



TPO Board Meeting

Marion County Commission Auditorium
601 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471
March 28, 2023
4:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Councilmember Ire Bethea
Commissioner Craig Curry
Councilmember Kristen Dryer
Commissioner Ray Dwyer
Commissioner Jeff Gold
Councilmember James Hilty
Councilman Tim Inskeep

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilmember Barry Mansfield
Commissioner Michelle Stone
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, TPO
Shakayla Irby, TPO
Liz Mitchell, TPO
Rakinya Hinson, FDOT
Darren Park, City of Ocala
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala
Elton Holland, Marion County
Other members of the public not signed in.

Item 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Craig Curry called the meeting to order at 4:00pm 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.

At 4:20pm Chairman Curry had to leave the meeting to attend another engagement and the quorum was lost.

Mr. Bethea made a motion to proceed with the business of the TPO with the six board members present. Mr. Hilty seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chairwoman Kristen Dreyer chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Item 3. Proof of Publication

Shakayla Irby, Administrative Assistant stated the meeting was published online at the TPO website and the City of Ocala, Belleview, Dunnellon, and Marion County meeting calendars on March 21, 2023. The meeting was also published to the TPO's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Item 4. Consent Agenda

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

Item 5a. TPO Director Annual Performance Evaluation

According to the Staff Services Agreement between the TPO and Marion County, the TPO Chairman was responsible for the annual performance evaluation of the TPO Director using the County performance evaluation process.

The TPO Director evaluation forms completed by previous TPO Board Chairman Ire Bethea and current TPO Board Chairman Craig Curry were provided in the meeting packets for board members to view.

Chairman Curry gave comments that TPO Director Rob Balmes was very technical oriented and factual in presentations. He also assisted the TPO Chair in preparation of meetings.

Chairman Curry also added that Rob needed to work on his public speaking and interpersonal skills by reaching out to City and the County Engineers and their counter parts to better communicate positions of the TPO through calls, lunches, and personal relationship building.

Another comment Chairman Curry gave was that Rob should reach out through community speaking engagements for more public awareness of the TPO.

Overall, Chairman Curry gave the TPO Director two goals:

1. To reach out to all entities regularly and bridge communication.
2. Educate and contribute to the community on the education of the TPO.

Chairman Curry also tasked Mr. Balmes with calling all TPO board members prior to the board meeting to establish relationships and to help improve attendance to the meetings.

Mr. Balmes commented that the evaluation and comments were clear and that he appreciated the opportunity for feedback. He also thanked outgoing Chair, Councilmember Bethea for all his guidance, feedback and support over the past year.

Mr. Balmes also made a comment that the TPO board should have a formal process in place where the Director is evaluated annually and proposed that the Staff Services Agreement with the County may need to be revised so that yearly evaluations could be conducted.

Mr. Hilty said that the evaluations should be done with the outgoing Chair person.

Chairman Curry said that Amanda Tart with Marion County could be invited to the next meeting to discuss the Director evaluation further.

Ms. Dreyer made a motion to approve the TPO Director Annual Performance Evaluation.
Mr. Hilty seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5b. 2022 Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)/TPO Annual Joint Certification

Rakinya Hinson, FDOT addressed the board and said that annually and pursuant to federal requirements the FDOT and TPO perform a joint review of the certification status for the transportation planning process. The 2022 joint certification process was conducted from January to February 2023, including a virtual meeting with FDOT on February 23.

The joint certification was an opportunity for the TPO to give feedback to the department as well.

The development of the Joint Certification package document was conducted by TPO and FDOT District 5 staff, and it was included in the meeting packet for the TPO board to view.

Ms. Hinson said that the Annual Joint Certification allows for the FDOT to put the TPO in a low or high risk category. Ms. Hinson was proud to report that the Ocala Marion TPO was in a low risk category. FDOT did not have any findings to report and all documents that were submitted had been at 100% accuracy.

Ms. Hinson acknowledged and commended the Ocala Marion TPO formally for a job well done.

Mr. Hilty made a motion to approve the 2022 FDOT/TPO Annual Joint Certification.
Mr. Bethea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gold complemented the TPO Director and Staff and said that it was a big achievement for the TPO.

Item 5c. Fiscal Years (FY) 2023 to 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #5

Mr. Balmes said that per the request of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), two projects were proposed to be amended in the Fiscal Years (FY) 2023 to 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The projects (FM#443623-1, #443624-1) had received federal highway planning grant funding to support activities of the I-75 Master Plan. Types of work the funding would support included community engagement, alternative concept identification and traffic analysis and modeling.

The projects would also assist future project phases as the Master Plan identifies specific projects and segments moving forward into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase.

FM# 443623-1: I-75 (SR 93) from Turnpike (SR 91) to SR 200

- Length: 22.50 miles
- Funding: \$2,500,000 (Federal)
- FY 2023, PLN Phase
- Total TIP Funding: \$2,500,000

FM# 443624-1: I-75 (SR 93) from SR 200 to CR 234

- Length: 25.28 miles
- Funding: \$1,783,543 (Federal)
- FY 2023, PLN Phase
- Total TIP Funding: \$1,783,543

Ms. Dreyer made a motion to approve the FY 2023 to 2027 TIP Amendment #5.

