

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Thursday, October 4, 2018

South County Regional Library

21100 Three Oaks Parkway, Estero FL 33928

9:30 a.m.



## Meeting Minutes

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Carl Karakos at 9:36 a.m.

The roll was called. A quorum was present. Those members in attendance included Andy Getch with the Lee County Department of Community Development; Alicia Dixon with Lee County Port Authority; Levi McCollum with LeeTran; Richard Perdue and Nena Garrett with the Lee County School Board Transportation District; Carl Karakos with the City of Fort Myers Department of Engineering; Jason Green with the Town of Fort Myers Beach; Craig Chandler with the City of Sanibel Department of Planning; Eric Ortman with the Collier MPO; Lakshmi Gurram with the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO; Persides Zambrano with the City of Cape Coral; and Mike Cook with Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District (LA-MSID). Others in attendance included Victoria Peters with FDOT; Nora Demers; Thomas Kanell via phone; and Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco with the Lee County MPO.

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

There were no public comments on items on the agenda. Ms. Nora Demers introduced herself and noted she was there for Agenda Item #4, the transit recommendation follow up from Mr. Thomas Kanell. Mr. Scott phoned Mr. Kanell and placed him on speaker phone.

### Agenda Item #2 - LeeTran Report

Mr. Levi McCollum with LeeTran gave the LeeTran report. The entire LeeTran presentation can be viewed here: <http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/LeeTran-TAC-20181004.pptx> Mr. McCollum's presentation included information on November 2018 service changes and January 2019 service changes. Chair Karakos asked the hours and days of service for the Park and Ride trolley to Fort Myers Beach. Mr. McCollum replied he thinks the schedule is seven days a week from roughly 6:00 a.m. or 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Mr. Ron Gogoi asked about the proposed bus stop changes and how many passengers were usually boarding. Mr. McCollum said it depends on season, and he said he could get specific numbers and hours. Mr. Jason Green asked if exact changes are identified. Mr. McCollum replied yes. Mr. Gogoi referenced the FDOT study on San Carlos and asked for specific numbers to be passed to FDOT. Mr. McCollum said he is in coordination with Mr. John Starling and Mr. D'Juan Harris on placement, and they have also met in the field. Mr. Scott asked if LeeTran was involved with proposals by FDOT's consultants. Mr. McCollum said he was aware, and they are in contact. Mr. Green asked if Fort Myers Beach could get the changes. Mr. McCollum said he would forward them to Mr. Green. Mr. McCollum then showed slides on Tools and Data that LeeTran uses, Analysis and Recommendations, Title VI Implications, Inconsistent Scheduling, and Considerations. He asked if there were any questions or comments. Ms. Peters asked if the presentation could be made available. Mr. McCollum replied yes. Chair Karakos commented that transit was down around the country. Mr. McCollum agreed, referencing a white paper on causes. Mr. Scott noted that while buses are down for ridership, rail is up. He also noted that Uber and other alternatives have an impact. Mr. McCollum agreed that ride hailing has usurped ridership. He added they are trying to figure out a better model, but it is difficult in our spread out suburban environment. Mr. Scott said we don't know all of the trips, but we are using modeling to try and figure out. Mr. Eric Ortman asked why rail was up? Mr. Scott said it has to do with not competing with existing auto traffic like added Uber trips, in its own right-of-way. Mr. McCollum added that a fixed guideway is a huge factor for rail's success. He said the buses must use the same roadway as the other vehicles. Mr. Scott mentioned ebikes are becoming popular and there is even an app that takes all the modes into consideration and what would be a better way to take that trip. There was a brief discussion on investing in rail. Mr. Richard Perdue asked if the lack of shelters has been examined as a factor for decreased ridership. Mr. McCollum said it hasn't been measured. He said they know it is an issue and are constructing new shelters in 2019 and are also making existing shelters ADA compliant. Ms. Zambrano asked if this information was communicated to Mr. Kanell. Mr. Scott said yes, he was currently on the phone listening. He added that Mr. Kanell also had a presentation for the TAC. Ms. Alicia Dixon thanked LeeTran for their support of RSW and asked to be notified of any changes.

### **Agenda Item #3 - FDOT Report**

Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT gave the FDOT report. She said she was filling in for Mr. D’Juan Harris as he was currently in Tallahassee. She noted there was an epublic hearing for the new work program December 3 – 7, 2018. She added that Mr. Harris will be at the Lakes Regional Library on December 3 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to answer any questions regarding the work program. She also announced there would be an FDOT sponsored mobility week October 27 through November 3. She said she would present more information as it became available. Mr. Gogoi mentioned FDOT’s Commuter Services was coordinating with the Lehigh Fire Department for an event during that week.

### **Old Business**

### **Agenda Item #4 - Follow up Transit Recommendations Video by Thomas Kanell**

Mr. Scott introduced Mr. Thomas Kanell, present via speaker phone, and a video that Mr. Kanell made regarding recommendations to the transit system in Lee County. The video can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/A3zLZR4aGEO> After viewing the video, Mr. McCollum commented that LeeTran currently uses the pulse system. He also noted that his earlier presentation pointed out examples of Mr. Kanell’s recommendations that did not work. Chair Karakos asked Mr. Kanell what he hoped to gain from this. Mr. Kanell responded that his plan is a work of art, and he would like to see it used. Chair Karakos commended Mr. Kanell for his effort. Mr. Kanell said that this was a search for the truth as LeeTran gives responses but the Commissioners are not happy. There was a brief discussion on the work session and programming. Mr. Scott noted that transit ridership is down, Collier is down and transit was changing. He referenced the SIS presentation that was given and that I-75 won’t be widened for 25 – 30 years, adding that these trips need to be addressed. Mr. Green commented on the reason for trips and different land uses. Mr. McCollum noted there were several transit systems compared to LeeTran and LeeTran does better in some categories and not in others. Mr. Scott gave examples of some of the peer comparisons. Chair Karakos asked how the trips would be slowed down. Mr. Kanell explained. Mr. Scott noted that when the transit element is updated, a lack of funding must be considered as that is what drove the previous plans that were done. Mr. Kanell said he wanted to show another alternative for transit in Lee County. Mr. Ortman asked if Collier had done an analysis of before and after the pulse system. Mr. Scott said he was unsure.

### **New Business**

### **Agenda Item #5 - \*Review and Approval of the September 6, 2018 TAC Meeting Summary**

**Mr. Andy Getch made the motion to approve the September 6, 2018 Meeting Summary. Mr. Jason Green seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion carried unanimously.**

### **Agenda Item #6 - +Review and Comment on the Draft Joint Regional Lee Collier Coordination Agreement**

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the draft Joint Regional Lee and Collier Coordination Agreement that was attached to the agenda packet. He handed out an updated version. Mr. Scott noted that the Collier MPO had previously revised the Joint Regional Coordination Agreement but at their last MPO Board meeting there were discussions regarding some additional changes, like not meeting every year. He added the Lee MPO staff has made a few additional changes, in underline and strike through format. He commented that at the last two meetings one side did not have a quorum. He said this will also go for the TAC/CAC, and they will not meet jointly with Collier unless there is something to present. Mr. Getch asked about the LRTP updates. Mr. Scott said that will require joint coordination, as will I-75. Mr. Getch said he supported meeting on an as needed basis. Mr. Scott asked if there were any further comments or questions. Mr. Ortman noted the Collier Board was fine with meeting on an as needed basis. He said it will go back through the attorneys as well.

**Ms. Persides Zambrano made the motion to approve the Draft Joint Regional Lee Collier Coordination Agreement. Mr. Andy Getch seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Agenda Item #7 - \*Approve the Support of the Annual FDOT Safety Targets**

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item to approve the support of the Annual FDOT Safety Targets. The annual FDOT safety performance targets were attached to the agenda packet and shown as slides at the meeting. Mr. Scott said the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is requiring that the FDOT and the MPOs around the State take action on setting the various performance measure targets each year and to also meet the reporting requirements that goes along with this. He noted earlier this year, the MPO took action to support FDOT's safety targets for 2018 and for 2019 FDOT has notified the MPO that they are staying with the vision zero target for all five safety measures. He said the MPO has until February 27, 2019 to accept FDOT's targets or to come up with their own and report on those. He referred to the safety performance measures that apply to all public roads including number of fatalities, rate of fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT, and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. Mr. Scott showed slides on crash stats including pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle injuries and fatalities. He said the MPO recommends adopting the same targets as FDOT. He added this will be brought back each year. Ms. Peters suggested it should be brought back every two years. There was a brief discussion on data. Mr. Scott restated that the MPO is recommending adopting FDOT's targets again.

**Ms. Persides Zambrano made the motion to approve the support of the Annual FDOT Safety Targets. Mr. Eric Ortman seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Agenda Item #8 - Presentation on Electric Bicycle, Scooters**

Mr. Ron Gogoi presented this agenda item on electric bicycles and scooters. He said we are now seeing a growing number of electric bikes on Lee County roadways. Mr. Gogoi's entire presentation can be viewed here: <http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/E-bike-and-Scooter-2-Revised.pptx> He showed slides on and discussed ebike sales, ebike regulation, Florida statutes, and safety concerns. Chair Karakos asked why ebikes are illegal. Mr. Gogoi replied they can't be driven on the roadway as they don't have the proper safety equipment like headlamps and fenders. He added that they don't have license or insurance requirements. Mr. Green said the other challenge is consistency with ADA regulations. He said Fort Myers Beach is rewriting their policy to accommodate. Mr. Scott noted there is already difficulty with enforcement. Mr. Gogoi continued his presentation with a slide on mobility service comparisons. Ms. Zambrano asked if any local municipality has received calls on bike sharing. Mr. Getch replied yes, three years ago. Mr. Craig Chandler said to his knowledge, Sanibel has not, but Zipcar did apply and was denied. Ms. Zambrano said that Cape Coral has been approached. Mr. Gogoi continued his presentation with slides on scooter shared mobility programs, business models, Florida local government legislation, public perception of scooters, and safety concerns. Mr. McCollum added there was the first fatality on a scooter. Mr. Gogoi said China is a pioneer and introduced ebikes as they are safer than motorcycles. Chair Karakos asked if the steel tariff is impacting the pricing. Mr. Scott said it already has from what they are hearing from bike shops. Mr. Ortman asked where these can be ridden now. Mr. Scott said as long as they are pedal assist, they can ride on the sidewalk. Mr. Scott said most crashes occur coming out of side streets. Mr. Getch agreed, noting it even happens on regular bicycles. Mr. Scott asked if there were LeeTran restrictions regarding placing the ebikes on the front of the bus like a regular bicycle. Mr. McCollum said as long as it fits in the rack, no. He said there might be some restrictions for bringing batteries on the bus. Mr. Scott said the mobility side is good, but where do they ride them in the future. Mr. Green said that is the problem that Fort Myers Beach is having.

### **Agenda Item #9 - Review and Discuss the Preliminary Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Analysis**

Mr. Scott asked if the TAC would like to table this item until the next meeting in the interest of time. Chair Karakos asked if there was a motion.

**Mr. Andy Getch made the motion to table Agenda Item #9, Review and Discussion of the Preliminary Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Analysis. Mr. Jason Green seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion carried unanimously.**

## Other Business

### **Agenda Item #10 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda**

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda. Ms. Nora Demers introduced herself. She commented on an FGCU assignment on public transit where it took a student seven hours to get to the university from Cape Coral using LeeTran. She suggested there should be better efficiency in meet ups added to the LRTP. She acknowledged this may not be the best venue for Mr. Kanell's rebuttal. She applauded the increases at Merchant's Crossing mentioned in Mr. McCollum's presentation, but added that more can be done. Chair Karakos asked if the request was being made to LeeTran or Lee County. Ms. Demers said the request was for the MPO to add language to the LRTP. She said this direction that the criteria isn't part of the plan and should be added as a first step came from Mr. Wayne Daltry. Mr. Getch noted that the Lee County Commissioners have the final say. He added that what is being suggested is a major overhaul of the system and requires extensive evaluation. He said this committee may not be the appropriate place for this discussion. Mr. Scott noted that Mr. Daltry had it included in goals and objectives. Mr. Getch commented that performance measures are based on federal funding criteria, and the Commissioners can direct LeeTran to evaluate new plans. Chair Karakos suggested going to the Commissioners. Mr. Green questioned how to make a recommendation without a complete overhaul. Mr. Scott said funding dictates what gets done. He said we may be able to add some parts to the transit element. Mr. Green noted the disconnect comes when there is a runaround situation, and he requested this committee break the cycle by taking some action. There was a brief discussion on the update of the TDP. Ms. Zambrano suggested bringing in a consultant. Mr. Scott said that might be possible when the transit element is done. Ms. Zambrano gave the example of a Cape resident that had an idea, and Cape had to hire a consultant to evaluate. Mr. Gogoi asked if it was determined to be any merit to the idea. Ms. Zambrano replied no. Chair Karakos asked if Mr. Kanell's study had been addressed. Mr. McCollum said yes, just not in a formal report. Ms. Demers said that there is a problem with LeeTran having no intention of analyzing Mr. Kanell's report. Ms. Zambrano said there is a need for someone to put together the data and analyze. Chair Karakos asked if Lee County had a formal response system. Mr. Getch said there is a request for action system. He questioned if LeeTran was expected to provide an analysis for every citizen that makes a suggestion. Mr. McCollum said they are adding service and making improvements. Chair Karakos asked if FGCU could conduct the study. Ms. Demers suggested the Southwest Florida Community Foundation might be able to assist.

Mr. Richard Perdue said there was a public comment asking if there would be sidewalks or lighting added on the curve on Barrett Road. Mr. Getch noted the Lee County BPAC is the venue to address that request. He added that Barrett Road is on the list. He suggested contacting Mr. David Wagley, noting Ms. Nena Garrett has his contact information.

### **Agenda Item #11 - Announcements**

Mr. Scott announced the November meetings would be cancelled.

### **Agenda Item #12 - Topics for next meeting**

There were no topics suggested for next meeting.

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

Mr. Scott briefly referenced the information provided regarding the use of temporary roundabouts after the hurricane in Wilmington, N.C.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.**

\*Action Items    \*May Require Action

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