

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization
Thursday, March 4, 2021
City of Cape Coral Public Works Building
815 Nicholas Parkway East, Cape Coral, FL 33990
3:00 p.m.



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:08 p.m. by Chair Rick Anglickis.

Roll Call

The roll was recorded by MPO staff. There was a quorum. Members in attendance included Albert O'Donnell, Marion Briggs, Rick Anglickis, Justin Thibaut, Ed Blot, Bruce Bohlander, Vanessa Chaviano, Randy Krise, Ted Tryka, and Ty Symroski. Others in attendance included Victoria Peters with FDOT; Matt Wiesenfeld, Daniel Haake, and Melissa Porcaro with HDR; and Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Items on the Agenda

There were no public comments on items on the agenda.

Agenda Item #7 - Presentation of the Goods Movement Study

Mr. Ron Gogoi introduced this agenda item for the presentation of the Goods Movement Study. He noted the study comprising the LRTP's freight component has been completed and referenced the following link for the Freight Element that was included in the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website: https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Freight-Element_10Feb2021.pdf. He then introduced Mr. Matt Wiesenfeld with HDR, the MPO's consultant for the Freight Element. Mr. Wiesenfeld then introduced Mr. Daniel Haake and Ms. Melissa Porcaro, also with HDR, to provide a virtual presentation of the study. Mr. Haake gave a PowerPoint presentation that contained slides with information on developing the goals and objectives, review of the goals, current and planned development, freight activity centers, highway freight network, freight mobility corridors, quick facts on the network, rail freight, improvement opportunities, air cargo 101, Fed Ex and UPS air cargo, commodity flow, 2018 trade data, freight volumes by mode tables, truck friendly design solutions, City of Fort Myers examples, performance measures, daily vehicle miles traveled, graphs of congestion/miles traveled/reliability/pavement conditions, freight needs and investments, sources consulted, rail improvements, air cargo improvements, cost feasible highway projects, multimodal needs, and recommendations. He asked if there were any comments or feedback. The entire presentation can be viewed here: https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-7-Lee-County-Freight-TAC_CAC_Presentation_20210304.pdf. The committee discussed the prior rail study, growing rail freight, challenges of Class One versus Class Three rails, selling off rail corridor south of Alico, demand for rail to ship minerals, possible future marine terminal in Lee County, rail yards outside Lee County, travel time difference between rail and truck freight, lack of rail clients south of Alico, demand for exporting of non-metallic cargo, local communities trying to shut down mines, cost prohibitive practices, bringing containers from port, slow speed of Class Three rail line, faster imports by plane and truck freight, possibility of oil terminal with pipeline, current level of fuel trucks brought in to RSW from Tampa, bringing train cars from Louisiana/North Florida, competition from other areas, lack of manufacturing in Lee County, issue of transporting goods, tanker accidents, lack of pipelines in Florida, utilization of rail right-of-way, support for disaster preparedness, ensuring warehouses are storm resistant, other area examples, spending now to prepare buildings and roadways, and new building codes. Chair Anglickis asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

Agenda Item #2 - LeeTran Report

Mr. Don Scott provided the LeeTran given by Mr. Jorge Puente with LeeTran at the earlier TAC meeting. Mr. Scott noted that Mr. Puente's report contained information on the new service changes for the off season beginning April 25 and updates on the progress of the Rosa Parks, South Area, and Lehigh projects. Chair Anglickis asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Agenda Item #3 – FDOT Report

Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT mentioned the upcoming SR 31 public hearing that was being held on March 11 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the Lee Civic Center. She said the public hearing will also have a virtual component. Mr. Albert O'Donnell said the committee had received an email with information on the event. Mr. Scott noted the project limits were SR 31 from SR 78 to Babcock. Chair Anglickis asked if there were any questions. There were none.

New Business

Agenda Item #4 - *Review and Approval of the January 7, 2021 CAC Meeting Summary

Mr. Justin Thibaut made the motion to approve the January 7, 2021 Meeting Summary. Ms. Marion Briggs seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 - *Review and Approval of Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the Amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a wrong way driving safety project at various off ramps and to adjust the FTA 5305 transit planning funds to remove the state and local funding. The draft TIP pages and the FDOT request letter were attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. He said the FY 2021 through FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is being amended to add a new safety project in FY 2022 to address wrong way driving on various off ramps in the amount of \$1,654,021. He added, an amendment is being made to remove the local and state funding match for the Section 5305 transit planning funding that the MPO receives as the state is now going to match their portion of funding with toll revenue credits. Mr. Scott then read the locations of the wrong way driving improvements. Chair Anglickis asked if in the reconfiguration of the amounts, ours increased or decreased. Mr. Scott responded that it was a reduction of ten percent of the funds. Mr. Ron Gogoi commented that this was not real money per se. Mr. O'Donnell commented this was a large amount of funding for this project and questioned how it was being spent. Mr. Scott responded this was more interactive with messages on the interstate about wrong way drivers, adding it was not in design yet. Mr. O'Donnell questioned the allocation of funding between design and construction and also the prevalence of wrong way drivers. Ms. Peters noted it was not only for wrong way drivers but also to alert other drivers on the interstate. She added that FDOT project costs are inflated. Mr. O'Donnell asked what was being done and if tire slashers would be used. Ms. Peters said she would find out the details and bring them back to the committee. Chair Anglickis asked if there was a motion.

