

**Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization
Board of County Commission Chambers
Collier County Government Center
3299 Tamiami Trail East, 3rd Floor
Naples, FL 34112
February 9, 2024 | 9:30 a.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

****HYBRID REMOTE – IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Folley called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Ms. Hansen called roll and confirmed a quorum was present in the room.

Members Present (in BCC Chambers)

Commissioner William L. McDaniel, Jr., Collier County BCC District 5 (*Chair as of item 9.A.*)

Commissioner Dan Kowal, Collier County BCC District 4 (*Vice-Chair as of item 9.A.*)

Council Member Greg Folley, Chair, City of Marco Island (*left during item 10.B.*)

Council Member Paul Perry, City of Naples

Council Member Ted Blankenship, City of Naples

Council Member Tony Pernas, Everglades City

Members Absent

Commissioner Burt Saunders, Collier County BCC District 3

Commissioner Chris Hall, Vice-Chair, Collier County BCC District 2

Commissioner Rick LoCastro, Collier County BCC District 1

MPO Staff

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director

Sean Kingston, Principal Planner

Dusty Hansen, Senior Planner

Suzanne Miceli, Administrative Support Specialist II

FDOT

Wayne Gaither, Manager, District 1 Southwest Area Office

Victoria Peters, Community Liaison (*arrived during item 5*)

Pam Barr, Planning Specialist

FDOT via Zoom

Babuji Ambikapathy, Transportation Systems Chief Engineer

Others Present

Scott Teach, Esq., Deputy County Attorney

Trinity Scott, Department Head, Collier County Transportation Mgmt. Services

Lorraine Lantz, Manager, Collier County Transportation Planning, TAC Chair

Anthony Matonti, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Chair

Riley Kempton, Quest Corporation

Michelle Avola-Brown, Naples Pathways Coalition

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Folley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, PREVIOUS MINUTES AND CONSENT ITEMS

Ms. McLaughlin proposed to amend the agenda by moving item 9.A., Elect Chair and Vice-Chair, ahead of item 5, as Chair Folley needed to depart early.

Commissioner McDaniel moved to approve the amended agenda and Commissioner Kowal seconded. Passed unanimously.

4.A. December 8, 2023 MPO Morning Meeting Minutes

Council Member Perry moved to approve the Morning Special Meeting Minutes and Council Member Pernas seconded. Passed unanimously.

4.B. December 8, 2023 MPO Afternoon Meeting Minutes

Council Member Perry moved to approve the Afternoon Regular Meeting Minutes and Commissioner McDaniel seconded. Passed unanimously.

4.C. Approve Change Order 1 for Jacobs Engineering Group for the Collier Area Transit Regional Service and Regional Fare Study

Council Member Perry moved to ratify the Consent Item, and Council Member Pernas seconded. Passed unanimously.

**Item 9.A. was heard after Item 4.C., as per the amended Agenda. Commissioner McDaniel was elected MPO Chair and Commissioner Kowal was elected MPO Vice-Chair. They assumed their roles as of Item 5.*

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Avola-Brown mentioned that a sponsor had been obtained for House Bill 1469, which would

extend requirements for hands-free cell phone use to all roads from school and construction zone only. Senate Bill 1664 also gained a sponsor with progress in the House of Representatives. Ms. Avola-Brown testified in Tallahassee at various committees on behalf of the bills and received unanimous support. She explained that on average, 9 people die every day on Florida roads, and that 6 of those fatalities are attributed to distracted driving. Drivers who text behind the wheel are 23 times more likely to be in a crash or near miss and Florida has one of the highest road fatality rates in the country. In a study from 2020-2022, it was shown that there has been a 5 second per hour increase in phone interactions in Florida, resulting in 3500 additional crashes. Ohio recently passed hands-free legislature and saw a 25% percent drop in road fatalities. A 2023 study, where drivers opted in to have a phone app track their phone use while driving, showed that 34% of drivers were interacting with their phones when crashes occurred. Hands-free phone use requirements could stop one-third of yearly crashes in Florida, saving over a thousand lives per year and preventing 86,000 injuries. 29 other states have enforceable hands-free legislation. She asked that the Board support the message of distraction-free driving.

Successor Chair McDaniel mentioned that he was a supporter of legislation that passed several years ago which enabled law enforcement to apprehend distracted drivers. He applauded Ms. Avola-Brown on her efforts.

Council Member Perry asked about the statistics of the reduction of crashes in states which had passed enforceable hands-free legislation.

