

# METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

9:00 a.m., Friday, May 19, 2023  
Lee County Administration East Building  
2201 Second Street, Room 118  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
239-244-2220



## Meeting Minutes

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The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by MPO Board Chair/Lee County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass. 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 Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass; City of Fort Myers Councilmembers Teresa Watkins Brown and Darla Betzer Bonk; City of Cape Coral Mayor John Gunter; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Dan Sheppard, Tom Hayden, Patty Cummings (9:05 a.m.), and Keith Long; Town of Fort Myers Beach Councilmember John R. King; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Michael Miller; City of Bonita Springs Councilmember Laura Carr; City of Bonita Springs Councilmember/Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes; and Village of Estero Vice-Mayor Joanne Ribble.

Others in attendance included the following – John Kubler, Wayne Gaither, and Victoria Peters with FDOT; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco; Derek Rooney/MPO Legal; Dominic Gemelli with LeeTran; Lee County IT staff; LCSO deputy; Farhan Butt with Lee County Department of Community Development; Ned Baier with Volkert; and members of the public Marsha Ellis, Karen DesRochers, and John Majka.

### **Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items**

Chair Pendergrass asked if there were public comments on consent agenda items. John Majka, a member of the public, provided public comments on Consent Agenda Items.

### **Agenda Item #2 - \*Consent Agenda**

- A. Approve the March 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant for FY 2023/2024
- C. Approve Appointments of Three CAC Members
- D. Approve the Updates to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan

Mayor John Gunter made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Councilmember John R. King seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments will be taken on Each New Business Item**

Chair Pendergrass noted public comments would be taken at each new business item.

## Public Hearing Items

### **Agenda Item #4 - ^Review and Approve an Amendment to the FY 2022/2023 through FY 2026/2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add a Transit Low/No Emission Grant Funding Project**

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a recently announced Federal Transit Administration grant award for LeeTran to replace three buses past their useful life with battery electric buses. He further explained the current FY 2023 through FY 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is being amended to add \$3,863,430 in FTA grant funding for the replacement of three buses with battery electric buses along with the

necessary charging equipment. The grant is being awarded from the Low or No Emission funding program and will be used to replace diesel hybrid buses that are past their useful life. He referred to and showed a slide of the TIP page with additional project information that was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). At their respective meetings, the TAC and CAC unanimously approved this item. Mr. Scott mentioned a public comment that had been emailed prior to the meeting, was printed and handed out to those present at the meeting, and can be viewed at the following link: [Kathleen Marquis Public Comment](#) The Board briefly discussed the cost of regular buses, the higher cost of electric buses, the advantages of electric buses, and the use of electric vehicles for community service vehicles by the Lee County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Scott asked if there was any public comment on this item. Chair Pendergrass asked if there was any public comment on this item. There was none.

**Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes made the motion to approve the Amendment to the FY 2022/2023 through FY 2026/2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add a Transit Low/No Emission Grant Funding Project. Mayor John Gunter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Agenda Item #5 - ^Review and Approve FY 2023 & FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program Amendments to Add a Safe Streets for All Grant Funded Project and Make Schedule and Budget Revisions**

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) amendments to add in the Safe Streets for All Grant project, recognize carry forward federal planning funds and corresponding task changes, update the FTA 5305 and TD grant funding amounts, and revise project schedules and descriptions. The underline and strike through changes to the task sheets and the proposed budget sheets were attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). He reviewed the following revisions: Add funding in FY 2023 to task 1.1 administration from task 4.4 administrative and consulting services to match the original intended amount; Revise the task 1.6 transit funding amount to the FTA grant allocation of \$316,753 in FY 2024 (addition of \$5,926 in funding); Revise the task 3.4 Transportation Disadvantaged funding amount to the FY 2024 allocation amount of \$37,625 (addition of \$625 in funding); Revise the task 4.4 descriptions and task funding in FY 2024 to recognize available carry forward funding in the amount of \$402,002; and to add in the federal grant funding for the Safe Streets for All Grant funding (federal funding of \$180,000 in FY 2024, with another \$120,000 to be shown in the next UPWP in FY 2025). The approval of this item also includes revising the Lee MPO Planning Grant Agreement to match the funding additions identified in FY 2024 and authorizes the Chair to sign the updated agreement with FDOT which was also attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). At their respective meetings held on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the TAC and CAC unanimously approved this item. Mr. Scott asked if there was public comment on this agenda item. There was none.

