

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

**Collier County Government Center
Admin Building F, IT Training Room, 5th Floor
3299 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112
May 7, 2025 | 1:30 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Chair Pernas called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Ms. Miceli called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

Members Present

Tony Pernas, MPO Board Member, Everglades City, *Chair*
Brett Nelson, Children at Risk
Carmen Henry, Southwest Florida Regional Workforce Development Board, *Vice-Chair*
Idela Hernandez, Rep. Citizens Advocate/User or Non-User
Michael Stahler, Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
Patti Warren, Fla. Dept. of Edu./Div. of Vocational Rehab Services (*arrived during item 2*)
Sarah Gualco, Area Agency on Aging SWFL-FL Dept. of Elder Affairs
Victoria Upthegrove, Florida Dept. of Transportation

Members Absent

Charles Lascari, Rep. Disabled
Cheryl Burnham, Florida Association for Community Action
John Lambcke, Collier Schools Transportation Director
Julia Manning, Local Medical Community
Leah Watson, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Oscar Gomez, Veterans Services
Tabitha Larrauri, Fla. Dept. of Children and Family Services

MPO Staff

Dusty Hansen, Senior Planner
Suzanne Miceli, Operations Support Specialist II

Others Present

Omar De Leon, Public Transit Manager, Collier Area Transit
Brian Wells, Director, Collier County Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement
Alex Showalter, Collier Area Transit

Elena Ortiz-Rosado, Collier Area Transit
Mari Maldonado, Collier Area Transit
Leslie Barnes, MV Transportation
Nolan Begley, MV Transportation
Michele M. Malberg, Public

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

Ms. Malberg said that as a senior and Immokalee resident who uses CatConnect, the 2-hour window for trips from Immokalee to and from Naples can turn an errand or task into a 6-hour day. She mentioned that using the restroom is not easy for people with certain disabilities, and because of the length of time it takes to travel, some are not able to use the service. Many Immokalee residents rely on CatConnect to get to Naples, as the services they need are not available in Immokalee. The limited Immokalee trip schedule makes it difficult to get a reservation for the service and it is oftentimes fully booked. She asked if it might be possible to reduce the 2-hour window to 90 minutes, add more trips from Immokalee to Naples so that there would be 3 outbound trips in the morning and 2 return trips in the afternoon offered, and add more CatConnect service for travel within Immokalee. She said it would be most appreciated if the service could better meet the needs of disabled Immokalee residents.

Mr. De Leon said that trip windows for paratransit are established by the trip windows of the fixed route service and by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidance for travel times. He said that with limited fleet, lack of drivers, and financial limitations, the 2-hour window allows the service to operate more efficiently, allowing time for additional pick-ups and drop-offs. Reducing the trip window would limit the number of passengers for each trip.

A group discussion followed, and it was mentioned that the 2-hour window is for drive-time only and that trip times for fixed routes are similar because of the distance between Immokalee and Naples.

Ms. Malberg asked if CatConnect could offer static pick-up times, *e.g.*, 6:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m., and 10:00 a.m., and residents could book a set service time to allow for more reservations and riders per trip.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Gualco moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Upthegrove seconded. Passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of March 5, 2025 Annual Public Workshop Minutes

Mr. Stahler moved to approve the Public Workshop Minutes for March 5, 2025. Ms. Henry seconded. Passed unanimously.

Approval of March 5, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Upthegrove moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for March 5, 2025. Mr. Stahler seconded. Passed unanimously.

5. BOARD ACTION

A. Review, Approve and Endorse Annual Update to the LCB Bylaws

Ms. Hansen said the TD Planning Grant requires the LCB to update its bylaws annually. There were only a few changes being proposed. The revisions include correction of a typo, the dates on the cover, updates to the endorsement/adoption page, and an update to the LCB Chair/MPO Board member title, from Chairperson to Chairman, on the signature lines, made by Collier County Attorney. Once approved by the LCB, the bylaws would be presented to the MPO Board for ratification at its June 13, 2025 meeting.

Ms. Gualco moved to approve and endorse Annual Update to the LCB Bylaws. Mr. Stahler seconded. Passed unanimously.

B. Endorse the TD Planning Grant Application for FY 2025/2026 and the Draft Authorizing Resolution

Ms. Hansen said that the MPO was applying for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant for the Transportation Disadvantaged for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/2026. The MPO has the authority to file a TD Planning Grant Application for Collier County as the Designated Official Planning Agency for the TD program in Collier County. The TD Grant application must be filed by June 30, 2025 and the TD grant for the year was expected to be \$31,757. The grant amount would be confirmed upon final action of this year's State Legislature.

These grant funds would be used to conduct LCB activities, including:

- Completion of the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Minor Update
- Annual Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation
- Staff management of LCB and support at LCB meetings
- Legal advertisement of LCB meetings
- Conducting the annual Public Workshop
- Conducting LCB training
- Review of LCB bylaws, grievance procedures, reports
- Staff attending TD Training Events and TD Commission meetings.

The grant application and the proposed Resolution will be presented to the MPO Board for approval at its June 13, 2025, meeting.