Ms. Avola-Brown said that across the board, within a 3-to-6-month average, there was a 15-20% reduction of crashes and crash fatalities.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal mentioned that as a retired Law Enforcement Officer, when the texting and driving statute passed in Florida several years ago, it was positively received by Law Enforcement. They started with education and then moved on to citing drivers. Many drivers were able to find loopholes in the statute, so he applauded Ms. Avola-Brown for her efforts to update the legislation necessary to make phone use while driving citations more enforceable. **Successor Vice-Chair Kowal** continued by saying that the legislation would also improve traffic congestion.

A group discussion followed regarding the improvements that enforceable hands-free legislation would make to traffic and safety.

6. AGENCY UPDATES

6.A. FDOT

Mr. Gaither said FDOT was in session with state legislature and member projects were being addressed, noting a project in Collier County being among them. FDOT wanted to stress that the funding mechanism used for earmarked projects either comes from the state General Fund (GF) or Transportation Trust Fund (TTF), and when funding comes from the TTF, no funds can be added to complete projects. It has been anticipated that the TTF being adopted as part of FDOT's Work Program will have to be amended to fiscally accommodate earmarked funds. The GF come from a different source and have no impact on the

Work Program or budget currently in place for the Five-Year Work Program. Mr. Gaither added that it is helpful if the state legislature knows that the General Fund is a benefit to our local communities and allows FDOT to continue forward with their transportation projects.

Ms. Peters announced that FDOT was honoring Crossing Guard Appreciation Day on February 2, 2024, and thanked the “guardians of safety” for their service. Project updates were that S.R. 82 from Hendry County Line to Gator Slough Lane, which includes a shared-use path, was on track to begin the construction bidding process in May 2024.

Successor Chair McDaniel commented that the project would greatly benefit the eastern portion of the County, along with the Moving Florida Forward (MFF) initiative.

Ms. Peters also mentioned that the interchange improvement project at I-75 and 951 had begun and the noise wall was almost complete. Construction had started - driving piles for the northbound overpass on Collier Blvd over Beck Blvd, and the southbound overpass improvements were scheduled to begin next month. Ms. Peters said that FDOT was pursuing a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study for the Immokalee Road Interchange to see if funding would allow for a widening of the road. MFF project updates included the Golden Gate to Corkscrew PD&E design contract being executed and construction funding was planned for FY 2027, Pine Ridge was scheduled for construction bidding in October 2024, S.R. 29 from C.R. 846 East to New Market Road phase one plans had been reviewed and the next phase would be design and construction likely in FY 2027, and phase one plans for S.R. 29 from New Market Road to S.R. 82 had also been reviewed and the design and construction would likely be funded in FY 2027. Ms. Peters finished by saying that FDOT extended congratulations to Anne McLaughlin and the Collier MPO team on the successful outcome of their OIG audit. She asked if there were questions.

Council Member Blankenship asked if FDOT and the state legislature had identified a replacement funding source for the decline of gas tax funds due to the electric vehicle and alternative fuel incentives.

Mr. Gaither responded by saying there was no concrete funding replacement source in place at the time, but that there had been discussion regarding the subject, and that FDOT was preparing for those efforts.

Council Member Blankenship remarked that it’s a fairness issue because people are being given incentives by the federal government to purchase electric vehicles, but without a gas tax funding source replacement, they are not contributing to the upkeep of the road facilities they use.

Mr. Gaither said there was legislation being written with electric vehicles identified to incur a potential additional tax, including a sliding scale for hybrid vehicles, with those funds being funneled into the TTF.

Council Member Blankenship asked if the money would go into the state trust fund or if counties and municipalities would get a share.

Mr. Gaither said he believed the funds would be utilized the same way the gas tax funds had been used, but that he would research the question and send a copy of the legislation to Ms. McLaughlin and the Board.

Council Member Blankenship suggested that the other Board members also might want to follow up, as each would need money available to repair and build new roads.

Chair Folley noted that electric vehicles are heavier and therefore cause more wear and tear to the roads. His perception was that electric vehicles are not being utilized by consumers, citing car dealerships in Marco Island with unpurchased electric vehicles.

Mr. Gaither wanted to add to the previously mentioned OIG audit Collier MPO had recently completed by stating it was a routine audit that all MPOs would be asked to complete, but Ms. McLaughlin was the test pilot and first one to complete it.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal added to Chair Folley's comment that electric vehicles are heavier and cause more wear and tear to the roads, by mentioning that large electric vehicles and trucks are so heavy they break through standard roadway safety rails and barriers during accidents, and that building stronger safety barriers along the roads will need to be addressed and added to budget costs.

Mr. Gaither said he would bring Commissioner Kowal's comment to the safety crew in Tallahassee to see if there was any action being taken regarding this issue, and report back at the next Board meeting.

Successor Chair McDaniel requested that in the meantime, Ms. McLaughlin investigate the status of the legislation, as there had been much discussion regarding gas tax revenue replacement and ways those funds might be allocated to municipalities when he attended the last Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting.

Successor Chair McDaniel asked Ms. Peters for an update on S.R. 29 and Oil Well Rd.

Ms. Peters said that as far as she understood, FDOT safety and traffic operations staff had been working with Collier County and started the process of implementing safety-focused, traffic-related signs and/or signals.

Successor Chair McDaniel requested that lighting be improved at the location to improve safety.

Ms. Peters said she would investigate the details of the project and provide an update later in the meeting.

**During Item 11, Ms. Peters informed Successor Chair McDaniel that the project included adding oversized intersection signs, stop signs, beacons, rumble strips and other safety equipment on S.R. 29. Referring to the Commissioner's request for lighting, Ms. Peters recommended that lighting be added to Collier MPO's priority list.*

6.B. MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. McLaughlin mentioned that the 2024 MPOAC Weekend Institute announcement flyer had been placed at the seat of each Board member, and that there were a few different weekend dates being offered for anyone interested in taking the course.

7. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Successor Chair McDaniel suggested that since each Chair Report was included in writing in the MPO agenda packet, that unless a committee chair had something additional to add, the written reports would suffice for presentation.

Ms. McLaughlin mentioned that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) citizen-volunteer chair, Mr. Matonti, was present with the intention of addressing the Board, and that she would like to give him the opportunity.

7.A. CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

7.A.1. Citizens Advisory Committee Chair Report

Report presented in writing.

7.B. TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

7.B.1. Technical Advisory Committee Chair Report

Report presented in writing.

7.C. BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)

7.C.1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Chair Report

Mr. Matonti said that the 2024 BPAC chair and vice-chair had been elected. He thanked outgoing BPAC Vice-Chair Patty Huff and extended his congratulations to newly elected BPAC Vice-Chair Michelle Sproviero. He informed the Board that he had been re-elected as BPAC Chair. **Mr. Matonti** also wanted to recognize BPAC members who have long served on the committee, including Andrea Halman, Alan Musico, Dayna Fendrick, Joe Bonness, and Patty Huff, and recognize newer BPAC members such as, Kim Jacob, Mark Komanecky and Robert Phelan. He thanked outgoing member, George Dondanville for his service, and said he looked forward to welcoming new members. He thanked the BPAC members for their time and effort and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as BPAC Chair. **Mr. Matonti** mentioned that he recently attended his Commissioner District meeting and learned that the County budget was approximately \$2 billion, saying he felt excited imagining the bicycle and pedestrian projects that

could be built from just a half of a percent of the budget. He asked if there were any questions.

Chair Folley mentioned that he has received many complaints regarding e-bikes on shared-use paths on Marco Island due to speed, and asked Mr. Matonti if BPAC had discussed the issue or was aware of such complaints.

Mr. Matonti said BPAC had discussed the issue at meetings where Collier County Sherriff Department was in attendance, and said it is a topic which needs to be addressed.

Successor Chair McDaniel suggested that Mr. Matonti discuss it thoroughly at a BPAC meeting with the Sherriff's Department and return to the MPO Board with some possible solutions for discussion.

7.D. CONGESTION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CMC)

7.D.1. Congestion Management Committee Chair Report

Report presented in writing.

7.E. LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD (LCB)

7.E.1. Local Coordinating Board Chair Report

None.

Successor Chair McDaniel requested that the Advisory Committee Chair Reports include a list of all committee member names moving forward. **Ms. McLaughlin** confirmed that the request would be implemented beginning with the next published MPO Board agenda packet.

Council Member Blankenship requested that Advisory Committee vacancies also be included in the report so that the Board members might assist in filling those vacancies with the relevant constituents.

