

# 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, September 20, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.

## MEETING MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – MPO Chair Doug Smith called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - MPO Chair Doug Smith led the pledge of allegiance.
3. **PRAYER** - Reverend Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church led the Invocation.

Reverend Harp wanted to recognize and express his appreciation to retired Reverend Jim Brocious for his many years of leadership and ministry to the community.

Reverend Jim Brocious came forward and was recognized by the MPO Board, and staff. They thanked him for his many years of faith and prayer to the Board. The MPO presented him with a bicycle clock for his time and devotion.

## 4. ROLL CALL

### Members Present

Doug Smith, Chair  
Stacey Hetherington, Vice-Chair  
Harold Jenkins  
Troy McDonald  
Merritt Matheson  
James Campo

### Representing

Martin County Board of County Commissioners  
Martin County Board of County Commissioners  
Martin County Board of County Commissioners  
City of Stuart Commission  
City of Stuart Commission  
Town of Sewall's Point Commission

### Members Absent

Ed Ciampi  
Anthony Dowling

Martin County Board of County Commissioners  
Village of Indiantown Council

### Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator  
Ricardo Vazquez, Senior Planner  
Cherie White, Administrative Specialist III

### Others in Attendance:

Reverend Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church  
Reverend Jim Brocious, Stuart Alliance Church  
Lisa Wichser, Martin County Engineer  
Victoria Williams, FDOT/Turnpike, MPO Liaison  
Rob Coteleur, Coteleur & Hearing

Aaron Wilbur, Cotleur & Hearing  
Bann Williams, FDOT, District Landscape Architect  
Kris McKirdy, FDOT  
Jim Hughes, FDOT, Project Manager  
Christine Fasiska, FDOT District Four  
Mira Skoroden, FDOT District Four

**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 the motion passed unanimously.**

## **6. Approve Minutes**

**A motion to approve the June 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner Troy McDonald and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins, the motion passed unanimously.**

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dottie Lanci, President of Hutchinson Island Preservation Initiative, Inc. (H.I.P.I) came forward to express concern on the Hutchinson Island street lighting and pedestrian crosswalk safety. She stated that over 2000 people have signed a petition opposing the excessive lighting plan. She stated that their group has been in touch with FDOT who will be presenting at the October MPO meeting to discuss the FDOT study. She requested that the results of the study and lighting plans be relayed to their group by the MPO for their input and recommendations.

## **8. AGENDA ITEMS**

### **A. FY21/22 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) SECTION 5305 TRANSIT PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION/RESOLUTION/ CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES.**

Beth Beltran MPO Administrator introduced the item and explained that the request is for approval of the resolution, application, certification, and assurances for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5305 Transit Planning Grant. This year the amount is approximately \$64,000.

**A motion to approve FY21/22 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5305 Transit Planning Grant Application/Resolution/Certifications and Assurances was made by Commissioner Troy McDonald and seconded by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington the motion passed unanimously.**

**B. PUBLIC HEARING - FY22 – FY26 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT #1 – ROLL FORWARD**

Beth Beltran introduced the item to the Board. She explained that the purpose for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment was to roll forward the FY21 Work Program funds to be incorporated into the FY22 TIP.

**A motion to approve FY22-FY26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #1 Roll Forward was made by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington and seconded by Commissioner James Campo the motion passed unanimously.**

**C. SR 76/KANNER HIGHWAY LANDSCAPING PROJECT**

Beth Beltran introduced the informational item and Rob Cotleur, Principal Landscape of Architect of Cotleur & Hearing. Mr. Cotleur gave a visual presentation to the Board on the SR-76/Kanner Hwy from SE Cove Road to SR-714/Monterey Rd (FM# 446033-1) landscape project. He explained that the project is a little over budget but after meeting with the County they agreed to contribute in order to achieve the level of landscaping wanted.

The schedule is as follows:

- Begin construction, October 2023
- 2-Year establishment period begins, October 2024.
- County to take over maintenance, October 2026

The design elements are as follows:

Design repeats elements from Veterans Memorial Bridge and sections of SR76 to the south Medians and will include solid shrub plantings (no sod),decorative concrete maintenance strips, irrigation systems, Sound walls (2,600') include trees, shrubs and irrigation, (4) Ponds include tree plantings only (no irrigation),three irrigation systems drawing from on-site ponds, key stats: 7,425' Full Width Medians, 6,346' Plantable Traffic Separators, 5,798' Within Sight Triangles.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked if they could consider Crape Myrtles in the median along SR 76, or possibly a lower bush.

Mr. Cotleur explained that this section of median is in a site triangle which restricts tree height and explained that the trees would also have to be 40 feet apart. He also stated that DOT has restricted the growth height of a plant not to exceed 18 inches.

Commissioner James Campo expressed concern over the planting of Sabal Palms. He stated that the trees tend to have debris, look dilapidated, and appear unmaintained three months after you plant them. Mr. Cotleur agreed that Sabal Palms do shed but added that a well-maintained trimmed tree should not be a problem. He said they are a very hardy tree, can be planted anywhere, including rocky soil, and tolerate everything. He concluded his presentation with the overall project cost estimate at a little over \$1.9 million.

Bann Williams, FDOT District Landscape Architect explained the timeline for the project. He stated that the 2-year establishment period begins October 2024. Martin County will assume maintenance in October 2026. Commissioner Smith expressed concern over the lengthy timeline and encouraged expediting the project. Jim Hughes, FDOT Project Manager came forward and stated that the project could get done quicker, but there are funding restrictions in the timeline. Commissioner Doug Smith kindly asked FDOT to look at trimming a year off the timeline. Commissioner Stacey Hetherington agreed with Commissioner Doug Smith. Bann Williams said that they are currently looking at projects and there could be an opportunity to move it forward one year if the design can be completed. He said they would take back the request for discussion. He stated that if there was another landscape project that has moved out, then we could possibly advance this project. Rob Cotleur stated that he was already ahead of schedule for the design. Commissioner James Campo agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Doug Smith.

#### **D. STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM (SIS) POLICY PLAN UPDATE INFORMATION**

Christine Fasiska, FDOT District Four presented the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan. The SIS Policy Plan is Florida's high priority network of transportation facilities important to moving people and freight, linking Florida's regions, and investing in strategic transportation facilities. FDOT is updating the SIS Policy Plan, which sets the policy direction for designating, planning, and implementing the SIS. It is developed in consultation with statewide, regional, and local partners. She explained the process for updating the SIS Policy Plan; its various components; emerging trends and focus areas including safety, resilience, technology, mobility, and connectivity. Commissioner Stacey Hetherington and Commissioner Merritt Matheson asked if the Okeechobee Waterway is designated as part of the SIS? Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator stated that this update does not include the Okeechobee Waterway, but was previously considered an SIS Facility. Christine Fasiska agreed with Ms. Beltran, she explained that a SIS designation update was done 2-years ago and during that update is when it was removed. Commissioner Merritt Matheson expressed concern over the removal of the SIS designation to the Okeechobee Waterway, since it is the only cross state waterway as a hurricane evacuation route for our seaports. He asked why it was removed. Christine Fasiska, said she would look into why it was removed. After the conclusion of her presentation she encouraged everyone participate in the SIS Virtual Room. A web link can be found here:

<https://sisvirtualroom.floridatransportationplan.com/>

Commissioner Doug Smith requested that the C44 be added to the list for discussion as to it being re-included to the SIS.

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington specifically requested that the funding for the SR 710 corridor be added back in the SIS plan. Ms. Christine Fasiska stated they are looking at the section of 710 from State Road 76 to the County line in 2021. Commissioner Stacey Hetherington expressed concern over the extensive timeline for review of the 710

roadway, and that the real time data won't show the future development projects. Ms. Christine Fasiska stated that the future projects are being considered in the study and that she would provide the exact dates of the study to the Board. Commissioner Doug Smith recommended that FDOT review the past DRI's as it relates to alternative routes or bypass.

Commissioner Doug Smith also recommended a study of alternative compliance to how we review the installation of traffic lights at intersections where they may not be warranted. He stated that if the local coordination between local government and the MPO recommends a signal at an intersection then FDOT should support the local recommendations rather than use the number of fatalities as a decision for a warranted signal.

Commissioner Merritt Matheson asked how Brightline ties into the rail, and if the Okeechobee Waterway is put back on the SIS and the conflict the two would give each other. He inquired if the FEC was part of the SIS? Christine Fasiska, FDOT District Four stated that the rail line is part of the SIS corridor but the entities that use that line are independent entities and not related to FDOT.

Commissioner Merritt Matheson expressed concern and asked them to examine the future conflict as it relates to safety of the storm evacuation marina traffic and the railway bridge that will be down significantly more time when Brightline comes online. Commissioner Troy McDonald asked if FEC railway was part of the SIS corridor and eligible for funding. Ms. Fasiska stated it was a SIS corridor rail, and she believes that is eligible for funding.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked if privately owned corridors are SIS funding eligible? Christine Fasiska said she believes so but would verify it. Commissioner Doug Smith asked if it was still 75% of all Federal funding in the state budget that goes toward SIS? Christine Fasiska stated "I believe so, yes."

## **9. COMMENTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**None**

## **10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington requested the Board have a presentation as to the volume of current approved and future residential and commercial units before they approve their priorities since it will impact transportation planning. Beth Beltran said she would reach out to the municipalities for their current and future developments. Commissioner Doug Smith agreed and stated that the planning staff from the School Board needs to also be included since it impacts the future of the school corridors. He also requested that FDOT investigate a funding strategy for Counties or MPO's for electronic prioritization to signalization for fire rescue or any emergency vehicles, especially on major corridors, whether SIS corridors or not. He also reminded Ms. Fasiska of Highway 27 as an alternative rail corridor, and that it needs to remain on the list.

## 11. COMMENTS FROM FDOT

## 12. NOTES

- FY20/21 4th Quarter Progress Report
- New Florida Law Update included in SB 950

Beth Beltran noted to the Board the FY20/21 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Progress Report and the new Florida Law SB 950 as it relates to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety. She also introduced the new MPO Administrative Specialist III, Cherie White to the Board.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked Christine Fasiska if a formal letter was needed from the MPO regarding their SIS comments discussed today? Ms. Fasiska stated she has the comments and no formal letter was needed. Commissioner Doug Smith did request a formal letter come from the MPO Chair to the FDOT Secretary to expedite the timeline for 76 corridor landscape project.

**A motion to approve a formal letter be sent to the FDOT Secretary from the MPO Chair to expedite the Kanner Highway landscape project was made by Commissioner Troy McDonald and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins the motion passed unanimously.**

### NEXT MEETING

- MPO Board Meeting – October 25, 2021 @ 9:00 AM

**ADJOURNMENT: 10:28 AM.**

**Approved by:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Doug Smith, Chair *for*

**Prepared by:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cherie White, Administrative Specialist III

**Minutes Approved on October 25, 2021**

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](mailto:rvazquez@martin.fl.us) in advance of the meeting. Hearing impaired individuals are requested to telephone the Florida Relay System at #711.