



TPO Board Meeting

Marion County Commission Auditorium

601 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471

February 27, 2024

4:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Councilmember Ire Bethea

Commissioner Craig Curry

Councilmember Kristen Dryer

Commissioner Ray Dwyer (*Commissioner Michael Goldman attended on behalf of Commissioner Ray Dwyer*)

Councilman Tim Inskeep

Commissioner Michelle Stone

Commissioner Carl Zalak

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant

Councilmember James Hilty

Councilmember Barry Mansfield

Mayor Ben Marciano

Commissioner Matt McClain

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, TPO

Shakayla Irby, TPO

Sara Brown, TPO

Liz Mitchell, TPO

Darren Park, City of Ocala

Noel Cooper, City of Ocala

Amber Gartner, Kimley-Horn

Sean Lanier, City of Ocala

Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala

Other members of the public not signed in.

Item 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairwoman Kristen Dreyer called the meeting to order at 3:01pm and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 2. Roll Call

Shakayla Irby, Administrative Assistant called the roll and a quorum was present.

Item 3. Proof of Publication

Shakayla Irby, Administrative Assistant, stated that the meeting was published online on the TPO website and the City of Ocala, Belleview, Dunnellon, and Marion County websites on February 20, 2024. Additionally, the meeting was shared on the TPO's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Item 4. Consent Agenda

Mr. Curry made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Stone seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5a. TPO Director Annual Performance Evaluation

Ms. Amanda Tart, Assistant County Administrator for Marion County, addressed the board and stated that the TPO had a Staff Services Agreement with Marion County. She mentioned that the TPO Chairman was responsible for the annual performance evaluation of the TPO Director, using the County's performance evaluation process.

On December 11, 2023, evaluation forms were distributed to each TPO Board member for completion. The collected information was managed by the Marion County Administration.

Evaluations were received from Chairwoman Kristen Dreyer, Commissioner Craig Curry, Commissioner Matthew McClain and Councilman Tim Inskeep. Councilman Tim Inskeep's evaluation was not included in the agenda packet and a hardcopy was provided to the TPO Board and *attached on page # of these minutes for the record.*

Ms. Tart informed the board that with the approval of the TPO Director's Annual Performance Evaluation, the County would proceed with processing a merit increase for Mr. Balmes, effective from October 1, 2023.

Mr. Bethea made a motion to approve the TPO Director Annual Performance Evaluation. Mr. Inskeep seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5b. Fiscal Years (FY) 2024 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #3

Ms. Brown presented to the committee and said there was one project proposed to be amended to the Fiscal Years (FY) 2024 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The following summarizes the proposed change to the TIP.

FM# 454185-1 Capital-Marion Senior Services, Inc.

- To provide transportation for those in the community who qualify to receive assistance through the 5311 program
- Funds to be added to FY 2024
- Total: \$125,000

Mr. Curry made a motion to approve the FY 2024 to 2028 TIP Amendment #3.

Mr. Bethea seconded, a roll-call vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5c. 2024 Performance Management Safety Targets

Ms. Brown gave a detailed presentation to the board on the Performance Management 2024 Safety Targets.

In 2023, the TPO Board tasked staff with evaluating the current methodology to determine if the increased growth in Marion County necessitates a revised target methodology. TPO staff conducted a thorough review, including examining VMT data, crash statistics from 2018 to 2022, and peer methodologies from other MPO/TPOs in Florida. They also considered revisions to the Commitment to Zero Safety Action Plan, aligning it with federal grant opportunities and Vision Zero goals. The review found that VMT data for Marion County is current and crash data needed updating due to reporting delays and anomalies. Revised 2022 statistics showed increases in fatalities and non-motorized injuries. Peer reviews of other MPO/TPOs revealed various methodologies focusing on declining targets. In January 2024, a proposed FHWA rule could change Safety Performance Measure targets from annual to triennial, shift to a 3-year average, and require constant or improved safety performance from baseline levels.

Since 2018, the TPO Board had adopted quantifiable safety performance targets to track progress and reflect more accountability to the public.

Ms. Brown shared with the board the three PM1 Safety Target options that were proposed:

Option A. Adopt safety targets based on the most current five-year rolling averages with a 5% reduction. This option supports the Commitment to Zero Safety Action Plan goal of Zero Fatalities and Zero Serious Injuries by 2045. This option also aligns the TPO more closely to other TPO/MPO peers, and the pending new rulemaking by FHWA.

