



Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) Meeting

Marion County Growth Services Training Room
2710 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470

September 14, 2023

10:00 AM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Michelle Stone
Jeffrey Askew (*arrived at 10:03am*)
Lauren Debick
Tracey Sapp
Jacqueline Rosko (*for Susan Hanley*)
Carlos Colon
Elizabeth Watson
Andrea Melvin
Tiffany Mckenzie
Steven Neal
Keith Fair
Ronald Graham (*arrived at 10:20am*)

Members Not Present:

Glorybee Perez
Iris Pozo
Anissa Pieriboni

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, TPO
Shakayla Irby, TPO

Elizabeth Mitchell, TPO
Clayton Murch, Marion Senior Services
Karen Williams, Marion Senior Services

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairwoman Stone called the meeting to order at 10:02am. Secretary Shakayla Irby called the roll and a quorum was present.

Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Jeffrey Askew led the board members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 3. Proof of Publication

Secretary Shakayla Irby stated that the meeting had been published September 7, 2023 online on the TPO website and Facebook and Twitter pages, the City of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites. The meeting was also published to the September 7, 2023 edition of the Ocala Star Banner.

Item 4A. Annual Operating Report (AOR)

Chairwoman Stone started off to say that Marion Senior Services celebrated 50th Anniversary the previous week and it was an excellent showing.

Mr. Murch said that the 50th Anniversary was a great success and he appreciated everyone that attended. It was a very humbling and appreciated moment.

Mr. Murch provided the AOR stats for the year including operating and financial. The Commission used the forms to gather information needed to accurately reflect each CTC's operating data, provide a statewide operational profile of the Florida Coordinated Transportation System, and evaluate certain performance aspects of the coordinated systems individually and as a whole.

Mr. Neal made a motion to approve the Annual Operating Report. Mr. Askew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 4B. Bylaws

TPO staff annually reviewed and/or amends the TDLCB Bylaws to assure that all elements of the Bylaws are in alignment with Florida statutes, regulations and codes. The Bylaws guide the TDLCB in assisting Marion Transit in its role as Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) deliver quality service to our Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) community.

Mr. Colon made a motion to approve the Bylaws. Mr. Fair seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5. Consent Agenda

Ms. Melvin made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Debick seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 6A. Subcommittee’s Meeting Update

Ms. Mitchell gave a brief presentation on the June 8, 2023, TDLCB Workshop. The workshop was centered around an exercise to see where everyone on the board stood in terms of providing service to the TD Community and what could be done better.

During the workshop, a question was raised: What improvements do you want to see in place to better serve the transportation-disadvantaged community?

Everyone was asked to think of two or three ideas and write them down on a small sheet of paper. Later they were paired with another person and together they combined their thoughts and ideas. That information was then placed on a sticky board in order to see where the commonalities and differences were. The information was then categorized into three main categories as follows:

Education/ Communication
Future Infrastructure, Service and Road Expansion
Funding

At the meeting, everyone chose a category to join a committee aimed at finding solutions for each of the listed issues. Each of the committees was tasked with meeting during the quarter preceding this quarterly meeting. They were to share what had been resolved or the ideas created to attempt a resolution.

Ms. Debick assumed the leadership role on the Education and Communication subcommittee and provided a brief summary of their recent meeting. She emphasized the importance of raising awareness about the services and improving communication to ensure that messages reach the right audiences. One of the consensuses reached within the committee was that the TDLCB needed to share the functions of their organizations to assist in creating a communication plan. The committee requested that each member of the TDLCB send two to three sentences to Ms. Mitchell describing what their organization does.

Mr. Askew assumed the leadership role for the Future Infrastructure, Service & Road Expansion subcommittee. He mentioned that the committee did not have a chance to meet and stated his intention to coordinate with the committee members to schedule a meeting before the December TDLCB meeting.

The Funding Subcommittee did not have leader. Mr. Neal volunteered to take the leadership role for the Funding committee. Mr. Neal said that he would plan for a conference call with the committee in the coming week.

Mr. Neal also mentioned, while he had the floor, that training for SunTran is available for every organization. If an organization is located near or along the SunTran route, SunTran offers free tokens and arranges to take people out to demonstrate and provide information on how to use SunTran.

Mr. Murch also contributed to the funding discussion, suggesting that organizations could assist with research on grant opportunities that would benefit Marion Transit since he lacked expertise in this area.

Mr. Neal mentioned that SunTran had partnered with Workforce Connections to support students over the age of 21 through an education program using capital funding.

The board discussed transportation challenges in the area and explored options for obtaining additional funding to meet the needs.

Item 7. Comments by TDLCB Members

Mr. Neal mentioned that SunTran is changing the bus schedules to improve efficiency. On September 22nd, they will reveal the new schedule times, and by January 1, they will introduce new maps, schedules, and implement two new reroutes.

Ms. Tiffany McKenzie inquired about the possibility of changing her assigned subcommittee.

Chairwoman Stone responded that both Ms. McKenzie and Mr. Graham could contact Ms. Mitchell to request a change in their subcommittee assignments.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Staff

There were no comments by TPO Staff.

Item 9. Comments by Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC)

Mr. Murch gave the following comments:

- Marion Transit had been incident-free for 50 days and injury-free for 36 days."
- Ken McKelvy was set to retire on September 15. Marion Transit was actively searching for a replacement and would be posting the position on Indeed.
- Marion Transit had been actively working to fully staff their driver positions.
- Marion Transit order 5 new buses.
- Marion Senior Services had completed stages of refurbishing their building, which included new paint, a parking lot renovation, and a new roof.
- Marion Transit provided a total of 1,600 Transportation Disadvantaged Trips more than the past year.

- Marion Transit planned to launch Green and Orange Routes early next year to meet the growing transportation needs.

Chairwoman Stone reminded all the present agencies that Marion Transit covers transportation services, ensuring that no one should go without needed services due to a lack of transportation. Mr. Askew asked Mr. Murch if Marion Transit was able to attract and retain drivers after the salary increase.

Mr. Murch replied that the hourly wage had increased from \$13 to \$15 per hour and that Marion Transit had seen a higher caliber of drivers applying since the increase.

Mr. Neal mentioned that the state was conducting a survey of all transit agencies, including CTCs, and Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) was compiling a list of the salaries paid by these agencies. Currently, SunTran and Marion Transit were paying significantly less than other agencies, and the state was working to bring their pay rates in line with the rest of the agencies. Once the survey was completed, either Mr. Neal or Mr. Murch would present the findings to the board.

Item 10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 11. Adjournment

Chairwoman Stone gave final comments and thanked all the board members for attending the meeting and noted that the subcommittees would enhance transportation services for the community. The next TDLCB meeting would be December 7.

Chairwoman Stone adjourned the meeting at 10:55am.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant