

MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD MEETING

Martin County Administrative Building Commission Chambers

2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, FL 34996

(772) 221-1498

www.martinmpo.com

Monday, April 19, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER – MPO Vice Chair Stacey Hetherington called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. PRAYER - Reverend James Brocious of Stuart Alliance Church introduced Reverend Jim Harp who will be taking his place because he has retired.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Smith took over chairing the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

4. ROLL CALL

Members in Attendance:

Doug Smith, MPO Chair, Martin County Board of County Commissioners (arrived at 9:05 am)

Stacey Hetherington, MPO Vice-Chair, Martin County Board of County Commissioners

Harold Jenkins, Martin County Board of County Commissioners

Troy McDonald, City of Stuart Commissioner

Merritt Matheson, City of Stuart Commissioner

Edward Ciampi, Martin County Board of County Commissioners

James Campo, Town of Sewall's Point Commissioner (arrived at 9:07am)

Members Absent

Anthony Dowling, Village of Indiantown Councilmember

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator

Ricardo Vazquez, Senior Planner

Joy Puerta, Planner (virtual)

Florence Allen, Administrative Specialist III

Others in Attendance:

Reverend James Brocious, Stuart Alliance Church

Reverend Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church

Lisa Wichser, County Engineer

George Dzama, MC Public Works

Victoria Williams, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (virtual)

Siaosi Fine, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (virtual)
Christine Fasiska, FDOT
Jill Quigley, Tindale Oliver (virtual)
Kim McLaughlin, MC Public Works, Capital Projects Division
Chris Goetzfried, MC Public Works, Capital Projects Division

A quorum was present for this meeting.

5. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Merritt Matheson and seconded by Commissioner Troy McDonald. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Approve Minutes

A motion to approve the February 22, 2021 regular meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner Edward Ciampi and seconded by Commissioner Troy McDonald. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Campo wants to work on a schedule to have contractors and consultants start attending meetings in-person again. It's difficult to understand the information provided and with connection issues, communication is decreased. All Board members agreed that consultants and contractors should start attending meetings in-person again. Ms. Beltran explained that there are some consultant agreements in place where the cost estimate factored in some virtual meetings but moving forward in-person attendance will be required of the consultants.

Commissioner McDonald spoke with Ms. Beltran about the right turn off US1 onto Palm City Road and how to make it a priority in the future. He is not sure how to fix the issue, the intersection is very dangerous. Commissioner Matheson has spoken with Ms. Beltran about the issue as well and his proposal was to have a study of the intersection put into the upcoming FY budget. Discussions with the City of Stuart was that the timing of the study would coincide with the right turn onto Kanner. Ms. Beltran clarified that the MPO budget and planning activities are identified in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The adopted UPWP is for FY21-FY22. Next Spring the MPO will be developing and submitting a draft FY23-FY24 UPWP to FDOT and that may be a good time to discuss a feasibility study for that project and other projects to be included in the new UPWP. That would make it more likely to coincide with the programming of funds that FDOT has in their Tentative Work Program for design in FY24 for that dedicated right turn lane on southbound US 1 turning onto Kanner Highway.

Chairman Smith discussed the two corridor study projects, (1) the resurfacing project from Kanner north, (2) the turn lane off Kanner onto US 1 northbound, there was a meeting

requesting feedback and that is a forum to discuss the issues. The City is doing a redevelopment study on the US 1 corridor. This makes a couple of different ways to discuss the project and he hopes the discussion is not moving to shutoff the righthand turn lane onto Palm City Road. Commissioner McDonald clarified the discussion is to modify the turn. Chairman Smith stated that modified means that you do not want to turn there you want traffic to go up to Kanner. Commissioner McDonald explained that it would be a hard turn versus a fast turn. Chairman Smith wanted to know if the County would have to buy land from the storage unit to put a righthand deceleration lane to make the hard right. Commissioner McDonald does not think it would be needed. Commissioner Matheson explained that is what needs to be determined. Ms. Beltran explained that the MPO Board directed FDOT staff to coordinate the resurfacing project with the City's study that they are currently doing along US1. A feasibility study will consider the discussions and what's in the City's plan and the MPO Board's input.

Chairman Smith explained that the timing should have been during the site planning for the storage unit because that would have been the time to extract a righthand deceleration lane. He wants Ms. Beltran to come back with a strategy as to what the timeline looks like. Ms. Beltran explained that in the beginning of the calendar year is when the MPO develops the new UPWP and that's when the discussion will be had for the feasibility study and other studies that will be included in the new UPWP.

Chairman Smith discussed a letter that was received by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) from Hutchinson Island Shores Resort & Spa about safety concerns on the Island. They have requested that the BOCC ask FDOT to study the safety concerns from the roundabout to where the center median falls on A1A for a lighting project. The BOCC did agree to request that FDOT look into a safety study and when he spoke with the District Secretary, he asked the Commissioner to ask the BOCC and MPO for concurrence to direct FDOT to do that safety study. It's no commitment to letting or funding, it is just for a safety study to add lighting from the property on the south end of the resort to the roundabout.

A motion to approve MPO requesting FDOT to do a safety study at Hutchinson Island Shores Resort & Spa from the south end property line to the roundabout was made by Commissioner James Campo and seconded by Commissioner Troy McDonald. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

8. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. 2021 TAP APPLICATION

Ms. Beltran explained that the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) is a Federal funding source that is primarily for bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects. Martin MPO received one application from the County for the SE Avalon Drive sidewalk project. Ms. Beltran introduced Kim McLaughlin and Chris Goetzfried from Capital Projects to present the 2021 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Application. Ms. McLaughlin explained what the TAP grant is and its goals. The total construction cost estimate for the

project is \$355,558. The funds being requested from FDOT are \$342,558 and the remaining \$13,000 will come from local funds. Ms. McLaughlin discussed the project scope which is to provide sidewalks and safety improvements that will eliminate public hazards and create connectivity to the Hibiscus Park Community. Chris Goetzfried discussed the project location and project limits. The project extends from Cove Road to Salerno Road. Due to budgetary constraints, the sidewalk project was not included with the neighborhood restoration project currently scheduled that addresses drainage issues. Mr. Goetzfried also discussed the existing conditions of the location, the existing typical section, and the typical layout. A Public Involvement meeting was held on Tuesday, August 6, 2019, and the Martin County BOCC approved the permission-to-apply for the TAP Grant on February 16, 2021. There was discussion regarding right-of-way. Mr. Goetzfried informed the Board that there is 50 feet of right-of-way and there is plenty of room.

A motion to approve the 2021 TAP Application was made by Commissioner Troy McDonald and seconded by Commissioner Edward Ciampi. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

B. UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) REVISION 4 – AMENDMENT 1

Ms. Beltran presented the Unified Work Program (UPWP) Revision 4 – Amendment 1. The UPWP is the MPO's 2-year budget and document of planning activities. Most of the MPO budget is funded with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Planning (PL) funds. Eighty percent (80%) of the project funds come from FHWA and the 20% match comes from the State. The State of Florida uses soft or in-kind match using toll revenue credits to match these FHWA PL funds and that is not a cash match. It is an in-kind match that serves the purpose of matching the funds. The MPO receives the 80% of FHWA PL funds which is over 95% of the MPO's budget.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5305 Grant planning funds are the reason for this Amendment. In the past the State would provide 10% of the 20% match in cash and Martin County would put up the other 10% cash match. Because of the reduction in gas tax, the State decided that all transportation programs would be impacted. FTA Section 5305 funding would be impacted by no longer using a cash match. Instead, the State has offered to provide a soft match using toll revenue credits like it does with the FHWA PL funds. Because of the way that the State law is written, the entire 20% must be soft match. The Amendment is a request by FDOT to reflect in the UPWP that the FTA Section 5305 funds are matched 20% with the State's soft match. The MPO has been instructed to identify Martin County's funds as "Local Funds", not "Local Match".

A motion to approve the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Revision 4 – Amendment 1 was made by Commissioner Harold Jenkins and seconded by Vice Chair Stacey Hetherington. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN UPDATE

Ms. Beltran explained that the Public Participation Plan (PPP) update is identified in the UPWP. The name has been changed from the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to the Public Participation Plan to match the Federal guidelines. The update is a Federal requirement. The MPO has contracted Tindale Oliver to do the major update. Ms. Beltran introduced Jill Quigley, Project Manager to present the update to the Board. Ms. Quigley explained that Ricardo Vazquez is the MPO Project Manager. She also discussed what the PPP is, where it applies, why it is being improved, and the process. Once the draft PPP is complete it will be available for public review and comment for 45 days before going to the MPO Policy Board for adoption. A second Open House will be conducted in September 2021; afterwards revisions will be made to the PPP and it will go before the advisory committees in November then on to the Policy Board in December. Updates include Technical Memorandum 1 which is the first half of PPP content and includes demographics, core products, and PPP goals, objectives and strategies. An Open House was held on March 30, 2021 both virtual and in-person. There was discussion from the Board regarding the results of the public participation polling exercise at the March 30th Open House and the number of participants, and the survey not reaching a broader audience and doing more to increase participation. The data is not a realistic picture because the sample size is too small. Ms. Quigley explained that a survey is being put out on the MPO website to reach a broader audience and increase participation. There was discussion from the Board that there are 20-30 organizations in Martin County that are civically minded, engaged, and involved that would give a broader cross section of individuals and recommends that Ms. Quigley reach out to those organizations and get the information out to their membership. Ms. Quigley explained that feedback was also gathered from the advisory committees regarding getting an increase in participation and they are currently working on implementing those suggestions. The Board agreed to approve the goals, objectives and strategies of the work product but not the outreach. Ms. Quigley must reach out to other organizations to increase participation and present the information to the Board once completed.