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

Item 5d. Performance Management 2023 Pavement and Bridge (PM2), System Performance (PM3) Targets

Mr. Balmes presented and said that Federal law required State DOTs and TPOs/MPOs to conduct performance-based planning by setting data-driven targets linked to specific measures.

In 2017, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measures (PM2) and the System Performance Measures (PM3) Final Rules. The rules established performance measures to assess conditions and reliability for the National Highway System (NHS).

On December 16, 2022, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) established new statewide two and four-year targets for Pavement and Bridge condition and System Performance. As a result, all MPO/TPO's in Florida were required to set targets, with the option to support the FDOT statewide targets or establish specific targets for their planning areas.

Targets had to be adopted by the TPO Board no later than June 14, 2023. The TPO was required to include the respective targets and annual results in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Mr. Balmes explained the Pavement and Bridge (PM2).

The PM2 measures represented the percentage of lane-miles on the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS pavement and bridges (by deck area) that were in good or poor condition.

FHWA set a threshold for each metric to establish good, fair, or poor condition. Pavement sections that were not good or poor would be classified as fair. Bridges are classified as either good or poor.

The following charts were provided to display the new Pavement and Bridge performance measures and respective targets set by FDOT on December 16, 2022.

PM2: State Pavement and Bridge Performance Measures and Targets

Pavement Condition	2023 Target	2025 Target
Percent of Interstate pavements in Good condition	60.0%	60.0%
Percent of Interstate pavements in Poor condition	5.0%	5.0%
Percent of Non-interstate NHS pavements in Good condition	40.0%	40.0%
Percent of Non-interstate NHS pavements in Poor condition	5.0%	5.0%

Bridge Condition	2023 Target	2025 Target
Percent of National Highway System (NHS) bridges classified as in Good condition by deck area	50.0%	50.0%
Percent of National Highway System (NHS) bridges classified as in Poor condition by deck area	10.0%	10.0%

Mr. Balmes explained the System Performance (PM3).

The PM3 measures represented the percentage of miles traveled on the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS that are reliable for all vehicles, and a specific measure for truck reliability. Travel time reliability compared to the worst travel times on a road against the travel time that was typically experienced.

In general, road miles with a ratio of less than 1.5 were considered reliable.

The following charts were provided to the new System Performance measures and respective targets set by FDOT on December 16, 2022.

PM3: System Performance Measures and Targets

System Performance	2023 Target	2025 Target
Percent of Person-Miles Traveled on the Interstate that are Reliable	75.0%	70.0%
Percent of Person-Miles Traveled on the Non-Interstate National Highway System (NHS) that are Reliable	50.0%	50.0%
Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) Index	1.75	2.0

Two options were available:

- A. Support the FDOT statewide two and four-year targets for Pavement and Bridge and System Performance
- B. Establish two and four-year targets specific to the TPO Planning area for Pavement and Bridge and System Performance

Mr. Balmes mentioned that the last cycle when targets were required to be set by FDOT in 2018, all MPO/TPOs in Florida agreed to support the statewide targets.

The PM2: State Pavement and Bridge Performance Measures, Targets and TPO Results were provided.

PM2: State Pavement and Bridge Performance Measures, Targets and TPO Results

Pavement Condition	2023 Target	2025 Target	TPO Target Results (2021)
Percent of Interstate pavements in Good condition	60.0%	60.0%	64.0%
Percent of Interstate pavements in Poor condition	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Percent of Non-interstate NHS pavements in Good condition	40.0%	40.0%	51.5%
Percent of Non-interstate NHS pavements in Poor condition	5.0%	5.0%	0.3%

Bridge Condition	2023 Target	2025 Target	TPO Target Results (2021)
Percent of National Highway System (NHS) bridges classified as in Good condition by deck area	50.0%	50.0%	59.2%
Percent of National Highway System (NHS) bridges classified as in Poor condition by deck area	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%

PM3: System Performance Measures, Targets and TPO Results

System Performance	2023 Target	2025 Target	TPO Target Results (2021)
Percent of Person-Miles Traveled on the Interstate that are Reliable	75.0%	70.0%	100%
Percent of Person-Miles Traveled on the Non-Interstate National Highway System (NHS) that are Reliable	50.0%	50.0%	95.9%
Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) Index	1.75	2.0	1.74

Mr. Balmes said when looking at the 100% reliability of the Interstate, the best term to use would be constantly and reliably congested.

Commissioner Ray Dwyer said that Belleview had been having a major issue with traffic backing up on 441 when there were wrecks on the Interstate. He mentioned that 92nd Loop could be an alternative around Belleview to alleviate some traffic and asked how could the word be spread about using the route.

Mr. Balmes said it would take a partnership effort with all the PIO offices and FDOT to try and find ways to spread the word.

Ms. Dreyer said that a lot of the traffic was driven by traffic apps.

Mr. Dwyer said it appeared that the 92nd Loop alternative was not in the apps for some reason.

Mr. Mike McCammon, Operations Engineer for FDOT said that FDOT and the County would be coordinating a meeting within the next couple of weeks to discuss complications that had been identified with all the routes.

Mr. Hilty made a motion to adopt the Option A methodology for the Performance Management 2023 Safety Targets. Mr. Bethea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5e. 2023 TPO Board Meeting Schedule Update

Mr. Balmes said that due to activities involving the TPO's upcoming proposed updates to the Congestion Management Process and Online Safety Dashboard and Report, an August 22 Board meeting had been proposed.

The contracts with the consultant teams that would be involved in the activities expire on August 31, 2023. Therefore, the activities and corresponding presentations would need to take place in August prior to the end of the contracts.

The board was in consensus to add the August 22, 2023 TPO Board Meeting to the schedule.

Item 5f. SunTran Grant Letter of Support

Steve Neal, Manager of SunTran, requested a letter of support from the TPO Board for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low and No-Emission grant. The FTA's Low and No-Emission Bus and Bus Facilities programs were making available \$1.66 Billion in grants to transit agencies across the nation.

The grant requires a match, which would be provided by the Florida Department of Transportation in the form of toll revenue credits. No local financial commitment was requested as part of the letter of support.

Mr. Neal provided a brief presentation to the board and said that the SunTran needed to apply for the grant because of rapid population growth, elevated pollution levels, consistency with local and regional priority, and identified unfunded transit needs.

Mr. Neal talked about some of the unfunded Needs identified in the Transit Development Plan (TDP):

- Peak-hour frequency improvement to core routes
- Sunday Microtransit Service
- Northwest Ocala Microtransit Service
- Silver Springs Shores Microtransit Service
- Belleview Microtransit
- SW SR-200 Microtransit Services (North, Central, and South)
- SR 200 Corridor Fixed Route

Mr. Neal said that the Ocala Marion TPO could help by providing a letter of support to support the SunTran's application and ensure a TIP/STIP amendment process is completed, should the project be selected for funding.

Mr. Hilty made a motion to approve the SunTran Grant Letter of Support. Mr. Bethea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 6a. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation, 2023

Ms. Liz Mitchell presented to the board and said that the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged designated a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for each county/service area. The CTC was responsible for coordinating and/or providing transportation services to individuals who are transportation disadvantaged.

Citizens were considered "transportation disadvantaged" due to age, income, or a disability, unable to drive, or do not have access to other transportation options.

Access was provided to medical appointments, employment, educational and other life sustaining services, including, groceries, shopping, meals, and social events, to those who are eligible.

In accordance with Florida Statutes, Chapter 427, and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged the Marion County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) evaluation had been conducted annually by members of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) with assistance from the Ocala Marion Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) as the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA). The TDLCB evaluates the CTC to ensure quality of service is being provided in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

This is accomplished through:

- audits
- series of interviews
- quality checks
- rider call surveys
- ride-along for observation

The evaluation encompassed management, operations, service, safety, vehicle maintenance, drivers and training, performance standards, grievance/complaint procedures, and quality assurance, utilizing the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged CTC Evaluation Workbook.

Ms. Mitchell said that the TPO found that all the required policies and procedures, contracts and contract management, grievance/complaint procedures, performance, quality and safety standards were in place and being adhered to. All vehicles were on a maintenance schedule and in good working order. The drivers are trained with continual training updates. There is a zero-tolerance substance abuse policy enforced complete with pre-employment drug and alcohol background checks. The riders speak highly of the overall system and feel that they are being provided a quality service.

The TPO had a few recommendations as well as commendations as a result of the evaluation.

Recommendations: The pertinent phone numbers on each bus continued to be too small. Since service was geared for the disadvantaged, many were unable to get up close to view the Ombudsman and complaint phone numbers. The numbers needed to be larger and centralized so that those seated on opposite sides of the isle were still able to see the numbers. Also, for distance viewing from the back of the bus, and the wheelchair riders that were secured in the very back.

Commendations: Marion Transit continued to make the changes required to maintain happy riders. Last year the TPO recommended a sealed drop box for comments so that riders could provide input on an ongoing basis. This led to an additional day being added to the Blue line in Dunnellon. The comments were unanimous that the riders wanted Friday added to the Blue Line.

The TPO commended Marion Transit for readily and eagerly making the necessary changes requested by their riders.

Item 7. Discussion Items

There were no discussion items.

Item 8. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Rakinya Hinson provided the most current construction report and introduced new FDOT District 5 liaison

Item 9. Comments by TPO Staff

There were no comments by TPO Staff.

Item 10. Comments by TPO Members

There were no comments by the TPO Members.

Item 11. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 12. Adjournment

Vice-Chairwoman Kristen Dreyer adjourned the meeting at 5:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, Administrative Assistant