

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

1:30 p.m., Friday, May 14, 2021
Lee County Administration East Building
2201 Second Street, Room 118
Fort Myers, FL 33901



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by MPO Board Vice-Chair/City of Fort Myers Councilmember Teresa Watkins Brown. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The roll was called by MPO staff. A quorum was present. Lee County MPO Board Members in attendance included Lee County Commissioners Kevin Ruane (1:59 p.m.), Frank Mann, Raymond Sandelli, Cecil Pendergrass, and Brian Hamman; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Dan Sheppard, Tom Hayden, and Gloria Tate; City of Fort Myers Councilmembers Teresa Watkins Brown, Johnny Streets Jr., and Fred Burson; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Richard Johnson; and City of Bonita Springs Councilmembers Fred Forbes and Laura Carr.

Others in attendance included, but are not limited to, the following - L. K. Nandam, Wayne Gaither, Patrick Bateman, and Victoria Peters with FDOT; Derek Rooney with GrayRobinson; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco; Robert Codie with LeeTran; Persides Zambrano with the City of Cape Coral; Lee County IT staff; David Dangel with Inwood Consulting Engineers; Dave Loveland with Lee County; and members of the public John Majka and Denise Diamond.

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on Consent Agenda Items. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if any of the Board members would like to pull any consent agenda items for discussion. There were no consent agenda items requested to be pulled.

Agenda Item #2 - *Consent Agenda

- A. Approve the March 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approve Appointment of a BPCC At-Large Member
- C. Certification of the Local Coordinating Board Membership
- D. Approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant for FY 2021/2022
- E. Approve the Update to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan
- F. Approve the Joint FDOT Certification Statement

Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Councilmember Laura Carr and Commissioner Brian Hamman simultaneously seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments will be Taken at Each Item

Vice-Chair Watkins Brown noted that public comments will be taken at each agenda item and added that the public comment time limit is three minutes.

Public Hearing Item

Agenda Item #4 - ^Review and Approve Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program. He said the FY 2021 through FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is being amended to match the funding amounts, the updated project

length, and the project limits description in FDOT's Tentative Work Program. He reviewed the additional project information that was included on the draft TIP page, the FDOT request letter, and resolution that were all attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. Mr. Scott asked if there were any public comments. There were none. Commissioner Hamman asked about the TAC and CAC approval of the item. Mr. Scott noted the TAC and CAC both unanimously approved the amendment at their recent meetings. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any additional Board comments. There were none.

Councilmember Laura Carr made the motion to approve the Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed.

Agenda Item #5 - ^Review and Approve the FY 2026/2027 Federal and State Funded Priorities

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the FY 2026/2027 Federal and State Funded Priorities. He provided a Power Point presentation that included slides on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Pedestrian Bridge options, switchback ramp, bridge replacement, additional information, funding opportunities, and 2021 Federal and State funded priority table. His presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-5-Federal-and-State-Priorities.pdf> Mr. Scott asked if there were any questions or comments. He further questioned if the Board wanted to approve the priority list with the addition of the Caloosahatchee Pedestrian Bridge project.

Councilmember Laura Carr made the motion to approve the FY 2026/2027 Federal and State Funded Priorities. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion.

Mr. Scott asked if there was any public comment. Mr. John Majka gave a public comment. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there was any Board discussion on the agenda item. The Board discussed the switchback ramp placement, working with the City of Fort Myers staff to ensure the location of the switchback ramp is in line with the Centennial Park renovations, switchback in conceptual phase with more exact placement after the project is funded, functional life of bridge supporting project, need for project years ago, changing atmosphere of downtown Fort Myers, question if funding bridge project is prudent use of \$15 million, actual uses of pedestrian bridge, possible use of small shared use vehicle shuttles across bridge, opportunity to connect North Fort Myers with downtown Fort Myers, allowing North Fort Myers opportunity to share revitalization of downtown Fort Myers, having shovel ready project for new funding, new vision for North Fort Myers, need for Six Mile project, importance of connecting all parts of Lee County, and use of bridge for exercise and increased activity.

A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed.

New Business

Agenda Item #6 - *Review and Approval of the Lee MPO Transportation Regional Incentive Program Priorities with the Collier and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPOs

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the Lee MPO Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Priorities with the Collier and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPOs. He noted the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) provides funding for roadway and transit projects that are included on the previously adopted regional roadway network map. He added the TRIP priorities have been updated to be consistent with the current eligible projects included in the local Capital Improvement Elements. He commented on the Burnt Store project priorities with Charlotte County. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any public comments or Board comments. There were none.

Commissioner Brian Hamman made the motion to approve the Lee MPO TRIP Priorities with Collier and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPOs. Councilmember Laura Carr seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #7 - Presentation on the SR 31 Project Development and Environment Study

Mr. Patrick Bateman with FDOT presented this agenda item on the SR 31 Project Development and Environment Study. He provided a Power Point presentation that contained slides with information on study area, need for project, proposed improvement, existing conditions, evaluation segments, selected alternatives segments one through four, evaluation matrix, project costs, public hearing, remaining study schedule, and contact information. Commissioner Kevin Ruane arrived at 1:59 p.m. Mr. Bateman's full presentation can be accessed here: https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-7-428917-1-SR-31-PDE-Lee-MPO_Board-2.pdf During and following Mr. Bateman's presentation the Board discussed the project limits, costs, population increases in the area, Babcock impact and cost-sharing, percentage being paid by Babcock, SIB loan explanation and history of approval, and funding of projects on SR 31. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any public comments. Mr. David Loveland with Lee County asked about the intersection at SR 31 and SR 78. Mr. Bateman explained the alignment. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any other public comments. Mr. John Majka, a member of the public, gave a public comment. Mr. Bateman addressed Mr. Majka's public comment. Mr. L. K. Nandam explained the PD&E processes differ by type of project. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown closed public comment. The Board continued with discussion on the relocation of a business on SR 31, right-of-way, roundabouts and speed limits, project phases, roundabout placement, slowing traffic on SR 31, percentage of project paid for by developer, length of project, programming of funding, and repayment by developer. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there was additional discussion. There was none.

