

MEETING MINUTES

**LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED of the
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
REGULAR MEETING**

**Board of County Commission Chambers
Collier County Government Center
3299 Tamiami Trail East, 3rd Floor
Naples, FL 34112
December 1, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

****Virtual participation via ZOOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Solis – called the meeting to order at 1:37 pm.

1.A. Roll Call

Ms. Bates called roll a quorum was present in the room. **Ms. Otero** asked for a vote to allow members to participate remotely due to extenuating circumstances.

Ms. Corris moved to allow members to participate remotely due to extenuating circumstances. Ms. Hanson seconded. Passed unanimously.

Members Present In-person

Commissioner Solis, Chair
Dale Hanson, FDOT
Susan Corris, SWFL Regional Workforce Development Board, Vice-Chairperson
Alana Watson, Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
Sherry Brenner, Disabled [arrived 5D]

Members Participating Remotely

Anne Chernin, Elderly
Leah Watson, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Jocelyn Schafer, Representative for Children at Risk

Members Absent

Maricela Morado, Area Agency on Aging SWFL-FL Dept. of Elder Affairs
John Kasten, Public Education
Dylan Vogel, Citizens Advocate/User
Robert Richards, Florida Dept. of Education, Div. of Voc. Rehab.
Tabitha Larrauri, Florida Department of Children and Family Services
Eileen Streight, Citizens Advocate/Non-User
Oscar Gomez, Veterans Services
Cheryl Burnham, Florida Association for Community Action

MPO Staff

Brandy Otero, Principal Planner
Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director
Danielle Bates, Administrative Assistant

Others Present

Omar DeLeon, Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE), Transit Manager
Michelle Arnold, Director, PTNE
Elena Ortiz-Rosado, PTNE
Alex Showalter, PTNE
Braian Morales, MV Transportation
John Poole, Citizen
Rick Hart, Citizen

1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Solis lead the Pledge of Allegiance

2. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Corris moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Hanson seconded. Passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Corris moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for September 1, 2021. Ms. Hanson seconded. Passed unanimously.

5. BOARD ACTION

5.A. Review of Annual Operating Report

Mr. DeLeon: After the last meeting the AOR was submitted to the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission (TDC), they approved report, it now needs final approval. There were no questions or comments from the TDC. **Mr. DeLeon confirmed Commissioner Solis's question**, it's the same report as before with no changes.

Ms. L. Watson moved to approve. Ms. Corris seconded. Passed unanimously.

5.B. Approval of Update to LCB Grievance Procedures

Ms. Otero: This is the annual update to the grievance procedures. The TD Planning grant requires that the procedures be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. This Grievance Procedures provide guidance for citizens with grievances, and the only changes were to define the designated planning agency and included a timeline of 30 days for the hearing date. PTNE

pointed out that there was no timeline. It also stated if CAT receives a grievance, they send out a copy of the LCB grievance procedures notifying riders of their rights.

Commissioner Solis moved to approve. Ms. A. Watson seconded. Passed unanimously.

5.C. Appointment of LCB Grievance Committee Member

Ms. Otero: The Grievance Committee requires three members, there are currently two members on the committee, Commissioner Solis, and Ms. Corris, we need one more person to volunteer. We need one in place if there was a grievance filed.

Ms. A. Watson: I will volunteer.

Ms. L. Watson moved to approve. Ms. Corris seconded. Passed unanimously.

5.D. Review of TD Trip Prioritization

Mr. DeLeon: This is an update to the prioritization approved last meeting. We implemented the priorities in the TDSP with a slight modification. This is an update of how it's working. We wanted to flatten the use of the service throughout the week. We tried negotiating to accommodate capacity. Hoping to increase on-time performance and reliability for medical, employment, and education trips. October has a notable difference with a more even distribution of trips. We encouraged riders to ride on weekends where there is more availability if they aren't medical or employment trips. The peaks are 7am-9am and 1pm-4pm. Our attempt was to even that out and have more trips than with flexible trips. This helps with reliability, it's making improvements. The last chart [in the attachments in the agenda packet] gives you an idea of how many trips were denied and completed. We found when this was put into action social was at #5 and nutritional was #4, one of the recommendations was to do a swap. When working with agencies and facilities with adult daycare or services for people with disabilities they are on more of a fixed time with not much flexibility. The thoughts were to swap those priorities then that allows for negotiation but gives social trips more priority. The other recommendation is to continue with this priority list as we hire more drivers. On October 26 an amendment went to the Board of County Commissioners and was approved for MV to increase the rated for the operators, there has been more attraction. They still must go through training after hired.

Mr. Pool: I am a regular traveler to doctor appointments, I do a lot of talking to the drivers. It seems like one of the biggest challenges is the rate you're paying them and there's too few drivers, so they do too much overtime. They could go to Amazon for better money and structure. Is there any way to highlight that pay raise?

Mr. DeLeon: The pay rate was approved. It's two steps, bring in drivers and bring in enough to alleviate pressure. It's mostly senior drivers working a lot of hours now.

Mr. Braian Morales: The rates are \$17.10 up from \$13.38 for paratransit and \$21 for CDL holders up from \$13.38. We're seeing movement on CDL side, there are 3 who just started classes and 2 starting soon. The biggest obstacle is ability to change. By the time it comes to the board the market has changed. Amazon has changed their rate 3-4 times since moving into the warehouse on Davis Blvd, and they can change quickly. The way the business is structured, on-demand, it's hard to keep that in certain boundaries because we don't know what the boundaries are until 5pm the night before. The drivers receive rate of pay effective 11/1 but there was a delay in the incentive part as it is a two-tier approach. Back pay was processed this week. As we expand in one part of service, like fixed route, we pull from the other to help with

paratransit. I have been on the road myself. Managers are helping with training, we do interviews on the spot, we train every Monday, we have two trainers coming from a sister property in St. Lucie to help. We require one on one on the road training for 42 hours. Then they go to cadets, but that is done with current drivers. We're using all resources we have.

