Transportation Coordinator (CTC)**

*There were no additional comments by the CTC.*

**Item 8. Public Comment**

*There was no public comment.*

**Item 12. Adjournment**

Vice-Chairman Askew adjourned the public workshop at 4:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

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Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant