

**MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
BOARD**

Held on February 22, 2013

The following members were present for the regular meeting of the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization Board on February 22, 2013 at the City of Cape Coral Council Chambers, 1015 Cultural Park Boulevard, Cape Coral, Florida.

Commissioner Frank Mann	Lee County Commission, District 5
Commissioner Larry Kiker	Lee County Commission, District 3
Commissioner John E. Manning	Lee County Commission, District 1
Councilman Thomas Leonardo	City of Fort Myers
Councilman Levon Simms	City of Fort Myers
Councilman Mike Flanders	City of Fort Myers
Mayor John Sullivan	City of Cape Coral
Councilman John Carioscia	City of Cape Coral
Councilman Kevin McGrail	City of Cape Coral
Councilman Chris Chulakes-Leetz	City of Cape Coral
Mayor Kevin Ruane	City of Sanibel
Vice-Mayor Stephen McIntosh	City of Bonita Springs

Those also in attendance included: Councilman Joe Kosinski with the Town of Fort Myers Beach; Councilman Doug Congress with the City of Sanibel; Russ Muller, Zac Burch, and Jennifer Stultz with FDOT; John Fredyma with the Lee County Attorney's Office; Rosalie Berlin as citizen; Jane Antolini as citizen; Darla Letourneau with BikeWalkLee; Carmen Monroy with LeeTran; David Loveland with Lee County DOT; Rick Williams with the Citizen's Advisory Committee; and Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, Meghan Marion and Anna Bielawska of Lee County MPO.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Ruane.

Chairman Ruane led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Marion called the roll and announced that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Agenda Item #1 – Approval of Minutes from the January 18, 2013 MPO Meeting

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 18, 2013 MPO BOARD MEETING. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MCGRAIL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #2 – Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee Report

None.

Agenda Item #3 – Citizen’s Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Rick Williams of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) provided the report. The CAC had a discussion concerning impact fees. The CAC passed a resolution in support of keeping the impact fees.

Mr. Rick Williams read the entire resolution into the record in front of the MPO Board. The CAC recommends that the Lee Board of County Commissioners vote no to the temporary suspension of impact fees; they are an important funding source unit infrastructure throughout the county.

Councilman Leonardo commented on the impact fees issue. He asked MPO staff to look into empirical evidence concerning impact fees in the City of Miami and City of Miami Beach; and whether removal or keeping impact fees gave rise to new residential units. About 31 new condo towers will be added in those two cities. Councilman Leonardo went on record to say that suspending impact fees will not be good for the City of Fort Myers.

Mayor Sullivan mentioned that the two studies that he has looked at showed that the towns who removed impact fees actually had a bigger rate of decline in the amount of permits issued.

Councilman Leonardo said he supports not removing impact fees. Impact fees are user fees. Builders charge impact fees which are factored into the price of the home, and the home buyer (the user) pays the fee. The removal of an impact fee will not dissuade people, especially baby boomers, who are already planning on moving down to Southwest Florida.

Commissioner Mann said he is in concurrence with the request made by the CAC. He said that the Board of County Commissioners is reconsidering the temporary suspension of impact fees and is looking at some sort of reduction of fees instead.

Councilman Chulakes-Leetz added that he hopes the Board of County Commissioners will not make the same error as the federal government did when they reduced social security taxes by 2 %. This was a false security imposed upon U.S. citizens. Ultimately, this temporary suspension has created a shortfall in the social security trust fund and has made things more difficult.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item #4 – Public Comments on New Business Items

Ms. Letourneau of BikeWalkLee had some comments on **Agenda Item #10** and **Agenda Item #12**. She thanked the MPO Board for initiating the letter to the state legislature requesting legislation this session banning texting while driving (Agenda Item #10). She hopes the MPO Board will continue speaking with the state legislature concerning this issue. Ms. Letourneau also thanked Mr. Scott and Mr. Gogoi for their hard work on the Year End Bicycle Pedestrian Report (Agenda Item #12).

Agenda Item #5 – Review and Approval of the Lee MPO/LeeTran Transit Planning Interlocal Agreement

Mr. Scott presented this item. He said that on pg. 4 the term was changed from 5 years to 3 years.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE LEE MPO/LEETRAN TRANSIT PLANNING INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MCGRIL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #6 – Approval of the Local Coordinating Board Membership Certificate

Mr. Scott presented this item.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MCGRIL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #7 – Endorsement of a Resolution Approving FDOT as the Designated Recipient of FTA Section 5310 Funds

Mr. Scott presented this item.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING FDOT AS THE DESIGNATED RECIPIENT OF FTA SECTION 5310 FUNDS. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MCGRAIL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #8 – Endorsement of the Lighthouse of Southwest Florida 5310 Application

Mr. Scott presented this item.

Commissioner Mann said that the **Lighthouse of Southwest Florida** was formerly known as **Visually Impaired Persons**, and it is a very fine organization.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANN TO APPROVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE LIGHTHOUSE OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA 5310 APPLICATION. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MANNING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #9 – Approval of the JARC and New Freedom Selection Committee Members

Mr. Scott presented this item.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE JARC AND NEW FREEDOM SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMEBERS. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN FLANDERS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #10 – Review and Approval of the Letter to the Legislative Delegation Requesting Legislation this Session Banning Texting While Driving

Mr. Scott presented this item.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MANNING TO APPROVE THE LETTER TO THE LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION REQUESTING LEGISLATION THIS SESSION BANNING TEXTING WHILE DRIVING. SECONDED BY VICE-MAYOR MCINTOSH.

Mayor Sullivan stated that this letter is not powerful enough and should include anyone with a cellphone in their hand.