**Councilmember Laura Carr made the motion to approve the FY 2023 and FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program Amendments to Add a Safe Streets for All Grant Funded Project and make Schedule and Budget Revisions. Vice-Mayor Michael Miller seconded the motion.**

Chair Pendergrass asked if there was any MPO Board discussion on this item. There was none.

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

**New Business**

**Agenda Item #6 - \*Review and Approve the Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda and the Lee and Collier MPOs Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Project Priorities**

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the updated Lee and Collier and Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPO TRIP priorities. He explained the Transportation Regional

Incentive Program (TRIP) and the order/ranking of the projects on each list. The TAC and CAC unanimously approved this item at their respective May 4<sup>th</sup> meetings. He also showed a slide of the TRIP priorities that were attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). Chair Pendergrass asked if the MPO Board members had any questions for Mr. Scott. There were none. He asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

**Councilmember Laura Carr made the motion to approve the Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda and the Lee and Collier MPOs Transportation Regional Incentive Program Project Priorities. Councilmember Patty Cummings seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #7 - \*Review and Approve the 45-Day Public Comment Period for the Revised Public Involvement Plan**

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of and comment on the revised Public Involvement Plan and to direct staff to start the public comment period for a minimum of 45 days. Mr. Scott explained the MPO is updating the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to address comments made during our federal certification as well as updates to outdated references. He referenced the draft that was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#) for review and said it will be put out for public comment review for a minimum of 45 days before it is brought back to the Board for final approval at the September MPO Board meeting. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any MPO Board or public comments. Marsha Ellis, a member of the public, provided a public comment on this agenda item. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any other comments. There were none. Mr. Scott noted a motion was required to begin the public comment period. Chair Pendergrass asked for a motion.

**Councilmember John R. King made the motion to approve the minimum 45-Day Public Comment Period for the Revised Public Involvement Plan. Mayor John Gunter seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #8 - Review of the Draft FY 2023/2024 through FY 2027/2028 Transportation Improvement Program**

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the draft FY 2023/2024 - FY 2027/2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The draft TIP was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#) for the Board and public review and comment. He said the final version will be brought back for approval at the June meeting, following a 30 day public comment period. He then provided a Power Point presentation that can be viewed at the following link – [Draft TIP](#). Mr. Scott asked if there were any questions or comments. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any questions. The MPO Board briefly discussed the possible reasons for fewer bidders on projects, greater number of projects, and higher bid prices. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any other comments. Mr. Scott asked if there were any public comments. John Majka, a member of the public, provided a public comment on this agenda item. Chair Pendergrass mentioned the Lee County Capital Improvement Program rankings, labor, material, cost increases, and reviewed the re-rankings of several projects in Lee County. Chair Pendergrass asked if there was anything additional for this agenda item. Mr. Scott replied no.

#### **Other Business**

#### **Agenda Item #9 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda**

Marsha Ellis, a member of the public, emailed a public comment on items not on the agenda presentation prior to the meeting, presented the emailed public comment presentation slides in-person to the MPO Board, and the public comment presentation can be viewed at the following link: [Marsha Ellis Public Comment](#). Karen DesRochers, a member of the public, provided an in-person public comment on items not on the agenda. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any more public

comments. Mr. Scott mentioned there were several public comments on items not on the agenda that were emailed prior to the meeting from members of the public that were then printed, handed out to those present at the meeting, and can be viewed at the following links – [Denise Diamond Public Comment](#), [John Majka Public Comment](#). John Majka, a member of the public, provided an in-person public comment on items not on the agenda. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any additional public comments. There were none.

### **Agenda Item #10 - LeeTran/TD Report**

Mr. Dominic Gemelli with LeeTran provided the LeeTran report which included information on increased ridership and the opening of the South Transfer station. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

### **Agenda Item #11 - FDOT Report**

Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT provided the FDOT report that included information on the cycle of the Work Program.

### **Agenda Item #12 - Announcements**

Mr. Scott announced the next regular MPO Board meeting would be held on June 16. He also mentioned a possible joint meeting with Collier MPO in August with information to be provided as it becomes available. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any other announcements. There were none. Chair Pendergrass mentioned the Colonial/McGregor improvements, the Cape Coral bridge replacement, the Big Hickory bridge replacement, and Corkscrew/Estero. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

### **Agenda Item #13 - Information and Distribution Items**

There were no information and distribution items.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m.**

**An audio recording of the meeting can be accessed here: [MPO Board May 19, 2023](#)**

**^Roll Call Vote    \*Action Items    †May Require Action**

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