



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ocala Citizens Service Center
201 SE 3rd Street, Ocala FL 34478

January 13, 2015

MINUTES

Members Present:

Dave Herlihy, Chairman
Bart Ciambella
Mike Daniels
Eddie Esch
Sue Farnsworth
Gennie Garcia
Winston Schuler
Kellie Smith
Kevin Smith

Members Not Present:

Mickey Thomason

Others Present:

Greg Slay, TPO Director
John Voges, TPO Staff
Ken Odom, TPO Staff
Ann McGaffic, TPO Staff
Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Staff
Mike McCammon, FDOT
Mary Schoelzel, FDOT
Ryan Marks, FDOT

Item 1. Call To Order And Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Chairman Dave Herlihy. Secretary Kayleen Hamilton called the roll. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof Of Publication

Secretary Kayleen Hamilton stated that the meeting had been published online on the TPO website and Facebook page and on the city of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites.

Item 3a. Election of Chairman and Vice-chairman

Ms. Farnsworth nominated Mr. Ciambella for chairman. Mr. Daniels seconded and the nomination was unanimously approved.

Mr. Schuler nominated Mr. Daniels for vice-chairman, and Ms. Farnsworth seconded. The nomination was unanimously approved.

Item 3b. Legislative Priorities

Mr. Slay presented the five legislative priorities for 2015. The first priority was restoration of Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding. The TRIP program was established in 2009 or 2010 for corridors of regional significance. Marion County had used TRIP funding for the SW 42nd Street flyover. Mr. Slay advised that funding had been shifted away from the TRIP program to other programs in recent years.

The second legislative priority was expansion of the charter county transit surtax. The funds from this tax could be used for any transportation improvement, but only charter counties could currently enact the surtax.

The third priority was indexing of the gas tax. Mr. Slay advised that only the state tax on fuel was currently indexed. Over time, buying power from the fixed tax was eroding as vehicles became more fuel efficient.

The fourth item on the legislative priority list was making use of handheld electronic devices while driving a primary offense. Currently it was a secondary offense, and Mr. Slay noted that the seatbelt law had taken a similar path from secondary to primary offense.

The final legislative priority was support for allocation of funds for trail development and maintenance. Under a recent constitutional amendment, a portion of document stamp funds had been dedicated to land preservation. Mr. Slay stated that this legislative priority supported allocating part of those funds to trail development and particularly to trail maintenance. With the trail projects the TPO was currently working on, the local governments would be responsible for maintenance once the trails were built.

Ms. Farnsworth made a motion to approve the 2015 Legislative Priorities as presented and Mr. Esch seconded.

Mr. Schuler asked if funding for trail development and maintenance would include trailhead facilities, and Mr. Slay advised that it was a possibility. Trailheads fell under the responsibility of local governments.

Mr. Herlihy asked about the development of the legislative priority list, and Mr. Slay answered that the items were mainly developed by the regional and statewide MPO groups. Mr. Herlihy asked about the

benefit of expanding the charter county surtax, and Mr. Slay advised that Marion County was not a charter county, so expansion would allow Marion County access to the surtax.

Mr. Herlihy asked if there was data regarding the decline in buying power of the gas tax, and Mr. Slay said that it was difficult to do because of fluctuations in the market. In 2004 and 2005, the market was up and right-of-way was extremely expensive to purchase; then the recession had hit, driving prices down. Now the market was improving again.

Mr. Herlihy asked about uses of funding for the land preservation amendment, and Mr. Slay stated that the legislature had indicated that it was not overly interested in purchasing additional lands. It was more interested in improving access on existing lands and trails. Mr. Slay advised that the county was currently responsible for maintaining trails, as there was no dedicated source of funding to do routine maintenance.

A vote was called and the motion to approve the 2015 legislative priorities as presented passed by a vote of seven to one. Mr. Herlihy was opposed.

Item 3c. Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Mr. Odom presented eight amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP documented the phasing and funding of all capital improvement projects over a five-year period. The eight amendments included additional operating funds for SunTran, additions for the NE 25th Avenue and 36th Avenue widening projects and railroad overpasses, resurfacing on SW 80th Avenue, sidewalk improvements near Saddlewood Elementary and Legacy Elementary, and capital improvements for SunTran.

