



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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

January 24, 2017

MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Jeff Gold
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilwoman Valerie Hanchar
Councilman James Hilty, Sr.
Councilman Brent Malever
Commissioner David Moore, Chairman
Councilman Jay Musleh
Commissioner Michelle Stone
Commissioner Carl Zalak (*arrived at 4:15pm*)

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Commissioner Gary Ernst
Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich
Councilman Wardell

Others Present:

Michael Daniels, TPO Director
Shakayla Jacobs, TPO Staff
Ann McGaffic, TPO Staff
Ken Odom, TPO Staff
Kellie Smith, FDOT
Jamie Kersey, FDOT
Gennie Garcia, SunTran
Tony Chau, City of Ocala
Darren Park, City of Ocala
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala Public Works

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:03PM. Secretary Shakayla Jacobs called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof of Publication

Secretary Shakayla Jacobs stated the meeting was posted on the Marion County, Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites and on the TPO website.

Item 3a. Transit Shelter Contract

Mr. Daniels stated that due to concerns regarding the requirements to meet the standards needed to “piggy back” onto an existing competitively bid contract, the transit shelter contract will undergo the standard bid process and as a result, no action will be taken on the transit shelters until the bid process has been completed. The transit shelter bid process will be started this week and staff is planning to take this item to the February Board meeting.

No action was taken.

Item 3b. Community Assistance Bus Pass Request

Mr. Odom stated that in an effort to assist various non-profit agencies serving different transportation disadvantaged citizen groups within Marion County, SunTran had issued free bus passes throughout the years. The demand for those passes had increased significantly in recent years. While the TPO Board had typically approved most requests under careful scrutiny, they were becoming more and more frequent to the point that it would not be possible to approve all requests in the future. The TPO Board recently directed staff to develop a policy that would establish guidelines to follow when bus pass requests are received from outside agencies. Following that directive, TPO staff had researched numerous other fixed-route systems and developed a DRAFT policy tailored to the unique characteristics of SunTran. The DRAFT policy had been included for review. Mr. Odom presented the DRAFT document and solicited the TPO Board for comments and/or recommendations regarding the SunTran Community Assistance Pass & Discounted Fare Program.

Mr. Zalak wanted to know how much of the full bus fare was subsidized by tax payers. Mr. Odom responded about fourteen percent fare return.

Mr. Odom showed a chart with a breakdown of all fares offered including, elderly and disabled, youth and college.

Mr. Musleh asked if the full fare revenue covered costs. Mr. Odom responded that it did not.

Mr. Zalak made a motion to decline and only have one fare, the full fare. The motion failed for a lack of second.

Mr. Daniels stated that the board had approved bus passes and tokens for several other groups in the past and one being United Way and Vets for Vets and Ocala Social Services and since approved in the past that they could be grandfathered at the same rate prior to any policies.

Mr. Moore stated he was ok with grandfathering the current groups and moving forward with a policy for any new groups.

Mr. Odom said that one of four groups the Ocala Social Services is a City of Ocala Organization.

Mr. Zalak stated that 86% was already being subsidized and wanted to know how much more of a discount should be given.

Mr. Daniels suggested tabling the item and meeting with Mr. Zalak to further discuss. Mr. Zalak informed that he had already stated his suggestions.

Mr. Musleh said even with a discount there would still be a set amount of expenses and he did not agree with penalizing groups and not giving the passes charging full fare or not.

Mr. Hilty said that the riders from groups mentioned had no other alternative transportation.

Mr. Zalak said he did not believe it would affect ridership.

Mr. Musleh said it would not affect ridership or revenue but it would affect the citizens that are currently receiving the passes. Mr. Musleh also stated that he didn't think there should be any additional discounts but to keep only the groups as is and grandfather them.

Mr. Musleh made a motion to continue the discounts for Devereux Kids, Vets for Vets, United Way, and Ocala Social Services, and Mr. Gold seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 3c. United Way Bus Pass Request

Mr. Scot Quintel with the United Way thanked the board for grandfathering in the United Way.

Mr. Quintel said that the bus passes were important to families that needed to attend skill building activities and gave updates on families that had successfully finished the program. The United Way has a new group of fourteen families that will be participating in the program.