A motion to approve the goals, objectives and strategies of the work product for the Public Participation Plan Update with the expectation of further outreach to reach a broader audience using civic organizations' program outreach to increase participation was made by Commissioner Edward Ciampi and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

9. COMMENTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS - None

10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman Smith asked about information on the connection to SR 710. Ms. Beltran stated that Christine Fasiska would provide that information. Ms. Beltran explained that the MPO Board approved the Tentative Work Program in January. In the Tentative Work Program there was funding for a priority that the Board had on its list. The project was the realignment of County Road (CR) 714 so the sharp curve at the far west portion of the

roadway is straightened so the curve is more gradual; the roadway will extend into Okeechobee County and connect to SR 710 at SE 126 Blvd. Included in the Tentative Work Program was funding for the design phase of that project in FY22. Since that time FDOT District Four has had some changes as to how they want to address that project.

Christine Fasiska explained that FDOT did have a project programmed in the Work Program to look at that realignment. The work was going to be done by District One which both districts had coordinated. The design was to start in FY22. FDOT staff was looking at the area and how to connect the intersection of SR 710, CR 714, and SE 126 Blvd. While looking at a roundabout potential there, what they identified was that the utilities were going to be heavily impacted. The impact to those utilities would be about a \$5 to \$6 million need for funding. With just the utilities increasing the price of the project, FDOT decided it would be valuable to take a step back and relook at what is the best way to connect CR 714 with SR 710. A part of the Board's priority list is also to look at County line to the FPL access road to look at what type of improvements can be done there. A feasibility study for that is scheduled in FY22 and design would take place in FY23. District Four wanted to take a step back from the CR 714 to SR 710 project and include it in the feasibility study in FY22 to see if there is a better concept that would not impact the utilities as much and keep cost down.

Chairman Smith wanted to know if the impact on the utilities is from the roundabout or the impact from putting in a lighted intersection. Ms. Fasiska explained that it has a lot to do with the roundabout. With coordination from Okeechobee County and the maintenance of lights, signal or roundabouts, the agreement with the County is that they would be favorable to the roundabout. That is what's necessitating a lot of the utilities. She does not know if the utilities would be impacted by the signal. Chairman Smith wanted to get clarification that the \$6 million impact potential comes from the idea of building a roundabout and building that roundabout would probably necessitate moving utilities. Ms. Fasiska mentioned that she does not know what the actual impact would be, but she does know that there is a Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) line out there as well as FPL.

Chairman Smith explained that the Board has been discussing this issue for about ten years; a simple T-intersection cannot be built but massive interconnects are being built everywhere else in the State. A roundabout is not good in the middle of SR 710. He wanted to know if there was a cost issue with the long-term maintenance. If Martin County must maintain or deal with a lit intersection because District One does not want to or whatever the issue is in Okeechobee that they can't or won't afford to do something, then he is more than willing to support whatever needs to be done. He cannot imagine an additional study being done or the project being postponed even longer.

Ms. Beltran provided clarification as to how the roundabout got included in the project. At the request of Okeechobee County, the realignment of CR 714 was included in the SR 710 Widening Project PD&E study. The money for the construction phase of that segment of SR 710 (which is mostly in District One in Okeechobee County and just extends about 200 feet into Martin County) got delayed. District One said that they were willing to do the work to realign CR 714 as a separate project if Okeechobee County agreed to maintain

the new roadway that extends into Okeechobee County. At the Okeechobee County Commission Meeting, one of the Commissioners stated that he would not agree to maintain the road unless there was a traffic signal installed at the new intersection with SE 126 Blvd. Other commissioners agreed that there should be a traffic light on SR 710. District One staff stated they could not guarantee a traffic light would be warranted and asked if the Okeechobee County Commission would agree to a roundabout. The Okeechobee County Commission agreed to a roundabout.

Chairman Smith appreciated the clarification and explained that Martin County would put a traffic light in and maintain if they must but explained that safety is the number concern and zero fatalities is the number one priority. He cannot imagine with the number of fatalities and accidents in that area that this does not override all the other conversations.

