

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

2:00 p.m., June 13, 2018
Cape Coral Public Works Building
815 Nicholas Pkwy E, Cape Coral, FL
Green Room/A200



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. by Chair Tracey Gore.

The roll was called. A quorum was present. Those MEC members in attendance included City of Cape Coral Councilmember Jessica Cosden, City of Fort Myers Councilmember Gaile Anthony, Town of Fort Myers Beach Mayor Tracey Gore, and City of Sanibel Mayor Kevin Ruane. Others in attendance included Martin Copeland and Tim Gruters with CRI; Roderick Harvey, Charles Wesockes, and Ivan Perez with HCT; MPO Legal Counsel Derek Rooney and MPO staff Don Scott and Calandra Barraco.

New Business

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on New Business Items

There were no public comments on new business items.

Agenda Item #2 - *Review and Approval of the May 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Cosden motioned to approve the May 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Councilmember Anthony seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3 - *Accounting Services Presentation/Questions and Select a Firm to Begin Negotiations

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the two accounting firms, HCT Certified Public Accountants and Consultants and Carr, Riggs & Ingram CPA's and Advisors (CRI), and selection of one of the firms to begin negotiations. He explained that on March 26, 2018, the MPO staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Accounting Services seeking a firm to provide the MPO with accounting services. He said the MPO received two proposals by the April 26, 2018 deadline, CRI and HCT, and those proposals were brought to the May 9, 2018 Executive Committee meeting. He added following a discussion of the proposals, the Executive Committee decided that the firms should come and answer questions in person and both firms responded that they would participate. He noted the grading criteria/scoring sheet and the MPO accounting services tasks for use in determining the ranking at the meeting were attached to the agenda packet.

CRI was the first firm to present at the meeting. Mr. Tim Gruters with CRI gave a brief overview of the firm and then introduced Mr. Martin Copeland, also with CRI. Mr. Copeland gave his background and then continued the presentation with a description of how CRI could integrate with the MPO. Mayor Kevin Ruane introduced himself, explained why the MPO uses QuickBooks, and gave a brief history of the need for the RFP. Mr. Copeland noted that CRI put out an RFP for accounting software, QuickBooks was part of that, but CRI ended up going with another software company. He said the software they chose was Xero. Mayor Ruane said the MPO would like full transparency in addition to avoiding the problems of the past. Mr. Scott asked if access to the accounting system would be given to others. Mr. Copeland said the MPO decides who can have access. There was a brief discussion on the software and possible users. Mr. Copeland said there is no additional cost for additional users. Councilmember Cosden asked if CRI had ever worked with an MPO/TPO before. Mr. Copeland said CRI works with other government agencies that are similar, like 911 Boards. Councilmember Anthony asked if they work with anyone in this area. Mr. Gruters replied they have done audits in Sarasota. Chair Gore asked Mr. Rooney for his opinion. Mr. Rooney noted the fact that CRI has worked in Florida is useful. Mayor Ruane asked a procedural question related to whether the firm should stay in the room for the discussion or be asked to leave. Mr. Scott said they could leave, and we would get them the results later. Chair Gore asked if references were included. Mr. Copeland said letters could be submitted if needed. He added that he will ensure all stored data from QuickBooks will be transferred. Mayor Ruane explained that CRI is peer reviewed and that can be considered a significant reference. He added that there is enough expertise in the

firm to complete the tasks required. Chair Gore asked about the availability of the firm. Mr. Copeland said they will be available as needed. Councilmember Cosden asked if there is a limit. Mr. Copeland replied no. Mayor Ruane commented that the firm's fee is reasonable and although there may be a transition period, it will run smooth after that. Mr. Copeland reiterated that if their proposal is accepted, he will ensure the existing QuickBooks data is converted. He thanked the committee. Mr. Copeland and Mr. Gruters left the meeting.