8. REGULAR BOARD ACTION (ROLL CALL REQUIRED)

8.A. Approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution to add five transit projects

Mr. Kingston said the item being presented was for the Board to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Collier MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Authorizing Resolution which would add five transit projects. FDOT requested Collier MPO to amend its FY 2024-2028 TIP to include a capital for fixed transit route project for the replacement of a fixed route bus, an urban corridor improvement project for operating funds to support bus routes on state roadways, and three capital for fixed transit route projects, which include the replacement of two fixed route buses and a new support vehicle. Collier MPO followed the TIP Amendment public involvement process outlined in Collier MPO's Public

Participation Plan by presenting the Amendment for endorsement to Technical and the Citizens Advisory Committees (TAC/CAC) and announcing a public comment period on the MPO website as well as via e-mail to applicable list-serve(s). The comment period began on January 12, 2024, and ended with the MPO Board meeting on February 9, 2024. TAC and CAC voted to endorse the Amendment at their January 22, 2024, meetings.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal moved to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution to add five transit project and Council Member Blankenship seconded.

Roll Call Vote.

Council Member Blankenship – Yes

Council Member Folley - Yes

Commissioner Kowal – Yes

Commissioner McDaniel – Yes

Council Member Pernas - Yes

Council Member Perry - Yes

Passed unanimously.

8.B. Approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution for South Golf Drive

Mr. Kingston said the item was being presented for the MPO Board to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Collier MPO TIP and Authorizing Resolution to revise a project and add a project on South Golf Drive regarding bicycle and pedestrian matters. FDOT has requested that Collier MPO amend its FY 2024-2028 TIP for the South Golf Drive bicycle/ pedestrian project to add a new project number for the construction phase and make a correction to the Transportation System and Roadway ID and beginning/ending mileposts. The original TIP project sheet for FPN 440437-1 has been revised and a new TIP project sheet for segment -2 has been added. The construction phase has been moved from segment -1 to -2, authorized with a different Federal Aid Number. Collier MPO followed the TIP Amendment public involvement process outlined in Collier MPO’s Public Participation Plan by presenting the Amendment for endorsement to the Technical and the Citizens Advisory Committees (TAC/CAC) and announcing a public comment period on the MPO website as well as via e-mail to applicable list-serve(s). The comment period began on January 16, 2024, and ended with the MPO Board meeting on February 9, 2024. TAC and CAC voted to endorse the Amendment at their January 22, 2024, meetings. Staff recommended approval.

Council Member Blankenship moved to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution for South Golf Drive and Successor Vice-Chair Kowal seconded.

Roll Call Vote.

Council Member Blankenship – Yes
Council Member Folley - Yes
Commissioner Kowal – Yes
Commissioner McDaniel – Yes
Council Member Pernas - Yes
Council Member Perry - Yes

Passed unanimously.

8.C. Approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution for State Road 82

Mr. Kingston explained that this item was being presented for the MPO Board to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Collier MPO TIP and Authorizing Resolution to include a project adding lanes and reconstructing State Road 82 from the Hendry County Line to Gator Slough Lane. FDOT requested that Collier MPO amend its FY 2024-2028 TIP to include this project previously from the FY 2023-2027 TIP. Toward the end of FY 23, the project’s construction phase was deferred to FY 24 and therefore not included in the TIP download files. The State Road 82 project is being added to the current TIP to receive federal funds for the final phase of the final segment of the road widening. FDOT’s amendment request was made after the Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees’ (TAC/CAC) January 22, 2024 meeting. Under Collier MPO’s Public Participation Plan, “Exceptions to Notification Commitments” allows staff to bring proposed actions to the Board on which TAC and CAC have not had the opportunity to review or comment when in response to a request by FDOT to act quickly. Otherwise, Collier MPO followed the TIP Amendment public involvement process outlined in Collier MPO’s Public Participation Plan by announcing a public comment period on the MPO website as well as via e-mail to applicable list-serve(s). The comment period began on January 30, 2024, and ended with the MPO Board meeting on February 9, 2024.

Council Member Pernas moved to approve an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution for State Road 82 and Council Member Perry seconded.

Roll Call Vote.

Council Member Blankenship – Yes
Council Member Folley - Yes
Commissioner Kowal – Yes
Commissioner McDaniel – Yes
Council Member Pernas - Yes
Council Member Perry - Yes

Passed unanimously.

9. REGULAR BOARD ACTION (NO ROLL CALL)

**Item 9.A. was heard after Item 4.C. as per the amended agenda.*

9.A. Elect MPO Board Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Folley moved to Elect Commissioner McDaniel as MPO Board Chair and Council Member Blankenship seconded. Passed unanimously.

Commissioner McDaniel moved to Elect Commissioner Kowal as MPO Board Vice-Chair and Council Member Pernas seconded. Passed unanimously.

Commissioner McDaniel and Commissioner Kowal assumed their roles as MPO Board Chair and MPO Board Vice-Chair immediately following the vote.