Option B. Adopt safety targets based on the current rolling average methodology. This option has been adopted since 2018.

Option C. *Adoption of state targets of 0 for all five 2024 safety targets.

*If the TPO adopts FDOT safety targets, the requirement is to annually adopt the same targets until changes are made by the state.

Ms. Stone inquired about possible consequences if targets were exceeded.

Mr. Balmes said for MPOs/TPOs there were no penalties for not meeting targets.

Ms. Stone emphasized that the focus should be on lowering the targets and maintaining a commitment to Zero. She expressed hope that the rates could even be lower than those listed because all lives were important. Additionally, she highlighted the importance of education for anyone using the roadways.

Mr. Curry also stated that he would like to see the targets lowered and to monitor the numbers regularly, suggesting monthly or quarterly monitoring instead of annually. He cited personal experiences he had witnessed with red light runners and emphasized the importance of continuing education on a regular basis.

Mr. Bethea also emphasized the importance and necessity of education for citizens to ensure safe driving practices, as it ultimately saves lives.

Mr. Inskeep asked if there were higher spikes in fatalities or serious injuries by month and suggested investigating the causes of any spikes to channel education towards addressing them.

Ms. Brown did not have the statistics on hand but assured the board members that she would email them.

Mr. Balmes suggested that the TPO could provide routine reporting to keep the board updated on crashes, allowing for monthly and seasonal comparisons.

Ms. Stone made a motion to approve Option A for the Performance Management 2024 Safety Targets. Mr. Curry seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 6a. 2024 Major Activities

Mr. Rob Balmes presented the 2024 Major Activities.

In calendar year 2024, the TPO was expected to be involved with a number of program and project activities to meet organization goals and state and federal requirements. In the meeting packet included current planned activities. A brief presentation was given at the meeting to share further information and how committee members would be involved throughout the calendar year in providing guidance, feedback and recommendations.

First Quarter: February to March

- 2024 Safety (PM1) Targets (February)
- Public Participation Plan (PPP) (March)
- Fiscal Years 24/2025 to 25/2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (April)

Second Quarter: April to June

- 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Public Kick-Off (April 23)
- List of Priority Projects (LOPP) (May, June)
- FY 2025 to 2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (May, June)

Third Quarter: August to September

- 2024 Traffic Counts Online Map and Report (August)
- Commitment to Zero Dashboard and Annual Report (August)
- Roll Forward Fiscal Years 2025 to 2029 TIP Amendment (September)
- Greenhouse Gas CO2 Performance Measure Target (new)
- Active Transportation Plan (TBD)
- *Resiliency Improvement Plan (TBD)*
- 2050 LRTP Ongoing Updates (Open House)

Fourth Quarter: October to December

- 2050 LRTP Ongoing Updates
- 2045 LRTP Amendment (if necessary) (August-November)

Item 6b. Federal Greenhouse Gas Performance Measure Update

Mr. Balmes informed the board that on December 7, 2023, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced a final rulemaking that implemented a new performance measure for state DOTs and MPO/TPOs to track greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) on the National Highway System (NHS) as part of federally required performance-based planning.

The final rule mandated all DOTs and MPO/TPOs to set declining targets for carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions on the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS. This initiative supported overall national goals of reducing GHG emissions by 50 to 52% below 2005 levels by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050. State DOTs were required to set two and four-year targets, while MPO/TPOs were required to set four-year targets. Moreover, MPO/TPOs had to set joint targets with neighboring large census urban areas. For the TPO, this entailed setting joint targets with the Lake~Sumter and Hernando-Citrus MPOs. Importantly, there were no penalties for failing to meet the required targets.

On December 22, 2023, the Florida Department of Transportation notified MPO/TPOs of their decision to join 21 other states in filing a lawsuit in federal court requesting relief from this rulemaking. Consequently, based on this action and the legal process, FHWA announced an extension to the requirement for DOTs to set state targets from February 1 to March 29, 2024. MPO/TPOs were then required to set their respective targets within 180 days of state targets. Specifically, the TPO had to set declining targets by late September 2024.

Collaboration had commenced among the Central Florida MPO Alliance members to coordinate on developing a methodology and targets.

Chairwoman Dreyer inquired how CO2 was measured.