Chair Gore asked if the other firm was coming to the meeting. Mr. Scott replied yes, they are scheduled to present at 3:00 p.m. Mayor Ruane said CRI's fees may be on the higher side, but if we have access then CLA won't have to be brought in to fix during the audit. Mayor Ruane noted the MPO would also be avoiding a management letter if issues are fixed before the audit. He added he scored CRI a one hundred as they meet all of the criteria. Mr. Scott said there is usually a consensus among the members as to who is selected. Councilmember Cosden asked if the other firm ever sent a fee schedule. Mr. Scott said they would bring it today.

HCT arrived early and their presentation began at 2:35 p.m. Mayor Ruane introduced himself and briefly reviewed his accounting background. Mr. Roderick Harvey with HCT introduced himself and began his Power Point presentation. His presentation included an overview of the team, their past experience, and their plan for the MPO. He added their primary market is government non-profit and gave a list of some clients. He also displayed a letter of recommendation from the Broward County MPO. Mr. Harvey then introduced Mr. Ivan Perez, also with HCT. Mr. Perez gave a brief background of himself and then spoke to the quality of HCT's personnel. Mr. Harvey continued the presentation with a review of the steps to set up, explaining that HCT uses QuickBooks online, and it would be easy to give them access to the MPO's current files. He said HCT also uses a secure information portal for any documents. Mr. Harvey thanked the committee and asked if there were any questions. Mayor Ruane mentioned the problems the MPO has faced in the past, specifically that the auditor was being paid at a high rate to fix simple book-keeping errors. Councilmember Cosden asked about the fee schedule. Mr. Harvey said they provide a monthly flat fee, but also gave an hourly fee if needed. Councilmember Cosden asked about the charge for services outside the scope. Mr. Harvey said that is why the hourly fee was provided. There was a brief discussion on the fee schedule and the transition period. Councilmember Cosden asked if anyone on the team had experience with MPOs. Mr. Harvey said the Mr. Thomas Williams and Mr. Ivan Perez had both participated in the Broward County MPO audit. There was a brief discussion about the core team and HCT's other employees. Councilmember Anthony asked if HCT just had one office in Florida. Mr. Harvey replied yes. Mayor Ruane thanked HCT for coming to present. Mr. Harvey asked when a decision will be made. Mayor Ruane said by the end of the day. Mr. Harvey, Mr. Perez, and Mr. Wesockes left the meeting.

Mayor Ruane noted the underlying issue is HCT presented like an auditor not an accountant. Councilmember Cosden asked if the auditor should know the other side as well. Mayor Ruane also noted the MPO does not have tax issues, adding CRI is less expensive. Chair Gore asked if there was any more discussion or if there was a motion. Councilmember Cosden asked if there were any comments from the MPO staff. Mr. Scott said he was glad to have two firms put in and stated he thinks both firms can do the job. Mayor Ruane interjected that although HCT does QuickBooks online, he was voting for CRI. He added that CRI knows the assignment, and he didn't want HCT to think the MPO would transition from book-keeping to auditing. He said he was bothered when they brought in items that were out of the scope like taxes and quality control.

Councilmember Cosden made the motion to select CRI as the MPO's accounting firm and begin contract negotiations. Councilmember Anthony seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #4 - +Overview of the FDOT Priorities Discussion for MPO Board Input

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item to provide input on the discussions staff has been having with FDOT on funding of the MPO's priorities. He referred to the priorities list that was attached to the agenda packet and shown as a slide at the meeting. He explained the Big Carlos Bridge project is for a new or rehabilitated bridge on the south end of Fort Myers Beach. He mentioned the Big Carlos Bridge project has been the number one roadway priority for the past three years and that \$25 million has been requested in federal funding for that project, which is about half of the project cost. He added to move this forward, FDOT is proposing \$10 million in any area funds to be matched with \$15 million in our federal allocation of funding in 2025, 2026 and 2027.