9.B. Elect Representatives to Serve on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council Board for 2024

Ms. McLaughlin said prior to the meeting, she was able to check with Successor Chair McDaniel to see if he would like to continue serving as the Collier MPO representative on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) Board for Calendar Year 2024. **Successor Chair McDaniel** confirmed that he was interested in continuing his role on MPOAC unless another Board member also had interest.

Council Member Blankenship moved to elect Successor Chair McDaniel as representative to serve on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council Board for 2024 and Successor Vice-Chair Kowal seconded. Passed unanimously.

Ms. McLaughlin added that she had also reached out to Commissioner Saunders before the meeting to inquire about his interest in continuing as Collier MPO alternate representative on the MPOAC, and he said would be willing to continue to serve in that capacity pending any other Board member interest.

Council Member Pernas moved to elect Commissioner Saunders to serve as alternate representative on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council Board for 2024 and Council Member Folley seconded. Passed unanimously.

9.C. Report to the MPO Board on the status of contract negotiations with the Board-selected candidate for the position of Executive Director at its December 2023 meeting, and a recommendation to approve a Fifth Amendment to the existing Executive Director's Employment Agreement extending the term of employment and increasing her annual salary.

Mr. Teach informed the Board that MPO Executive Director candidate, Lorraine Lantz, had withdrawn her application during contract negotiations, and with Ms. McLaughlin's employment contract ending on Board meeting day, he had preemptively reached out to her to inquire if she was willing to

continue in her current role and extend her contract up to one year (with the opportunity to continue up to two additional years), raising her salary from the current \$117,000 to the salary negotiated by the prior applicant of \$140,000.

Council Member Folley moved to approve a Fifth Amendment to the existing Executive Director's Employment Agreement extending the term of employment and increasing her annual salary, and Successor Vice-Chair Kowal seconded.

Successor Chair McDaniel asked if there was any more discussion on the matter.

Council Member Blankenship queried if there was money already in the budget for the salary or if fund would need to be added. **Ms. McLaughlin** responded that money in the budget had been earmarked to cover the prior applicant's requested salary.

Chair Folley noted that with it being a time of so many questions surrounding current legislation, which perhaps might push for the merging of Collier and Lee MPOs, that he was thankful Ms. McLaughlin was willing to extend her contract and continue in her role, the with new salary being appropriate. **Successor Chair McDaniel** concurred.

Passed unanimously.

9.D. Recommendation to award Agreement No. 22-8025, 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, to Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for professional consulting services in the amount of \$821,169 and authorize the Chair to execute the attached agreement

Ms. McLaughlin said item 9.D. was a recommendation to award Agreement No. 22-8025 to procure professional consulting services to prepare the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) on behalf of the Collier MPO. She continued by saying that the MPO is required to complete a LRTP to receive federal funds. The LRTP is updated every five years and must maintain a minimum time horizon of 20 years to be in federal compliance. The 2045 LRTP was adopted in December 2020; therefore the 2050 LRTP must be adopted by December 2025, noting that the previous LRTP update took two years to complete. Collier MPO completed the selection process for the 2050 LRTP, and on April 14, 2023, the MPO Board accepted the selection committee's ranking and authorized staff to negotiate a contract with the top ranked firm, Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for the 2050 LRTP.

With assistance from Collier County and in accordance with Florida Statute §287.055, the Consultant's Competitive Negotiation Act, staff negotiated and reached a proposed agreement with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., in the total amount of \$821,169. This is within the 10% increase allocated for inflation of the \$610,000 2045 LRTP consulting contract. With \$635,389 in funding identified in the FY 22-24 Unified Planning Work Program for the LRTP, FDOT has programmed SU funds for Collier MPO that can be used for the LRTP in future years, including \$350,000 in FY 2025 and \$350,000 in FY 2026. If necessary, PL funding will be reallocated to cover any shortfall in future fiscal years.

Staff received concurrence on the proposed agreement from FDOT and FHWA, and TAC and CAC previously approved the scope of services at their February 28, 2022, meetings. Contracting matters are not taken to the advisory committees.

Ms. McLaughlin recommended that the Board approve the award of Agreement No. 22-8025 to Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for professional consulting services to complete the 2050 LRTP and authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

Successor Chair McDaniel expressed his concurrence that preparing the LRTP was an important task for the Collier MPO to complete.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal moved to approve to award Agreement No. 22-8025, 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, to Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for professional consulting services in the amount of \$821,169 and authorize the Chair to execute the attached agreement, and Chair Folley seconded. Passed unanimously.