Ms. Farnsworth moved for approval of the Transportation Improvement Program amendments. Mr. Daniels seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 4. FDOT Five Year Work Program Presentation

Ms. Smith presented the Marion County projects contained in the FDOT Five Year Work Program. The first project was the US 441 corridor study for safety and pedestrian improvements. Mr. Slay reported that the scope was finished with direction from the Belleview city commission and the study would kick off in the next month or so. Mr. Ciambella asked if a reduction in traffic due to the Belleview Beltway had been taken into consideration. Mr. Slay was not sure if the study would get into that aspect; the focus was mainly pedestrian safety. The study section was approximately 1.5 miles long.

The SR 40 widening and replacement of the Ocklawaha River Bridge were next on the list. The bridge span would remain the same length while the height of the new bridge would be lower than the original.

The NE 36th Avenue widening and railroad overpass had been segmented into three sections. One of the sections, the railroad crossing grade separation, was being advanced with funding from Central Office. The PD&E phase of an I-75 interchange at NW 49th Street was funded in 2018.

The Pruitt Trail project was pending right-of-way certification. Mr. Slay reported that the Department of Environmental Protection was working with a land owner to do a land swap. Mr. Herlihy asked about the Sabal Natural Gas line, and Mr. Esch gave a brief update on discussions about the gas line's route.

The Silver Springs Trail from SE 64th Avenue to Silver Springs State Park was programmed for design in 2016 and construction in 2018. The Downtown Ocala Trail was programmed for design in FY 2020. Mr. Herlihy asked about the design of the Downtown Ocala Trail on Fort King Street, and Mr. Slay said that there were some concepts but that the Marion Technical Institute site posed challenges that needed to be discussed with the school board.

The Belleview-Greenway Trail was programmed for a feasibility study in 2018. The SR 40/Black Bear Scenic Trail from Levy Hammock Road to US 17 was programmed for PD&E in 2020. Ms. Farnsworth asked how the trail was related to the widening of SR 40, and Mr. Slay said that the trail was being incorporated into the first construction segment. The bridge was being designed to include a twelve-foot multipurpose trail on the south side. In the Ocala National Forest, the trail would deviate from the road.

Funds for Intelligent Transportation System operations and maintenance for the Ocala and Marion County were included in the Work Program, as were SR 40 flood mitigation, SW 80th Avenue resurfacing, and Marion County sidewalks. Mr. Ciambella asked about widening SW 80th Avenue and reported that the county wanted to connect for an industrial park. Mr. Slay said that current traffic volumes were nowhere near four-laning volumes but that plans to four-lane could be accelerated in need be. There were no funds currently programmed for widening.

Ms. Smith reported that SR 40 downtown multimodal improvements had been deferred a year. The SW 95th Street interchange had also been deferred because the interchange justification report had not yet been approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

5. Consent Agenda

Ms. Farnsworth made a motion for approval of the October 14, 2014, meeting minutes. Mr. Schuler seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Mr. McCammon reported that SR 40 widening was on track to move traffic to the new road in March. The county had worked with retiming the signal at SW 80th Avenue. FDOT was also working with some home owners to restore some trees.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Slay reported that the Long Range Transportation Plan would kick off soon. Staff would be bringing it to the committee to get direction on what they would like to see. Mr. Slay commented that with the fiscal situation, he anticipated more of an update to the 2035 LRTP rather than a whole new plan. Staff did not plan to conduct Strings and Ribbons sessions. Mr. Slay said that population projections were unchanged from the 2035 LRTP, so there would be nothing new in terms of needs.

Item 8. Comments by TAC Members

Mr. Daniels asked about the FDOT Complete Streets policy, and Mr. Slay said that staff would schedule a presentation.

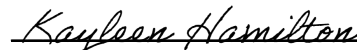
Item 9. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Item 10. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Mr. Herlihy at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Administrative Assistant