



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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

August 23, 2018

MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilwoman Valerie Hanchar
Commissioner Ronald Livsey
Councilman Brent Malever
Commissioner David Moore
Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich (*arrived at 4:14pm*)
Commissioner Michelle Stone
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Jeff Gold
Councilman Justin Grabelle
Councilman Jay Musleh

Others Present:

Oliver Cromwell, SunTran
Mark Reichert, FDOT
Steven Buck, FDOT
Alison Stettner, DOT
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala
Tracey Straub, Marion County
Amber Gartner, Kimley Horn
Darren Park, City of Ocala
Sean Lanier, City of Ocala
Carl Mikyska, MPOAC

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:13 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 3a. NE 25th Avenue Widening

Steven Buck with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) presented the NE 25th Avenue Widening project that was currently under design.

Mr. Buck said progress on the design was at approximately twenty percent and the new corridor was planned to include four travel lanes with dedicated turn-lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a grade-separated bridge over the CSX lines.

Mr. Buck gave some background on the project that included:

- Highway System- Off-state Facility, City of Ocala and Marion County, Existing 2-lane undivided, rural collector
- TPO Priority- Ranked 21st on the Priority List
- Project Sponsor- FDOT
- Commitment- Grade separation over CSX

Mr. Buck said there was a South Project and North Project and he explained to the board the proposals for both projects starting with the South Project:

- Project would begin at NE 14th Street (State Road 492) and end north of NE 24th Street with a length of 0.830 miles
- Typical Section-Roadway (proposed)
 - Two Travel lanes in each direction (each 11 feet wide)
 - 20-foot median
 - 7-foot buffered bicycle lanes (both sides)
 - 6-foot sidewalks (both sides)
 - Additional right of way needed
- Bridge over CSX Railroad (proposed)
 - Two Travel lanes in each direction (each 11 feet wide)
 - 20-foot median
 - 7-foot buffered bicycle lanes (both sides)
 - 5-foot sidewalks (protected by concrete barrier walls)
- Proposed Roundabout at NE 24th Street
 - Two-lane roundabout
 - Passed steps 1 and 2 (of 3-stepscreening process)
- Noise Abatement Wall at Wagon Wheel MHP

- Pond Locations
 - Ponds being optimized to account for geotechnical information

The North Project:

- Would begin north of NE 24th Street and end at NE 35th Street with the length of 0.758 miles
- Typical Section- Roadway (proposed)
 - Improved one travel lane in each direction (each 11 feet wide)
 - No frontage roads
 - 42-foot wide median (to accommodate future widening)
 - 7-foot buffered bicycle lanes
 - 6-foot sidewalks
 - Additional right of way needed
- Proposed Roundabout at NE 28th Street
 - Single lane roundabout
 - Passed steps 1 and 2 (of 3-step screening process)
- Perimeter Wall at Raven Glen
 - Provided per RFP Commitment
- Pond Location
 - Ponds being optimized to account for geotechnical information

Mr. Buck gave the board upcoming Public Hearing information and said the Project Schedule was:

Design- January 2020

Right of Way Acquisition- Not yet funded

Construction- Not yet funded

There was some board discussion about the project.

Mr. Moore said that roundabouts do not work and wanted to let the board and the FDOT know that he did not like them.

Mr. Buck said that Mr. Moore's concerns were noted and that the FDOT had certain safety and operational improvements for the roadway before a roundabout could be considered.

Item 3b. Financial and Billing Update

Mr. Daniels presented the Financial and Billing Update and said on June 25, 2018, The Florida Department of Transportation issued specific award condition requirements for the Ocala/Marion County TPO's Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding. The reasons for the conditions were due to the timeliness and accuracy of our billing submittals provided in the enclosed letter. The PL funding was outlined in our 2 – year Work Program (UPWP), which was an estimated budget for each of the planning tasks undertaken by the TPO. Staff had worked closely with the FDOT to ensure that billing was timely and accurate. Staff had diligently complied with all of the requirements laid out in FDOT's specific conditions letter and had revamped the billing process to create a more accurate and efficient billing process. At the time of the Director, Michael Daniels memo, the TPO

had been approved for, or had submitted to FDOT for review of all outstanding invoicing. In addition, Mr. Daniels said that billings had been submitted to FDOT prior to the TPO meeting. To ensure that the Board was kept up to date with the financial and billing activity, at each monthly meeting Mr. Daniels said he would submit a financial report which would update the Board on expenses and invoicing for the fiscal year. In addition, would provide an update to the approved Unified Planning Work Program Tasks, so that the Board can see the progress that had been made on achieving the tasks in the approved UPWP.

