

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

9:00 a.m., Friday, March 22, 2024
Lee County Administration East Building
2201 Second Street, Room 118
Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-244-2220



Meeting Minutes

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 Commissioners Cecil Pendergrass, Mike Greenwell, and Brian Hamman; City of Fort Myers Councilmember Johnny Streets Jr.; City of Cape Coral Mayor John Gunter; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Dan Sheppard, Richard Carr, and Tom Hayden; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Michael Miller; City of Bonita Springs Councilmembers Laura Carr (9:03 a.m.) and Chris Corrie (alternate); City of Bonita Springs Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes; and Village of Estero Mayor Jon McLain.

Others in attendance included the following – Victoria Peters, L. K. Nandam, Kyle Purvis, James Heffelfinger, Jason Heironimus, Katelyn Carmona, Joe Lauk, and Wayne Gaither with FDOT; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco; Derek Rooney/MPO Legal; Shana Overhulser with Quest; Rob Price and Md Rakibul Alam with Lee County; Karl Pyles with KSI; Dawn Huff with LeeTran; Doug Hattaway and Charles Hines with the Trust for Public Land; Cal Santarelli with Hardesty and Hanover; Ned Baier with Volkert; EXP staff; Lee County IT staff; LCSO deputy; and members of the public Derek Felder, Barry Freedman, Bruce Ackerman, Marsha Ellis, Emily Porter, Deborah and Rob Orton, Harvey Kulkin, and Terry Koch.

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items

Chair Pendergrass asked if there were public comments on consent agenda items. There were none.

Agenda Item #2 - *Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the November 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of the February 16, 2024 Joint Meeting Minutes
- C. Approve CAC Appointments for the Village of Estero and District Five Vacancies
- D. Approval of the 2023 FDOT and MPO Joint Certification Statement

Mayor John Gunter made the motion to approve the consent agenda items. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments will be taken on each Public Hearing and New Business Item

Public comments were taken on each Public Hearing and New Business Item.

Public Hearing Items

Agenda Item #4 - ^*Approve Amendments to the FY 2024 - FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program to add Projects and Revise Cost Estimates

Mr. Don Scott presented this public hearing agenda item for approval of Amendments to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 through Fiscal Year (FY) 2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add Projects and Revise Cost Estimates. He reviewed the amendments that were attached to the agenda

packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). He also mentioned a revised funding amount for the CR 78 over Little Pine Island Pass Bridge and showed the following slide: [CR 78 Funding Update](#) He asked if there were any questions. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any questions from the Board or the public. There were none.

Commissioner Brian Hamman made the motion to approve the TIP Amendments. Commissioner Mike Greenwell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 - ^*Approve an Amendment to the FY 2023/2024 UPWP to Add Funding for the CR 951 Feasibility Study

Mr. Scott presented this public hearing agenda item for the approval of an Amendment to the FY 2023/2024 Unfired Planning Work Program (UPWP) to Add Funding for the CR 951 Feasibility Study. He reviewed the funding information that was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). He also referred to a Power Point presentation on the study: [CR 951 Study](#) Mr. Scott asked if there were any questions. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board or the public. Commissioner Hamman asked Mr. Scott to explain the purpose of this item and noted it was not for construction. Mr. Scott answered that it was a study to explore the possible alignments, issues, and costs. Commissioner Hamman restated that this study was to research options. Mayor Jon McLain asked if the recommendations would be brought back to the Board. Mr. Scott replied yes. Chair Pendergrass asked for a motion.

Mayor John Gunter made the motion to approve the UPWP Amendment. Commissioner Hamman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6 - ^*Approve the Updated Federal and State Funded Priority List

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the approval of the Updated Federal and State Funded Priority List that was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). He asked if there were any questions. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any public comments. There were no Board member or public comments.

Councilmember Laura Carr made the motion to approve the Updated Federal and State Funded Priority List. Vice-Mayor Michael Miller seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Agenda Item #7 - *Election of Officers for 2024

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the Election of Officers for 2024 and reviewed the rotation information that was attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#). He noted the new chair would be Mayor Gunter, new vice-chair would be Councilmember John R. King, and Commissioner Ruane would remain treasurer. Chair Pendergrass asked if there was any public or Board comments on this item. There were none.