Ms. Henry moved to endorse the TD Planning Grant Application for FY 2025/2026 and the Draft Authorizing Resolution. Ms. Upthegrove seconded. Passed unanimously.

C. Approve the Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Completed in 2025

Ms. Hansen said that as a requirement of the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) Planning Grant, the LCB must conduct an annual evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC).

The Public Transit and Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE) Division, on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, is designated to act as the CTC for Collier County.

The Evaluation examines the CTC's compliance with requirements in the Florida Statutes and Administrative Code, CTD standards, local standards, and performance goals as set in the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan. It included 3 onsite observations of the CatConnect service by LCB members, surveys of riders and caretakers, and makes findings and recommendations to the CTC. The Evaluation must be completed and submitted to the CTD by June 30, 2025. The CTC evaluation would be presented to the MPO Board for ratification at its June meeting.

Ms. Hansen provided a presentation of the Evaluation highlights, findings and recommendations. (A copy of the presentation can be obtained by request by contacting Collier MPO.)

***Ms. Gualco** moved to approve the Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Completed in 2025. **Mr. Stahler** seconded. Passed unanimously.*

D. Approve the 2025 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Annual Update

Ms. Hansen said that every year, Collier County is required to submit an annual update to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service plan (TDSP) to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD). Every 5 years a Major Update occurs and the last Major Update to the TDSP was prepared in 2023. In between Major Updates there are Minor Annual Updates. The TDSP is a multi-year document that looks at development, service and quality assurance components related to the delivery of the Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

Annual updates must contain the following per CTD guidelines: Needs Assessment updates; Goals, Objectives and Strategies; Implementation Plan updates; and Cost/Revenue Allocation and Rate Structure (annual Rate Model) Justification. The 2025 annual update to the TDSP was set to be ratified by the MPO Board on June 13th. The annual update to the TDSP must be submitted to the CTD prior to July 1st.

Ms. Hansen provided a presentation of the major components of the TDSP annual update. (A copy of the presentation can be obtained by request by contacting Collier MPO.)

***Mr. Stahler** moved to approve the 2025 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Annual Update **Ms. Henry** seconded.*

Roll Call Vote:

Tony Pernas - Yes

Brett Nelson - *Yes*
Carmen Henry - *Yes*
Idela Hernandez - *Yes*
Michael Stahler - *Yes*
Patti Warren - *Yes*
Sarah Gualco - *Yes*
Victoria Upthegrove - *Yes*

Passed unanimously.

E. Approve Alternate Date for LCB's September Meeting (September 10, 2025)

Ms. Hansen said that the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) holds an annual training event for TD planning staff every year. The MPO's attendance at the training event is mandatory and is a requirement of the MPO's TD Planning Grant with the CTD. CTC staff typically attend the annual conference as well. The CTD informed the MPO that the 2025 TD training session would be held during the FPTA annual conference occurring September 2-4, 2025 in St. Petersburg, and requested that LCB meetings scheduled during that time be rescheduled if necessary.

The next regularly scheduled LCB meeting was set for Wednesday, September 3, 2025, and Ms. Hansen planned to attend the training and conference and requested that the LCB meeting for September 3, 2025 be rescheduled to the following Wednesday, September 10, 2025.

Mr. Nelson moved to approve an alternate date for LCB's September meeting (September 10, 2025). Mr. Stahler seconded. Passed unanimously.

6. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

A. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Quarterly Report

Mr. De Leon reviewed the CTC Quarterly report which can be viewed in the May 7, 2025 LCB Agenda, saying that as part of the CTC evaluation CAT staff was reviewing trip windows, operations, and ways to improve On-Time Performance (OTP), and would have more detailed information at future LCB meetings. He mentioned that CAT transported over 11,000 riders in March 2025, the highest for the year, and explained some of the information in the preventable accidents section in the report. The CTD Commission recently conducted an audit of CAT and there were 0 findings.

B. MPO Quarterly Progress Report

Ms. Hansen reviewed the MPO Quarterly report (which can be viewed in the May 7, 2025 LCB Meeting Agenda), mentioning LCB activities like public outreach, a new LCB citizen advocate member, the LCB Public Workshop, and the Annual CTC Evaluation.

C. FDOT Report

Ms. Upthegrove said FDOT received approximately 37 applications for projects in Collier County for 2025. A meeting was scheduled in June to make project recommendations. FDOT would hold a professional development workshop in Tampa on June 9, 2025. FDOT, in partnership with CUTR, was in the midst of conducting triennial reviews of some transit agencies and would provide recommendations. CAT's review would be in 2026.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

A. Updated LCB Membership Roster

This item was distributed.

B. FDOT Transportation Disadvantaged Services Report dated 1/1/25

This item was distributed.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. De Leon introduced the new General Manager for MV Transportation, Leslie Barnes.

Ms. Hernandez said she was looking forward to contributing and asked for a list of the acronyms frequently used at LCB meetings.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

September 10, 2025, at 1:30 p.m., Regular Meeting, Collier County Government Center, County Administration Bldg. F, IT Training Room, 5th Floor, 3299 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, FL 34112.

11. ADJOURNMENT

*No further business being conducted, **Chair Pernas** adjourned the meeting at 2:33 p.m.*