Commissioner Solis: It sounds like the increase did generate interest. If we need to move quickly, we'll try to expedite.

Ms. Chernin: I'm with the Naples Senior Center, I'm very pleased that social has moved up to 4 however, I would like to advocate to move maybe even to number 3. The impression is that social is strictly social activities, but it enables seniors to get out and come to places like the Naples Senior Center and Golden Gate for social activities but also for dementia respite programs and adult daycare programs. We're dealing with tremendous social isolation which has escalated, this is a huge concern. Would like to consider making it higher. We frequently hear from people who don't want to ride paratransit because of long wait times and length of drives. Changing social priority to a higher level would improve it.

Commissioner Solis: Is this coming back? Is this an ongoing process that is being constantly evaluated?

Mr. DeLeon: We can bring it back with inputs and evaluate the different trip types. The top tiers are competitive. We could move forward with the recommended change, go through that for a bit, then bring it back modify if needed.

Ms. Chernin: Agree to bringing it back, I'm pleased it's moving up. Want to advocate to continue looking at if we're able to meet the needs of the seniors. There's a contingency of seniors who can't ride because of barriers.

Mr. DeLeon: Once we have more drivers the priority list will fade away because the services will be provided

Commissioner Solis: We will continue to bring this forward in in March? We'll see the difference with more drivers.

Ms. Otero: March is the public hearing too, so we advertise that in buses, dialysis centers, etc, so you may get more public input.

Ms. Corris moved to approve. Ms. Watson seconded. Passed unanimously.

5.E. Review and Endorsement of FTA §5311 and §5339 Grant Applications

Mr. DeLeon: There are two applications for Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 and 5339 grant funds, they're applied through FDOT. Historically we've applied for operating costs, the change is 5311 grant for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) were identified for operating cost. 5311 standard grants were recommended to look at vehicle replacements to maintain capital replacement. The 5311 application is for a fixed route bus and a utility truck. For 5339 we're applying for the purchase of a fixed route purchase and bus stop ADA improvements, bus shelters. It's for the design of 6 stops. The difference in the grants is that the local share is 30% for 5311, and for 5339 it is a 20% state share and we're looking at transit development credits to cover the match. Looking for your endorsement to submit these grants.

Ms. Hanson: I must abstain from voting because FDOT is a reviewer of these grants.

Ms. A. Watson moved to approve. Commissioner Solis seconded. Passed 7-0 with Ms. Hanson abstaining.

6. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

6.A. CTC Quarterly Report

Mr. DeLeon: These stats look at July, August, and September. There were 6,230 trips in July. The averages were 255 trips on weekdays, 99 on Saturdays, and 41 on Sundays. The operator shortages took effect, there was a decrease on on-time this year due to staff shortage. In August there was a decrease of 17% on on-time performance. There were 5,981 trips in August. We implemented new software, when you look at efficiency and passengers per hour, we saw positive effects. Last year in September there was 1.48 vs 1.88 passenger per trip in September of this year. There were 5,638 trips in September this year. We had a decline in 2020, but saw an increase to normal levels, just under 6000 trips per month since August. Vehicle hours and revenue hours follow the same trends. For reliability and efficiency note the increase in passenger per hour but decrease in on-time performance starting in July.

Commissioner Solis: Is that due to the driver shortage?

Mr. DeLeon: Yes, we were having a hard time keeping up with demand. We experienced some no-shows, but no one is suspended. A no show is when driver gets there and rider is not getting on, 3 no-shows in a certain amount of time are needed for suspension. Missed trips are a result of the driver shortage, we make every attempt but if they are too late and can't make their appointment it is a missed trip. We saw an increase in on-time performance for work and medical trips but since July there's be a decrease.

Ms. Arnold: Work and medical trips have a different standard, it's a 30-minute time frame, we can't get them there too early or late.

Mr. DeLeon: The last report is the complaints/accommodations, it's an effect of the driver shortage, there's an increase in complaints and not meeting standards. Individuals can complain, we investigate and look into all, a lot are due to shortages, not getting people to their appointments on time.

Ms. Arnold: Most complaints are valid, people aren't just calling and complaining.

Mr. DeLeon: Not where we want to be, but we're working on it, hiring the drivers should help.

Commissioner Solis: Pay increase may generate more interest to help.

6.B. MPO Quarterly Progress Report

Ms. Otero: This an update is for grant deliverables. This is beginning of the fiscal year with state, so the only item completed and invoiced for is the Actual Expenditure Report. Other tasks are pending.

6.C. FDOT Report

Ms. Hanson: Notification of Grant Awards for 5310 and 5339 have been sent to all agencies. Public Transportation Grant Agreements will be sent to Agencies between October and March. Collier Area Transit will be awarded: Section 5311 operating funds to provide transit in the rural areas, Section 5310 capital funding to purchase vehicles to transport Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, and Section 5339 capital funds for ADA bus stop improvements. Grant applications for this cycle are due

Friday, December 17, 2021. Every three years there are triennial reviews on recipients of federal funds, they started February 2021, 5310 is being reviewed specifically, due to COVID they are virtual, the consultants are Center Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) and Atkins. The upcoming reviews are for Sunrise Community of Southwest Florida, Inc and Easter Seals of Florida.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

None.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 2, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Solis adjourned the meeting at 2:24 pm.