Ms. Marion Briggs made the motion to approve the TIP Amendments. Mr. Ted Tryka seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Donnell questioned if the committee would find out the nature of the improvements before the vote. Ms. Peters said this is for funding that begins July 1. Mr. Ed Blot asked if the money was being moved for construction because design was done. Mr. Scott replied that design was being done in house by FDOT. Mr. Blot asked if construction was being done this year. Mr. Scott said it would be

next fiscal year. Ms. Peters noted the next fiscal year begins July 1, 2021. Mr. Scott added it could also be a message in the car based on transponders, but he was not exactly sure what improvements would be included. Mr. Bruce Bohlander asked if FDOT would inform the committee of the improvements before they started. Mr. Scott said some areas in the state have already started this project. Ms. Vanessa Chaviano asked about recourse if the committee voted to approve now but then did not agree with the project when it comes out. Ms. Peters noted it takes several months for approvals and the project will let July 1. Mr. Scott questioned if anything could be done after the project was approved, but said that the item could be brought to the MPO Board noting the CAC did not approve it. He added the MPO Board has stopped projects before. Chair Anglickis asked if the TAC approved the item. Mr. Scott replied yes. Mr. Bohlander said that the CAC could vote against the project and then turn over to the MPO Board but at least the CAC knows they have done their due diligence. Mr. Scott commented that tabling the item was not an option. Mr. O'Donnell commented that the MPO Board may get an explanation of the project. Ms. Briggs asked if the MPO Board would understand why the CAC voted no. Mr. Scott replied yes, adding he would include the reasoning in the staff report. Chair Anglickis called for a vote.

There were two in favor and six objections, and the motion failed.

Agenda Item #6 - *Review and Approval of FY 2020/2021 Unified Planning Work Program Amendments

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) amendments to remove the local and state match funding from the transit planning task. He reviewed the new task table, the old task table, and the revised budget sheets with the 5305 20% soft match that were shown as slides at the meeting, attached to the agenda packets, and posted to the MPO website.

Ms. Marion Briggs made the motion to approve the UPWP Amendments. Mr. Bruce Bohlander seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. O'Donnell asked to revisit Agenda Item #5 to separate out the 5305 funding from the wrong way driving funding and vote again. Chair Anglickis asked if there was a motion to reconsider the vote on Agenda Item #5.

Mr. O'Donnell made the motion to reconsider the vote on Agenda Item #5. Mr. Ty Symroski seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ty Symroski moved to amend the motion for Agenda Item #5 to recommend denial of the wrong way driving funding TIP amendment and approval of the 5305 funding TIP amendment. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #8 - *Review and Approval of the Freight Project Priorities

Mr. Gogoi presented this agenda item to recommend MPO Board adoption of updated 2021 Lee MPO Freight Priorities, that were attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. Mr. Gogoi gave a brief Power Presentation that included slides with information on the proposed Lee MPO freight priorities. His presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-8-Freight-Priorities.pdf> Mr. O'Donnell asked if the priorities were listed regardless of cost. Mr. Gogoi replied yes. Mr. O'Donnell asked if the priorities needed to get in the system to apply and then get the plan done. Mr. Gogoi replied yes, noting additional funding opportunities occasionally arise.

Mr. Albert O'Donnell made the motion to approve the Freight Project Priorities. Ms. Marion Briggs seconded the motion. There was no discussion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #9 - Review of the Draft Regional TRIP Priorities

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item to review and provide input on the draft TRIP priorities. He said the Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPOs held a Joint MPO Board meeting on February 19th and one of the items that was discussed was updating the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) priorities for this year. He reviewed the list of TRIP priorities and added for Lee County the list was revised to include two additional sections of Ortiz Avenue, from SR 82 to Lockett and from Lockett to SR 80, and the addition of the Veterans Parkway segment. He said the Collier priorities have not been received or added to the list, and the list was in no particular order as yet. Chair Anglickis asked if this item would be brought back. Mr. Scott said yes, at the May meeting. Mr. O'Donnell asked if this was similar to what will be done with Collier. Mr. Scott replied yes, but it does not guarantee that FDOT will follow the recommended MPO order.