Mark Reichert, Administrator from Metropolitan Planning with the FDOT in Tallahassee. Mr. Reichert said his reasoning for attending the TPO meeting was that any time a Special Conditions Letter is provided to an MPO the FDOT Central Office is notified and is their intent to make sure the board is aware and working with the TPO Staff to make sure the issues are being resolved.

Mr. Reichert said the Ocala/Marion TPO was not being held to a higher standard than any other MPO in the state but because of the history of invoicing issues the TPO had been rated at a Higher Risk and the ranking elevates the level of monitoring that is required by FDOT as the pass-through agency for Federal Highway Administration funds and that about three years ago the Florida Department of Financial Services changed the rules for invoicing requiring more documentation.

Mr. Reichert said he would encourage Mr. Daniels to continue to work closely with the FDOT District and foster a relationship of mutual respect and corporation.

Mr. Reichert said he was very encouraged to see that there would be regularly financial reports given to the board.

Mr. Zalak asked how many MPO's are having the issues that Ocala/Marion was having in the state.

Mr. Reichert said not very many and that there was one that had issues more severe than the ones being dealt with by Ocala/Marion.

Mr. Zalak asked if there were issues with the billings issued prior to the ones over the last six months.

Ms. Vickie Wyche with FDOT said there were some issues that included timesheets and tracking of the timesheets and unallowable expenses.

Ms. Allison Stettner with FDOT said that when the Special Conditions Letter was sent it was to provide a type of structured way to provide technical assistance and it is a learning curve that is in depth and said that Desi (TPO Grant Coordinator) had gone to DeLand for additional training and FDOT would continue to work closely with Mr. Daniels to make sure that invoices and spending was consistent with the agreement.

Ms. Rich asked when the new rules came into place was the TPO doing what needed to be done at that time.

Ms. Stettner said considering the timely processing and the amount of times that billings had to be rejected was being improved.

Mr. Moore asked when did the problem begin.

Ms. Stettner said FDOT started seeing the first issues in the year 2016.

Mr. Daniels said there was a new UPWP that started in 2016 and there was also a four-month lag where there was no Director and the billing was behind and when he started the job there was a learning curve so trying to get back on schedule was very difficult and personnel changes as well.

Mayor Guinn asked what the risk was.

Ms. Stettner said the risk was not being reimbursed for Federal Funds and for Planning Funds.

Ms. Bryant said that if the issues continued the board would need to have some more serious discussions.

Mr. Zalak expressed concerns about not knowing about the issues quick enough so he asked Ms. Wyche as the Liaison to the Ocala/Marion TPO to make sure the board was aware immediately of issues. Mr. Zalak said he wanted to make sure the relationship with FDOT was phenomenal like it had been in the past.

Mayor Guinn said he sat on the TPO Board for 19 years and never had a problem with FDOT and wanted to receive a summary of the issues that had been occurring.

Ms. Stettner said she would provide a summary to the board.

Ms. Bryant said if there were any other issues that would put the board at risk the board needs to be notified immediately.

Mr. Malever asked how long it would take to get off High Risk.

Ms. Stettner said usually within the year if progress is being made and re-evaluation is done every year.

Item 4. Consent Agenda

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

Item 5. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Vickie Wyche provided the board with construction updates.

Item 6. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Daniels said that he was coming up on his two-year anniversary and his contract was good for two years so he would need to setup a date with the Chair and Vice-Chair for his performance evaluation.

Mr. Daniels also said the September meeting proposed date was Thursday, September 20 at 2pm.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Members

Ms. Bryant asked FDOT to send an update within six months to let the board know how things were coming along.

Ms. Stettner said that she would provide the update and also wanted to let the board know she would not classify the relationship with the TPO as a bad one and wanted to make sure it was clear that FDOT and the TPO were good partners.

Mr. Zalak asked what Ms. Stettner would classify it as.

Ms. Stettner said she would classify it as excellent and have open communication and working to provide technical assistance.

Councilman Malever asked if there would be more shelters up in the future.

Mr. Daniels said yes there would be more shelters up.

Item 8. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 9. Adjournment

Commissioner Moore adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Pullings, TPO Administrative Assistant