Commissioner Brian Hamman made the motion to elect City of Cape Coral Mayor John Gunter as MPO Chair and Town of Fort Myers Beach Councilmember John R. King as MPO Vice-Chair while retaining Lee County Commissioner Kevin Ruane as MPO Treasurer. Councilmember Johnny Streets Jr. seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #8 - *Functional Classification and Urban Area Boundary Map Presentation

Mr. Kyle Purvis with FDOT presented this agenda item on the Functional Classification and Urban Boundary Map Updates. He provided a Power Point presentation that can be viewed at the following link: [Functional Classification](#). Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any questions from the Board or comments from the public. There were none. He thanked Mr. L. K. Nandam for his attendance.

Vice-Mayor Michael Miller Made the motion to accept the updated Functional Classification and Adjusted Urban Area Boundary Map for Lee County. Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #9 - Presentation on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge Project

Mr. Joe Lauk with FDOT presented this agenda item on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge Project. He provided a Power Point presentation that can be viewed at the following link: [Caloosahatchee Bridge](#). The Board discussed public comments on the project, lane sizes, lane closures, speed reduction, current condition without bike/ped facilities, increased safety by adding bike/ped facilities, compliments to FDOT staff on avoidance of peak season and minimizing impacts, public outreach, example of media opportunity and man walking bicycle across the bridge in background, impacts on morning and evening commutes, extended lane closures, peak season, and nighttime closures. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Agenda Item #10 - Information on the Trust for Public Land and Seminole Gulf Rail Trail Agreement

Mr. Charles Hines and Mr. Doug Hattaway with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) co-presented this agenda item as an update on the TPL and Seminole Gulf Rail Trail Agreement. They provided a Power Point presentation that can be viewed at the following link: [TPL Rail Trail](#). The Board discussed timeframe for building trail in Sarasota, cost of building trail in Sarasota, mitigation of environmental issues, environmental study, restrictions on use of rail corridors, purchase price of Bonita Estero Rail Trail (BERT) property, possible connections, funding, high speed rail, I-75 Master Plan consideration of high speed rail in median, contributions from citizens, Friends of BERT, embellishments for trail, concessions along trail, width of rail corridor and possible other uses, increasing safety, placement of high speed rail versus commuter rail, and option of rail with trail. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were any public comments on this item. Members of the public, Deb Orton, Harvey Kulkin, and Bruce Ackerman provided comments on this agenda item.

Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes made a motion to direct staff to add the Bonita Estero Rail Trail to the MPO priority list to access funding. Mayor Jon McLain seconded the motion.

Mr. Nandam explained the process of accessing funding from the state through the MPO. Chair Pendergrass clarified that once the trail is on the list then staff could apply for SUN Trail funding. He also asked about possible impacts on other projects. Mr. Nandam said the MPO Board decides how to allocate funding and SUN Trail is its own source of funding, but in order to apply for SUN Trail funding, the project must be on the MPO priority list. Chair Pendergrass asked if there were other questions or comments. There were none. He referred to the motion and second on the floor and asked if there were any objections.

There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Pendergrass thanked Mr. Hines and Mr. Hattaway for their presentation.

Other Business

Agenda Item #11 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

A member of the public, Marsha Ellis, provided a comment on items not on the agenda.

Agenda Item #12 - LeeTran/TD Report

Ms. Dawn Huff with LeeTran provided the LeeTran report which included information on ridership, fares, outreach, and the Lehigh Park and Ride project.

Agenda Item #13 - FDOT Report

Mr. Nandam with FDOT commented on local appropriations and their impact on funding for already programmed projects. He asked for increased coordination between local governments and FDOT staff to avoid project delays due to approved legislative requests. Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT presented the FDOT Report which included information on the Sanibel and Pine Island bridges, truck parking projects, Lee County MPO's Joint FDOT Certification, US 41 public hearing, SR 82 public meeting, and Pine Island public meeting. Her report can be found at the following link: [FDOT March](#)

Agenda Item #14 - Announcements

Mr. Scott noted there was no meeting scheduled for April and the next MPO Board meeting was scheduled for May 17, 2024.

Agenda Item #15 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and/or distribution items were attached to the agenda packet and [posted to the MPO website](#).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

An audio recording of the meeting can be accessed here: [MPO Board March 22, 2024](#)

The public comment cards can be viewed at the following link: [MPO Public Comment Cards 032224](#)

^Roll Call Vote *Action Items *May Require Action

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