Commissioner Ciampi agreed with Chairman Smith and explained that this has been an issue for residents. This area is the exiting point for County residents that are heading across the State or heading north into the center of the State. The current design makes no sense and the area is very dangerous. The concept of correcting the area has been very important for a long time. He knows that the MPO has worked hard to collaborate with District One and District Four and is appreciative. He gets the concept of a roundabout but in that area, it is overkill because most of the traffic in the area is large trucks. He agrees with Chairman Smith if the Martin BOCC has to figure out funding, they will discuss it.

Commissioner McDonald agrees with Chairman Smith and Commissioner Ciampi. This has been an ongoing issue for a long time. The realignment was requested because there were tragedies in the area and that the project just needs to get done. FDOT needs to move forward with the current plan. If there is an opportunity to get the maintenance paid for by Martin County, that will address this safety issue.

Vice Chair Hetherington echoed Chairman Smith, Commissioner Ciampi, and Commissioner McDonald and agreed with their comments as well as support everything said. The project needs to keep moving forward.

Chairman Smith suggests the Board make a motion that the MPO send a letter to the District Four Secretary requesting to stay the course and work it out financially with Martin County and/or the MPO and District One and that we do everything humanly possible to get it built as quickly as possible. Commissioner Matheson wanted to know if stay the course means that the MPO does not have any desire to support or see the necessity for a roundabout. Chairman Smith confirmed that is what it means. And the Board supports the addition of a light if it is needed or if that's the approach to make it safer whether it is warranted or not.

Ms. Beltran suggested that if a letter goes to Gerry O'Reilly the letter should be copied to District One and the Okeechobee County Board of Commissioners and include the suggestion that the Martin County Board of County Commissioners maintain that new

roadway. Chairman Smith agreed and added that the State Secretary be copied on the letter as well.

A motion that the MPO send a letter to District Four Secretary requesting to stay the course and work it out financially with Martin County and/or the MPO and District One and that we do everything humanly possible to get the realignment of CR 714 built as quickly as possible; and that the MPO Policy Board does not have any desire and does not support or see the necessity for a roundabout; and the Board supports the addition of a light if it is needed or if that's the approach to make it safer whether it is warranted or not was made by Commissioner Merritt Matheson and seconded by Commissioner Edward Ciampi. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Beltran explained that the MPO received notification last week that the Transportation Management Area (TMA) which is the urbanized area that is shared with St. Lucie TPO is going to get about \$2.6 million in Cares Act funding to be put towards the MPO's and TPO's priorities. Ms. Beltran asked Christine Fasiska to discuss this with the Board. Christine Fasiska explained that there is going to be some additional funding. FDOT does not know all the details yet. They do know that the funding will be available July 1, 2021 and must be encumbered by September 30, 2024.

Chairman Smith wanted to know what formula was being used for the funding split. Ms. Beltran explained that FDOT wanted to know if the same funding split would be used that was used for the 2045 LRTP. The Board agreed to the LRTP funding split based on the urbanized area population with the stipulation that once the census numbers come out that the Board would readdress the split for the LRTP. Chairman Smith wanted to know if it was envisioned that the funding should go to cross jurisdictional projects or specific to a project in St. Lucie County or Martin County. There does not have to be a connection. He wanted to know if there will be an agenda item to discuss the funding. Ms. Beltran stated that an agenda item will be placed on the next Board Meeting agenda.

Chairman Smith stated two places the funding would go if he had a choice, which would be the SR 710 safety improvements and the interconnection between St. Lucie and Martin at Village Parkway.

Commissioner Ciampi believes that leaving the split as is which has been agreed upon is a good idea. He also agrees with Chairman Smith's suggestions to direct it to SR 710, especially by Tommy Clements Street because it's a safety issue.

11. COMMENTS FROM FDOT- None

12. NOTES

13. NEXT MEETING – May 17, 2021 @ 9:00 AM

14. ADJOURN

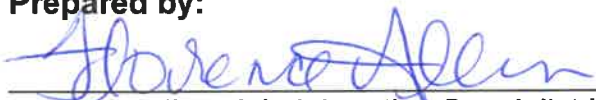
Seeing no other business items remaining on the Agenda and no additional comments, Chair Doug Smith adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Approved by:



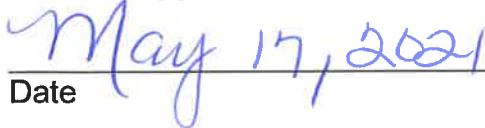
Doug Smith, Chair

Prepared by:



Florence Allen, Administrative Specialist III

Minutes approved on:



Date

The Martin MPO solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act or persons who require language translation services (free of charge) should contact Ricardo Vazquez, Senior Planner (Title VI/Non-discrimination Contact) at (772) 223-7983 or rvazquez@martin.fl.us in advance of the meeting. Hearing impaired individuals are requested to telephone the Florida Relay System at #711.