Agenda Item #8 - *Approve the City of Cape Evacuation Study Selection Committee Rankings

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the approval of the City of Cape Coral Evacuation Study Selection Committee Rankings. He noted there were two submittals and they were ranked as follows: CDM Smith, Stantec. He said the Board is being asked to approve the selection committee ranking and to authorize MPO staff to negotiate a contract with the number one ranked firm. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Councilmember Gloria Tate made the motion to approve the City of Cape Coral Evacuation Study Selection Committee Rankings. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #9 - *Approve LeeTran's Acceptance of the Community Transportation Coordinator for a Five Year Contract

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the approval of LeeTran's Acceptance of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for a five year contract. He noted LeeTran has been serving as the CTC, under an emergency designation, since Good Wheels Inc. closed in February of 2020. He added the Lee County Board of County Commissioners has approved a resolution requesting the Lee MPO Board provide a recommendation to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for their approval of the designation at their next meeting on June 3, 2021. He said this agenda item is to approve resolution 21-06 making a recommendation to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged that Lee County Transit serve as the Community Transportation Coordinator over the next five years, from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Commissioner Frank Mann made the motion to approve LeeTran's Acceptance of the Community Transportation Coordinator for a Five Year Contract. Councilmember Laura Carr seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #10 - Review of the Draft FY 21/22 through FY 25/26 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the Draft FY 21/22 through FY 25/26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He mentioned the Draft FY 2021/2022 - FY 2025/2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Board's review prior to public comment review that can be accessed at the link below. He noted the final approval by the Board will be at the June 18, 2021 meeting. Link to TIP: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/M10a.Draft-TIP-for-MPO-Board-meeting.pdf> Mr. Scott mentioned the file was large as the document was over 400 pages to meet requirements. He noted there were no major changes to the projects since the release of the tentative Work Program in January. He commented on the funding, CIPS in the appendices, and the inclusion of the Transit Safety Asset Management Plan. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there was public comment. Mr. John Majka made a public comment. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there was any Board comment. There was none.

Agenda Item #11 - Proposed Amendments to the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of and input on the Proposed Amendments to the 2045 Long Range Transportation Program (LRTP). He said MPO staff is proposing LRTP amendments/modifications to be voted on at the June meeting to be consistent with recent project discussions. He reviewed the following amendments that are being considered: Amend the Federal and State list to include the potential construction of a pedestrian facility on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge (the design phase was included within the Bicycle Pedestrian cost feasible project list previously) and Add language in the transit element to include the implementation of technology for the buses (like on board units for the buses) to take advantage of the US 41 FRAME (Florida Regional Advanced Mobility Elements) project that is currently being implemented. He said this will come back next month for approval. Vice-Chair Watkins Brown asked if there were any public comments. There were none. She asked if there were any Board comments. There were none.

Other Business

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

Ms. Denise Diamond, a member of the public, gave a public comment on the SR 80 projects. Mr. John Majka, a member of the public, gave a public comment on the SR 80 projects.

Agenda Item #13 - LeeTran/TD Report

LeeTran did not have a report but Director Robert Codie was available for any questions. There were no question or comments for LeeTran.

Agenda Item #14 - FDOT Report

Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT provided the FDOT report that contained information on the upcoming mobility week. She then introduced Mr. Patrick Bateman to provide an update on the US 41 at Bonita Beach Road project. Mr. Bateman gave a short Power Point presentation that included slides with information on the project overview, purpose and need, recent activities, and upcoming activities. Mr. Bateman said he would be back next year with another update on the project. His presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/FDOT-Report-US-41-at-BBR-Project-Update.pptx> The Board briefly discussed grade separation, project preferences of Bonita Springs and Lee County, and the quadrant plan. Mr. L. K. Nandam with FDOT then commented on the current budget approval, funding opportunities, and allocations.

Agenda Item #15 - Announcements

Mr. Scott mentioned the upcoming I-75 virtual public outreach.

Agenda Item #16 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and distribution items included the MPOAC Legislative Update.

The Board briefly discussed concerns of Cape Council regarding growth on Pine Island, addressing traffic concerns on Pine Island Road west area, Matlacha bridge concerns, other access plans, population growth, constrained corridor designation, growth in Bonita, projects addressing growth in Bonita, Pine Island growth restrictions, community development plan, transfer of development rights off island to limit growth, residential permits lows for Pine Island, Matlacha constraints with businesses and roadway, examining transportation options, Cape Coral Executive Committee member, and attending the Executive Committee meeting to discuss concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

A completed audio recording of the meeting can be accessed here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-390911534/05-14-2021-mpowma>

^Roll Call Vote *Action Items †May Require Action

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