He said this will require other programs, off the top box funding, for those three years to be reduced by at least \$1 million a year. Chair Gore asked if the county was ready to move forward with funding to match. Mr. Scott replied yes. He then reviewed the rest of the priority list and said it would also be on the agenda for the MPO Board. Chair Gore referenced a resident near the Big Carlos Bridge that she would have to contact and asked for a clarification as to what the project specifies. Mr. Scott said there has been no determination yet on what should be built and this is only for funding at this point. Chair Gore asked what the MPO Board vote would be for. Mr. Scott replied it would be to move forward with FDOT's funding recommendation. He also mentioned the priority list has looked much the same for the past three years.

Agenda Item #5 - Follow up on the Transit Ridership/Traffic Data Discussion at the MPO Board

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item as a follow up on the transit ridership/traffic data discussion at the last MPO Board meeting. He said the minutes from the meeting were reviewed, but he wanted to ensure that the correct data is being provided. He noted that one item that came up was ridership from Bonita. He added that a representative from Bonita was not present, and he is not sure what they are requesting. Councilmember Cosden said she was unsure as well. Chair Gore suggested reaching out to Bonita directly.

Agenda Item #6 - FDOT Performance Measure Targets for Pavement, Bridge and System Condition

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item on FDOT performance measure targets for pavement, bridge, and system condition. He handed out the recently received FDOT performance measure targets for pavement, bridge, and system performance. He said several months ago when there was a discussion on the Safety Performance measures, we had indicated that we would also be required to provide targets for pavement, bridges and system performance measures. He explained that now the MPO has six months to determine if we support their targets or if we want to establish our own. He said he sees no advantage to adopting something different. Councilmember Cosden asked if the targets could be lower and questioned the measures. Mr. Scott said he did not see any advantage to change them and would not want them lower. He added that Florida is good about keeping up with pavement and the on system bridges are good. He said there are only issues with some off system bridges. He noted this will come back in the fall. Chair Gore asked if there were any additional questions. There were none.

Agenda Item #7 - Overview of the MPO Board Agenda

Mr. Scott handed out the MPO Board agenda for the June 22, 2018 meeting. He provided an overview of the upcoming MPO Board agenda items including the numerous consent agenda items mentioning the two new Citizen Advisory Committee members up for approval. Chair Gore asked about the roundabout priorities that were part of the consent agenda items. Mr. Scott explained and also gave an explanation of the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) item. He said due to the TD item and funding coming through Good Wheels to the MPO, the MPO will not be doing an evaluation of Good Wheels this year. Mr. Scott also mentioned that Good Wheels will not be able to keep the funding for themselves, or they will not get paid from the TD Commission. He then reviewed the Estero agenda item, noted the wording was changed to eliminate "or" on agenda item number ten, and referred to the roundabout presentation agenda item. Councilmember Anthony said it is a popular topic that can get heated. There was a brief discussion regarding roundabouts, the possible roundabout at Periwinkle on Sanibel, and the Winkler/Challenger roundabout project. Mr. Scott noted that roundabouts are safer, and they can save money but it depends on the location. Mr. Rooney mentioned the three roundabouts that were recently installed in Charlotte County and asked if there was any information on them. Mr. Scott said they are discussing the before and after for those roundabouts. Councilmember Cosden mentioned the roundabout being installed in Cape Coral at 47th and Vincennes.

Other Business

Agenda Item #8 - Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

Agenda Item #9 - Announcements

Chair Gore announced that Mayor Kevin Ruane would be coming to the Town of Fort Myers Beach to discuss eliminating the Lake Okeechobee water releases. Mayor Ruane said he would also be speaking in Cape Coral and Fort Myers. He said that Estero was the first municipality he visited, and they passed a resolution

supporting the elimination of water releases from Lake Okeechobee. Chair Gore also announced that Fort Myers Beach would be holding an event to make the biggest human seashell later in June, and they are trying to recruit approximately 900 people to participate.

Mr. Rooney announced his firm was seeking to hire another attorney. There was a brief discussion about the need for more attorneys in the area.

Agenda Item #10 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and distribution items included a fee schedule from HCT, the performance measures initial targets for pavement, bridge, and pavement from FDOT, and the agenda for the MPO Board meeting on June 22.

Councilmember Gaile Anthony motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Kevin Ruane seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

* Action Items + May Require Action

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