** Successor Chair McDaniel elected to hear item 10.B. immediately following Item 9.D. so that Chair Folley could participate in the discussion of the item, as Chair Folley needed to depart early.*

9.E. Approve a Work Order for TY Lin International to complete the Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Ms. McLaughlin said that this item was being presented to request that the Board to approve a work order for TY Lin International to complete the Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. Collier County Procurement Services assigned the contract to TY Lin and the contract falls under the auspices of the General Planning Contract. Collier MPO concurs with TY Lin's scope and the \$248,900 cost to complete the work order, which is within budget.

Council Member Blankenship moved to approve to Work Order for TY Lin International to complete the Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, and Council Member Perry seconded. Passed unanimously.

** Successor Chair McDaniel elected to hear item 10.A. immediately following Item 9.E. Item 9.F. was heard after Item 10.A.*

9.F. Approve the Collier to Polk Regional Trail PD&E as a Priority for SUN Trail Funding

Ms. McLaughlin explained that this item was for the Board to approve the Collier to Polk Regional Trail Project Development and Environmental PD&E phase as a priority for SUN Trail funding. She reminded the Board that in September 2023, it voted to add the Collier to Polk Trail to the SUN Trail Network, and then on December 6, 2023, the Florida Greenways and Trails Council gave its approval, followed by the Board's ratification of the addition of S.R. 29 to the trail. FDOT submitted an application for SUN Trail funding to conduct a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study for the Collier

to Polk Trail to meet the December 20, 2023 deadline. However, the project still must be formally approved as an MPO Board priority in order to receive SUN Trail funding in the amount of approximately \$6.3 million.

Council Member Pernas moved to approve the Collier to Polk Regional Trail PD&E as a Priority for SUN Trail Funding, and Council Member Blankenship seconded.

Successor Chair McDaniel expressed his hope that an incremental evolution of the project didn't derail its completion as he had seen happen to other vision projects in the past and said he would be interested in seeing the total estimated cost. He expressed concern that care be taken to ensure that this vision does not turn controversial in terms of environmentally sensitive lands.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal had questions regarding whether there would be high costs for the County for the portions of the trail that were within Collier County's environmentally sensitive areas.

Ms. McLaughlin explained that the PD&E study is for the entire loop including the entire County portion and would clarify the expenses. Once the expenses are known from the study, it would be the County's discretion whether they would move forward with their portion of the trail.

A group discussion followed, and it agreed that total cost knowledge was imperative.

Passed unanimously.

9.G. Adopt the Florida Department of Transportation Vision Zero Safety Performance Targets for Calendar Year 2024

Ms. McLaughlin explained that this item was for the Board to adopt FDOT's Vision Zero Safety Performance Targets for Calendar Year 2024. She noted that when this item was heard in the previous year, the Board had requested that next time they be informed about the Collier region transportation safety status. She reported that via FDOT statistics for the area, rate of fatalities was trending down the last few years and the rate of serious injuries were going up. Pedestrian and bicycle trends are more challenging to track and find trends, but the Collier region shows a slight trend down of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities. She noted the challenge of predicting future statistics and measuring policies.

Successor Chair McDaniel concurred that it is almost impossible to predict future statistics but that the statistics FDOT makes available are beneficial, and that supporting a zero fatality target is a step in the right direction.

Council Member Blankenship moved to adopt the Florida Department of Transportation Vision Zero Safety Performance Targets for Calendar Year 2024, and Successor Vice-Chair Kowal seconded. Passed unanimously.

9.H. Approve Two New Appointments and Three Reappointments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Mr. Kingston explained that the item was for the Board to approve two new appointments and three reappointments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). The MPO has received two applications to fill the two vacancies on the BPAC. All voting members are at-large per BPAC bylaws. Three members are applying for reappointment. Their terms expire on February 29, 2024. He went through the list candidates and noted topics of interest about them. He mentioned that with these appointments and reappointments, BPAC membership would be completely filled.

Council Member Pernas moved to approve Two New Appointments and Three Reappointments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Council Member Perry seconded. Passed unanimously.

9.I. Approve Reappointment to the Citizens Advisory Committee

Ms. Miceli explained that this item for the Board to approve the reappointment of a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) member, Karen Homiak, to represent District IV. She shared some of Ms. Homiak's qualifying accomplishments and that District IV Commissioner, Vice-Chair Kowal, had given his approval of her reappointment.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal moved to approve Reappointment to the Citizens Advisory Committee, and Council Member Perry seconded. Passed unanimously.