Councilman Flanders agreed with Mayor Sullivan but said it is important that the first step should be against texting. Mayor Sullivan concurred.

Chairman Ruane also agreed with Councilman Flanders' statement and said that a step by step approach is appropriate.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #11 – Overview of the January MPOAC Meeting

Councilman Leonardo presented this item. There are two handouts in the agenda packet: the **2013 Florida MPOAC Legislative Priorities** and the **2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Financial Guidelines**. He said that he hopes the County Commissioners will study the recommendations in the handouts and will use it as a guide to increase revenue for the county.

Councilman Leonardo highlighted the interim recommendations and long-term recommendations from the 2013 Florida MPOAC Draft Legislative Policy Positions. He is also concerned about the \$74 billion shortfall for all Florida MPOs through the year 2030.

Councilman Leonardo also addressed the **Mortgage Electronic Registration System (MERS)**. He promised Councilman Chulakes-Leetz to bring this to attention at the January MPOAC meeting, because Councilman Chulakes-Leetz was concerned about the possible loss of transportation dollars due to this system. The chairman of the January MPOAC, Mayor Kaplan, responded that MERS has been studied in at least 15 states, and it is not going anywhere.

Councilman Leonardo discussed the need for a Lee County Freight Plan in order to compete with other counties who are moving aggressively to establish freight centers. If anyone is interested in this issue, they should contact Juan Florez with FDOT.

Councilman Leonardo also stressed the need for purchasing only natural gas buses and county vehicles in Lee County. It is important to start planning now for the proper infrastructure.

Agenda Item #12 – Review of the Year End Bicycle Pedestrian Report

Mr. Gogoi presented provided a PowerPoint on this item.

Councilman Leonardo asked Mr. Gogoi to go back to the slide that showed the number of dedicated bike lane miles.

Vice-Mayor McIntosh said he was impressed with the level of accomplishment that has gone into planning this report.

Agenda Item #13 – Discuss Potential Agenda Items for the Upcoming Joint Lee and Collier MPO meeting

Mr. Scott presented this item. The items listed were discussed at both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizen’s Advisory Committee meetings. SR 82 in Collier and the back entrance to their airport will also be discussed.

Other Business

Agenda Item #14 – Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

Ms. Jane Antolini personally thanked Commissioner Manning, Commissioner Hall, and Ron Gogoi for responding to her email requesting to look at a sidewalk between Prairie Pines and the new Publix/Walgreens complex on the corner of Pine Island Rd and Del Prado Blvd. Adding a stretch of sidewalk would be beneficial for the residents.

Agenda Item #15 – LeeTran Report

None.

Agenda Item #16 – FDOT Report

Mr. Muller of FDOT gave the report. He stated that the director of the Southwest Florida Office, Johnny Limbaugh, resigned two weeks ago. He also said that Governor Scott was in their SWIFT center a week ago. Governor Scott emphasized the Florida Families First budget and projects in this area that will support the local economy.

Agenda Item #17 – MPO Member Comments

Councilman Leonardo asked Mr. Scott about the status of the northbound right turn lanes from Six Mile Cypress Rd onto Colonial Blvd. Mr. Loveland of the Lee County Department of Transportation (Lee County DOT) responded that FDOT has a project there now. The right turn lanes are under design. Lee County DOT is waiting until FDOT is finished before moving in and working on their part. Councilman Leonardo said that he was under the impression that it is starting soon. Mr. Loveland answered that it will start as soon as FDOT is finished on their component. Councilman Leonardo asked Mr. Loveland what is involved when you have two lanes turning right onto Colonial Blvd from Six Mile Cypress. Mr. Loveland said that this is correct; they are making a dual right turn lane there. Councilman Leonardo also asked about the time frame for this project. Mr. Loveland that he would have to check with the project manager for specific dates.

Councilman Leonardo also asked about a future roundabout study at that intersection. Mr. Scott responded that doing a roundabout study that looks at more intersections than were previously identified was discussed. The funding could come from the congestion management projects funding, or it could be made a priority on this year's priorities list. Councilman Leonardo said that he is concerned that the study could be so diffused that the need to look at this intersection quickly would not be prioritized. Mr. Scott answered that the study would start with the identified intersections and would go from there.

Chairman Ruane asked Councilman Leonardo what the shortfall was for the MPOs funding. Councilman Leonardo responded that it was \$74 billion for all Florida MPOs through the year 2030. Chairman Ruane said that it is obvious that transportation funds are declining. He asked to look at numbers for the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, including how much money is there, how much money is being spent on projects and their maintenance. Councilman Leonardo gave an example using the Lee County Plan for the elevated expressway on Colonial Blvd. It was presented as costing \$938 million. The correct total including future maintenance costs plus interest on the bonds came out to be \$ 1.438 billion. Councilman Leonardo said it is crucial to look at maintenance costs.

Chairman Ruane stated that he would like to work with Lee MPO staff on project infrastructure costs.

**MOTION BY VICE-MAYOR MCINTOSH TO HAVE CHAIRMAN RUANE
WORK ON INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS WITH LEE MPO STAFF.
SECONDED BY MAYOR SULLIVAN. MOTION CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY.**

Agenda Item #18 - Announcements

Mayor Sullivan invited everybody to attend a Salute to the Marines in Cape Coral on Saturday March 16th.

Agenda Item #19 – Topics for April MPO meeting

None.

Agenda Item #20 – Information and Distribution Items

The MPOAC Weekend Institute for elected officials will be held April 12th – April 14th in Orlando and May 17th – May 19th in Tampa.

On Thursday February 28th, there is an Estero Blvd Project meeting from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter Lutheran Church.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.