Chairman Moore entertained a motion to remove the United Way Bus Pass Request from the agenda and Ms. Hanchar so moved the motion, and Commissioner Gold seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 3d. Electronic Agenda

Mr. Daniels said Staff was considering the option of eliminating paper agendas to the TPO Board and were seeking the Boards direction. The Marion County Commission and Ocala City Council currently utilize paperless electronic agendas to conduct meetings. In addition, the agenda and the packet are posted to the TPO website and available to all Board members and as well as the public.

Mr. Daniels presented the following suggestions:

1. Agenda and packet is prepared by staff in an electronic version that is posted on the TPO website and linked to all Board members. The resulting electronic agenda is the same as currently posted and no additional work is required. The paper agenda is eliminated saving staff time.
2. Board and Committee members prepare for the meeting using their personal electronic device by accessing the agenda posted on the City's Website.
3. At each meeting, a TPO provided tablet is available on the dais for use by each Board member. The tablet remains in possession of the TPO and are utilized for each Board and Committee.
4. At the meeting the member accesses the agenda and packet using the tablet.

Mr. Daniels also stated the following benefits:

- Save staff time;
- Eliminate paper costs:

Mr. Musleh made a motion to approve the Electronic Agenda with removing the purchase of electronic devices. Mr. Zalak seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 4a. Sunshine Law Review

Mr. Pat Gilligan, City of Ocala Attorney presented the board with a packet to review Sunshine Law and also gave a brief over view of Sunshine Law to the board.

Mr. Gilligan informed board to make sure they do not meet to discuss any official business. Mr. Gilligan also said it is good practice not to discuss official business with friends or family.

Mr. Gilligan mentioned not to take bribes, know that any notes taken in a meeting are public record and should be given to the clerk to file.

Mr. Gilligan stated that Sunshine Law applied to boards in a major way because of the topics that are discussed.

Item 4b. Transit Development (TDP) Plan Update

Mr. Odom stated the Transit Development Plan (TDP) was a ten-year plan that guides funding and serves the mobility needs of all users of the fixed route transit system (SunTran). It was required by the Florida Department of Transportation and is updated annually with a major update to be completed every five-years. The Ocala/Marion TPO has retained Tindale Oliver & Associates Inc. to assist with the development of the major update that began in November 2016. At the point, the public involvement processes have begun and fifteen of nine of ten stakeholders have been interviewed by the consultant. TPO staff have also prepared candidate lists for three separate focus group meetings that will be taking place on February 1st and two public involvement exercises that would take place in February at the Paddock Mall and at Wal-Mart on east SR 40. TPO staff will present a brief synopsis of the public involvement activities to date as well as inform the TPO Board on what the next steps will be and how we plan on the entire process to develop.

Item 5. Consent Agenda

There were no items on the consent agenda.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Jamie Kersey with FDOT gave a PowerPoint presentation of the Complete Streets and Florida Transportation Plan and the District Five Work Public Hearing.

Ms. Kersey also presented the January 2017 construction report.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Daniels made a comments about the TPO would be hiring a Fiscal Coordinator/Transit Manager. TPO would also be moving forward with letter of interest for General Planning Contract (GPC).

Mr. Daniels said in the past a member from the board would be included on the reviews of the GPC and asked if a board member would like to volunteer and Ms. Hanchar did.

Mr. Zalak said to have more than one consultant because of the long process and tough to get another consultant if not satisfied with the work. Mr. Daniels agreed.

Mr. Daniels talked about bus wraps bids and wanted clarification that it was going by the highest bidder.

Mr. Musleh said it should go to the highest bidder.

Mr. Daniels thanked Commissioner Stone and Commissioner Gold for signing up to attend the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) Institute and also recommended that if any other board members would like to go to let TPO staff know.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Members

Mr. Malever asked when the work on Silver Springs Boulevard would be completed. Mr. Mike McCannon with the Florida Department of Transportation said there was still another 45 to 60 days remaining.

Mr. Moore asked about sidewalks at Stanton Elementary because when it rained the children get wet from the puddles.

Ms. Kersey said the sidewalks was something that could be added to the priority list.

Item 9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 10. Adjournment

Chairman Moore adjourned the meeting at 5:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Jacobs, TPO Administrative Assistant