9.J. Review and Comment on FDOT Proposed Functional Classification and Urban Boundary Updates

Ms. McLaughlin explained that the item is for the Board to review and comment on FDOT Functional Classification and Urban Boundary Updates. She said that since the writing of the Executive Summary for this item, she learned that after revisions requested by the County were made by FDOT, Transportation Department Services Head, Trinity Scott, expressed that she was satisfied with the document. Ms. McLaughlin wanted to make mention FDOT's forthcoming and cooperative response to the County's request.

Council Member Blankenship moved to accept the FDOT Proposed Functional Classification and Urban Boundary Updates, and Council Member Perry seconded. Passed unanimously.

10. PRESENTATIONS (MAY REQUIRE BOARD ACTION)

10.A. Federal Quadrennial Review of Collier MPO 2024 – Schedule

Ms. McLaughlin said the item was being presented so that the Board would be aware of Collier MPO's upcoming quadrennial review by the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations. She said that during this review process, it is common for the federal team to request corrective actions be taken for some items. The site visit and public meeting element of the review is scheduled for July 23-24, 2024. It is beneficial to have the MPO Chair or Vice-Chair in attendance to say a few words about the process and answer questions.

Successor Chair McDaniel said he would be in attendance, and if the public meeting was to be recorded, Board Chambers could be a good location for the meeting.

Item 10.A. was heard for comment and review only.

10.B. Report on Pending Legislation Affecting Collier MPO and Concerns Expressed by Representative Botana

Ms. McLaughlin explained that [Senate Bill 1032](#) and [House Bill 7049](#) are companion bills that propose eliminating the MPOAC, adding new performance metrics for MPOs to meet, and granting FDOT greater authority over the MPOs. The bills call for Lee and Collier Counties to submit a feasibility report by February 28, 2025, exploring the benefits, costs, and process of consolidation into a single MPO. According to a Memorandum on HB-7049 prepared by Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel, the bill raises two areas of concern: 1) consistency with federal law and administrative regulations and 2) cost-efficient delivery of services to the public and MPOs. HB-7049 was unanimously approved by the House Transportation and Modals Committee on January 19, 2024, and by the Infrastructure and Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee on February 1, 2024. SB-1032 differs from HB-7049 in that it also abolishes the Florida Transportation Commission (FTC).

Ms. McLaughlin said that recently two of the most concerning elements of the bills had been edited out due to issues with the Sunshine Law, one being FDOT having greater authority over MPOs and allowing FDOT to replace an Executive Director and even sit on an MPO Board as Chair if so decided, and the other being the proposed abolishment of the FTC. She said that one element that is still of concern in the bills is the proposal of eliminating the MPOAC, noting that this proposal was discussed at the most recent MPOAC meeting, because the MPOAC provides a very good forum for these vital conversations. She added that a separate proposed legislation to be cognizant of is known as [House Bill 1301](#) adds a new subsection (6) to section 339.155 Florida Statutes governing transportation planning, which would prohibit FDOT and MPOs from considering nonpecuniary factors such as environmental or social justice, or initiatives to achieve net zero emissions of carbon dioxide, when developing plans. The full legal impact of the enactment of such a law, considering the apparent inconsistency with existing federal administrative regulations.

Ms. McLaughlin noted the relationship between all three bills and a letter from Senator Botana that preceded the introduction of the bills asking what could be done to facilitate more regional coordination between the Collier and Lee MPOs. The letter spurred Collier MPO to begin working on ideas of how to implement more coordination opportunities with Lee MPO, with preliminary feedback provided by FDOT. There are some favorable possibilities to create more coordination with Lee MPO for the Board to consider. She mentioned that the Lee MPO Executive Committee met and were in favor of a regional consolidation feasibility study, but not in favor of funding it, and **Ms. McLaughlin** concurred that Collier MPO did not have the funds available and wondered if the state might fund the study. Questions that arose were what was the problem that was being addressed and what were the possible alternative solutions?

Successor Chair McDaniel mentioned that he voiced his opinion at the recent MPOAC meeting for the council to take action in regard to the bills. He said that he sees the MPOAC as a mechanism for the

aggregate transportation leaders in the state to receive information, but rather than abolishment, maybe adopting a more efficient meeting structure, which would include remote participation, might be a better option fiscally. He said that he was in favor of the Collier-Lee MPO consolidation study through an equitable process, but that legislation to establish funding for the study needed to be in place. He believed more would be discovered as the process evolved that would allow for a more informed view of the best course of action.