Agenda Item #10 - Information on the US41 Caloosahatchee Bridge Discussions at the MPO Board

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item on the US41 Caloosahatchee Bridge Discussions at the MPO Board. He said at the MPO Board meeting in January, there was a discussion about adding a sidewalk to the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge as currently there are no bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the bridge. He noted at the request of one of the County Commissioners, FDOT has been looking at options for adding a sidewalk to one side of the bridge. He commented the MPO Board voted to have FDOT come to the March 19th meeting and present the various options for further Board discussion. He said the bridge is 58 years old and one of the issues that FDOT has raised is that it would potentially need to be replaced in about twenty years. He mentioned this item was being provided to the committee as an information item in case they would like to attend the MPO Board meeting. He added any additional information on the item will be brought back at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Scott gave a brief Power Point presentation that included slides with information on background, several options, and other issues. He asked if there were any comments. Mr. Symroski asked if this was addressed in the 2045 LRTP. Mr. Scott said it is not in the plan. He added that FDOT decides the bridge replacement schedules and the only bridge in the plan to be replaced is the SR 31 bridge. Mr. O'Donnell asked if the bridge would just have bike/ped or also fishing improvements. Mr. Scott said signage could be placed to prohibit fishing, although the bridge is currently signed for no bike/ped and that still occurs. Ms. Peters added FDOT is following an ADA design. Chair Anglickis asked if there was any other input. There was none. Mr. Scott's presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-10-Caloosahatchee-Bridge.pdf>

Agenda Item #11 - Information on the Electric Vehicle Fee Discussions and Impacts

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item as a follow up to previous discussions about Electric Vehicle (EV) registration fees. He referred to the two bills that are being brought forward this session that were shown as slides at the meeting, attached to the agenda packet, and posted to the MPO website. He noted Senate Bill 140 establishes a registration fee for Electric Vehicles that goes with SB 138 that uses that funding to build EV charging infrastructure. He added the fee for electric vehicles weighing less than 10,000 pounds is starting at \$135 and a hybrid plug-in would cost an additional \$35 with the legislation including an expiration of the fees in 2030. He said he would report back as the bills move forward. He then referred to an article from Mr. Ed Blot regarding the thoughts from the President of Toyota on the electric grid impacts of an EV only fleet that was also attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. Mr. Blot gave a brief explanation of the article and the projected

impacts on the power grid in Japan. Mr. Scott then discussed additional articles that he found relating to the implementation and impacts of electric vehicles (EV) on the power grid in the United States. The committee then discussed oil as a fuel, lack of significant increase in demand, efficiency, natural gas, best time of day to charge, utility bills in other areas, solar power, power walls/battery packs, generators, expense related to installation of power walls, projected increase in electric vehicle fleet, recharging technology, example of battery exchanges in Israel, propane tank exchange example, and induction charging. Mr. Scott mentioned EV fee discussions at the upcoming MPOAC meeting and said he would bring back additional information at the May meeting. He said this discussion came up at the recent joint MPO meeting with Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO and a Charlotte Commissioner suggested starting with FDOT. Mr. Scott noted this might need to start below FDOT. Mr. Scott also mentioned that Mr. Carl Mikyska was leaving the MPOAC to be the Executive Director of the Pasco County MPO. He said the MPOAC would be led in the interim by a CUTR employee. Mr. O'Donnell asked if a resolution from the CAC would be helpful. Mr. Scott said to wait until after the discussion at the MPOAC to decide this. Mr. O'Donnell said it would be prudent if EV owners paid their equivalent to the gas tax.

Other Business

Agenda Item #12 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

Mr. Scott read a comment that was emailed by a member of the CAC, Mr. Steve Henry, regarding prohibiting passing on Burnt Store Road to curb the occurrence of already prevalent accidents. Mr. Scott said he would be passing the comment along to Lee County staff. Mr. Bohlander agreed with Mr. Henry's comment. Mr. Scott said he would bring any updates back to the next meeting.

Ms. Peters provided additional information on the wrong way driver project as she was corresponding with the project manager during the meeting. She said the funding would be used for the twelve ramps identified and it may have been overestimated. She added that as more of these projects are deployed across the state, FDOT will be able to better estimate the project costs as well as seeing cost savings through competitive bidding. Ms. Peters said she would provide additional information once she has received it. There was a brief discussion as to the type of funding being used for this project. Ms. Peters said she would find out if the funding was all SU. Mr. Scott said it might be possible to use safety funds for this project.

Agenda Item #13 – Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda Item #14 - Topics for next meeting

Topics suggested for next meeting included sidewalks near a bridge in Lehigh Acres on the north side of Richmond to Leeland over the Able Canal and rail right-of-way for pipeline. The committee briefly discussed the sidewalks on Richmond. Chair Anglickis said he would email Mr. Gogoi the information on the bridge and sidewalk location. Ms. Peters provided additional information on the wrong way driver project noting the implementation ideas include wrong way signs and wrong way vehicle detection systems. She added she would get back with staff on the use of SU funds for the project. Mr. Gogoi commented that the right-of-way on the railway in Fort Myers was constrained so the tracks may have to be ripped up and then replaced once the pipeline is in place. Mr. Blot and Mr. O'Donnell commented that the tracks would not be ripped up as directional boring was now used to avoid that.

Agenda Item #15 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and distribution items included the latest MPOAC Legislative Update.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

An audio recording of the entire meeting can be accessed here: <https://soundcloud.com/user-390911534/03-04-2021-cacwma>

***Action Items †May Require Action**

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