Mr. Balmes said there were sources within Marion County from which they could obtain the data and the TPO will be working with the Central Florida MPO Alliance partners on methodology. He stated the performance measure targets are for the National Highway System developing potential reductions that could be achieved by implementing measures such as taking vehicles off the roadways, adding trails, improving park-and-ride facilities, and implementing other initiatives that could reduce CO2 emissions.

Mr. Bethea inquired if electric vehicles emit more or less CO2.

Mr. Balmes responded that electric vehicles have no CO2 emissions.

Mr. Bethea suggested that promoting more electric vehicles on the roadways could help reduce the amount of CO2.

Ms. Stone mentioned pollution to the environment and soils from the lithium battery.

Mr. Curry countered, stating that there isn't a high demand for electric vehicles and that there is still work needed to perfect them. He pointed out that electric vehicles are not efficient in terms of mileage and performance in various weather conditions. He expressed skepticism about relying on them to significantly reduce CO2 emissions within the next four years.

Item 7. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Kia Powell provided the construction report, which was updated to include maps to make it more public-friendlier to the board, and shared that at the time there were eight road closures that would occur intermittently within Marion County. She also gave the following updates:

- As of February 7, 2024, the S.R. 93 mainline Wildwood weigh station improvements were completed.
- A Public Meeting would be held at 5:30pm regarding plans to widen a segment of S.R. 40 from east of C.R. 314 A to S.E.183rd Avenue Road (Levy Hammock Road).
- On March 4th FDOT would be holding an in-person public hearing at the Hilton of Ocala for I-75 improvements from SR 200 to S.R. 326 project development and a virtual hearing would be held on the 6th.

Mr. Curry asked for an update on the repaving of 17th Street/464 from U.S. 301 to S.R. 35. He mentioned that he had been informed the repaving would begin in February, but it had not yet occurred. He expressed concern as this area falls within his district and he has received numerous inquiries about it. He emphasized the importance of providing accurate information to citizens and requested a realistic timeframe for the repaving so he can relay the correct information to those who inquire.

Ms. Powell expressed her understanding of Mr. Curry's concerns and assured him that she would speak to him further after the meeting ended to ensure she could provide him with accurate information.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Balmes gave the following updates:

- The 2023 Annual Report was provided to the TPO Board in late January and also provided in the meeting agenda packet to view.
- On February 9, 2024, the TPO participated in the quarterly Central Florida MPO Alliance meeting in Orlando. Councilman Bethea and Director Balmes represented the TPO at the meeting. The meeting included updates on the following major regional coordination topics.
 - **Regional Project Prioritization Process Kick-Off:** The regional priorities list process will first start at each respective MPO/TPO through July 1. The Central Florida MPO Alliance will then approve a full regional list at the October 11, 2024 meeting, followed by submission to FDOT District 5.
 - **Federal Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Performance Measure and Target**
 - **Vision Zero Updates:** The Alliance may consider a joint resolution of support for Vision Zero at a future meeting.
 - **2024 Schedule:** The remaining 2024 meetings will be April 12, June 14 (joint with Sun Coast TPA) and October 11.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Five conducted two Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Studies in Marion and Sumter Counties. The limits of both studies were from south of State Road 44 in Sumter County to State Road 326 in Marion County. The projects were part of the statewide Moving Florida Forward Initiative. As part of the public and partner engagement process, FDOT requested timely feedback or comments from the TPO at their respective public open house meeting on December 13, 2023. In coordination with Chairman Curry, a letter of support was transmitted to the FDOT regarding the projects. The letter was provided in the meeting agenda packet.
- On November 28, 2023, the TPO Board approved consulting services for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The Kimley-Horn team, including Bonnie Landry and Associates, InNovo, and Quest, received the Notice to Proceed on January 5, 2024. A formal 2050 LRTP Kick-Off Meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2024, at 2:00 PM at the County Commission Auditorium. The meeting, open to the public, elected officials, and partner agencies, includes leadership remarks, a project overview, and a schedule summary. Save-the-date notices will be sent out soon.

Item 9. Comments by TPO Members

There were no comments by TPO Members.

Item 10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 11. Adjournment

Chairwoman Kristen Dreyer adjourned the meeting at 3:41pm.

TPO Board Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2024
Approved – March 26, 2024

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, Administrative Assistant