Successor Chair McDaniel suggested that Collier MPO send a letter to state legislators expressing support for the portion of the bill regarding the Collier-Lee feasibility study with consideration for the state to provide the necessary funding for the study. He also suggested recommending that a reorganization of the MPOAC meeting process be considered to include remote participation rather than total abolishment.

Successor Chair McDaniel moved for Collier MPO to send a letter to state legislators expressing support and establishing funding for the Collier-Lee feasibility study and recommending a reorganization of the MPOAC meeting process and Chair Folley seconded.

Council Member Pernas asked what other regions were consolidating within the state.

Mr. Gaither stated that in FDOT District 1, current consolidations in place are Sarasota-Manatee MPO, Heartland TPO comprised of six rural counties. He mentioned that he was uncertain of all of the current consolidations throughout state, but referenced an aspect of the bill that said any new urbanized areas would be incorporated into the nearest adjacent MPO/TPO region.

Council Member Blankenship said that the low attendance by the Lee MPO Board at the joint Collier-Lee MPO Board meeting in August 2023 would need to be addressed in the feasibility study. He wondered if in addition to a letter to the state legislatures, an arranged meeting with local legislators might also be helpful.

Successor Chair McDaniel said that once the Board passed this motion, his intention was to suggest that each Board member reach out to legislators as well.

Passed unanimously.

**Following item 10.B., Item 9.E. was heard.*

11. MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Pernas thanked everyone for the sidewalks in Everglades City being completed in time for the Everglades Seafood Festival. He also thanked Ms. Miceli and Successor Chair McDaniel for attending the opening ceremony of the festival, saying it was appreciated by the community.

Council Member Perry announced that since there was discussion regarding cancelling the March MPO Board meeting, that if that was the case, that this would be his last MPO Board meeting, as his term would expire April 3, 2024. He thanked Ms. McLaughlin and the Collier MPO staff, FDOT and the MPO

Board for a very pleasurable professional experience.

Successor Vice-Chair Kowal wanted to inform everyone that the Board can hear conversations even from behind the wall of the dais. He also wanted to mention that he was pleased Ms. McLaughlin would be continuing in her role as Collier MPO Executive Director and appreciated working with her.

Council Member Blankenship **asked about the plan for U.S. 41 within the limits of the City of Naples. He said he was aware that it is in the LRTP, but there had been citizen inquiries regarding more distressed areas of the highway and so, he was curious to know if there might be any thoughts about any possible quick fixes for the most distressed areas. Mr. Gaither** said he would investigate the matter and follow up with Council Member Blankenship when he had an answer.

Successor Chair McDaniel requested Ms. Scott to approach the dais and asked her about topic of traffic light signalization timing that was presented at the proposed moratorium meeting of the Collier County Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Scott said that in the conversations that were had at the BCC meeting, the focus was on Immokalee Road and Vanderbilt Beach Road Extension. There is a signal timing project that has been funded by FDOT and through the MPO process to retime the traffic signals in those areas. There is an in-season and out-of-season signal timing that will be implemented.

Successor Chair McDaniel then asked Ms. Scott about the status of I-75 and Everglades Blvd.

Ms. Scott said that the project was being funded within the County's LRTP. She said she had conversations with Secretary L.K. Nandam regarding the points Successor Chair McDaniel had brought up at both the BCC and the MPO Board meetings, to see if there is a possibility to open the existing interchange, with modifications for safety to allow merging. She said she was working with County staff to put in a legislative request to allow for a study and perhaps the requested improvements.

Successor Chair McDaniel wanted it to be known that he was looking to open the interchange for travel for southbound on Everglades Blvd to come into town on I-75 and east bound on I-75 to come into the Picayune Strand State Forest or back up into eastern Collier County. He also mentioned he was open to adding a toll there to assist with the expenses and felt it would be worth the expense. He said he would bring it up on the BCC's trip to Washington DC and he requested that Ms. McLaughlin add the item to the next MPO Board agenda to approve the project.

Ms. Scott wanted to mention that another item that came out of the discussion that was had at the BCC proposed moratorium meeting was the MFF project mentioned by Ms. Peters that FDOT was pursuing a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study for, the Immokalee Road Interchange to see if funding would allow for a widening of the road was key for Collier County as that interchange also needed improvements as well. She said that the BCC authorized her to work with FDOT to try to advance moving that project forward to occur along with the MFF initiative.

12. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

There were no distribution items.

13. NEXT MEETING DATE

13.A. March 8, 2024 - 9:30 a.m. Board of County Commissioners Chambers, 3299 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112

14. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Successor Chair McDaniel adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:34 a.m.