

**Minutes of the Florida MPO Advisory Council
Staff Directors' Advisory Committee Meeting
April 26, 2012**

Staff Directors' Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

T.J. Fish, Lake-Sumter MPO, Chair
Mary Bo Robinson, Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa-Walton, Bay County TPOs, Vice-Chair
Lucie Ayer, Collier County MPO
Harold Barley, MetroPlan Orlando
Beth Beltran, Martin County MPO
Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO
Ray Chiamonte, Hillsborough County MPO
Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
Dennis Dix, Hernando County MPO
Mike Escalante, Gainesville MTPO
Bob Herrington, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Michael Howe, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Bob Kamm, Space Coast TPO
Phil Matson, Indian River County MPO
Harry Reed, Capital Region TPA
Carlos Roa, Miami-Dade MPO
Don Scott, Lee County MPO
Jeff Sheffield, North Florida TPO
Greg Stuart, Broward MPO
John Voges, Ocala-Marion County TPO
Sarah Ward, Pinellas County MPO
Karl Welzenbach, Volusia TPO
Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO

Others in Attendance:

Howard Glassman, MPOAC Executive Director
Brigitte Messina, MPOAC Assistant
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel
Jeff Kramer, USF/CUTR
Karen Seggerman, USF/CUTR
Stephen Reich, USF/CUTR
Jan Davis, USF/CUTR
Karen Brunelle, FHWA
Lee Ann Jacobs, FHWA
Keith Melton, FTA
Bob Romig, FDOT
Kathy Neill, FDOT
Jim Wood, FDEP
Herb Hiller, East Coast Greenway Alliance
Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering
Juan Flores, FDOT

Others in Attendance:

Deputy Mayor Susan Haynie, Palm Beach MPO, Vice-Chair
Gary Huffman, MetroPlan Orlando
Ed Mierzejewski, Gannett Fleming
Wiley Page, Atkins
Councilmember Sam Saad III, Collier MPO
Mary Schoelzel, FDOT
Michael Skipper, Nashville Area MPO
Bob Wallace, Tindale-Oliver
Charlie Williams, GEC

1. Call to Order

T.J. Fish, Lake-Sumter MPO, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:13 p.m. Self-introductions were made.

Announcements:

Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO, and Susan Schrieber, Miami-Dade MPO, have been appointed to the Policy Committee of the Association of MPOs (AMPO). Commissioner Bob Dalari and Harry Barley, MetroPlan Orlando, have been reappointed to the Board of Governors and the Executive Directors Council of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC). Howard Glassman has been reappointed to the Committee on Metropolitan Policy, Planning and Processes (ADA20) of the Transportation Research Board (TRB).

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO, to approve the January 26, 2012 minutes. A second was received from Harry Reed, Capital Region TPA. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Howard Glassman, MPOAC Executive Director, provided a status report on current MPOAC finances, reporting that roughly 75% of current fiscal year funds have been spent.

Mr. Glassman then discussed the draft Fiscal Years 2012/2013 – 2013/2014 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) contained in the agenda packet. He pointed out that the overall amount budgeted is lower than in the current UPWP due to the completion of the Transportation Revenue Study. A new task has been added allowing the MPOAC to work with FDOT and other partners to implement the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan (FTP). The last two pages outline the allocation of all funds by work task. A motion to approve MPOAC Resolution 2012-01 adopting the 2-Year UPWP for FY 2012/13-2013/14 was made by Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO, and seconded by John Voges, Ocala-Marion County TPO. The motion carried.

Mr. Glassman then referred to the Agreement for Legal Services contained in the agenda packet. He spoke highly of the work performed by Mr. Gougelman and recommended that the MPOAC continue his contract. A motion to approve a General Counsel Agreement for Legal Services contract with Mr. Paul R.

Gougelman was made by Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO, and seconded by Harold Barley, MetroPlan Orlando. The motion carried.

Mr. Glassman directed attention to a one-page handout that reflected the more pertinent aspects of the 2012 Summary of the Florida Legislative Session previously received by MPOAC members by email. He recommended that the MPOAC prepare and send a letter to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) requesting that a portion of the \$135 million specified for existing or planned strategic transportation projects that meet certain criteria be appropriated to the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP). Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO, made a motion to prepare such a letter which was seconded by Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO. The motion carried.

Mr. Glassman reviewed legislation directly affecting MPOs. Discussion ensued regarding new legislative language that designated FDOT representatives would serve as “non-voting advisers” on MPO Boards. This change is to ensure that conversations between MPO Board members and FDOT representatives are not in violation of Florida’s Sunshine Law. Each MPO is advised to review its membership to ensure that members are designated appropriately to ensure compliance with the law. Additional discussion ensued with regard to concern that non-voting members of MPO Committees may be violating Sunshine Laws. Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel will write a legal brief on the subject of Sunshine Law in relation to non-voting members and non-voting advisers. He noted that many people misunderstand the Law, thinking that it applies only to elected officials, which is not true as it also applies to staff and advisory committee members. He further advised MPOAC members to discuss any situations that may be in question with their attorney. In response to a suggestion that the MPOAC request an interpretation from the Florida Attorney General, it was decided to wait until after Mr. Gougelman finished his legal brief and specific questions for the Attorney General can be clarified.

Howard Glassman was thanked for his efforts regarding legislation on behalf of the MPOAC.

Mr. Glassman will be scheduling a Policy Committee meeting and a 2060 FTP Implementation Working Group meeting. He also reminded the members that an MPOAC Institute Weekend is coming up June 8-10, 2012 in Tampa, Florida.

4a. FDOT Report

Kathy Neill, FDOT Office of Policy, provided additional information on recent legislation. The Freight Mobility and Trade Plan will include a policy element and an investment element. The policy element will be completed by July 2013. The consultant will start the process in July 2012 through regional meetings around the state and webinars to obtain stakeholder input including that of the MPOAC and its member MPOs.

The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Plan was adopted in January 2010 and FDOT continues to work on implementation of changes proposed in the Plan. Currently they are developing draft criteria and thresholds that address new types of facilities, including Intermodal Logistics Center (ILCs), urban fixed guideway terminals and corridors, military access facilities, and hub-to-hub connectors. They expect to distribute the draft criteria this summer. The Department is also working on a SIS cost feasible plan for the year 2040. There will be outreach to MPOs in late fall of this year with the draft released sometime between January and March 2013 for review. Adoption is anticipated in April 2013. Each MPO will have the opportunity to provide input through their District SIS coordinator.

FDOT recognizes the need to update the 2008 guidelines for the long range revenue forecast. The MPOAC has reviewed and provided comments on the FHWA Draft Expectations Letter for MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) updates and the revised draft is anticipated soon. The guidelines will be developed after the letter is finalized. In addition, a methodology will be developed for the long range forecast. All of this should be available for review in the fall, at least 16 months before the first LRTP update is due. A question arose as to whether operations and maintenance (OM) would be in the forecast for each MPO individually so MPOs can respond to the requirements. Ms. Neill responded that OM will be forecast for the entire system.

The 2010 Census information on urbanized areas was released on March 26, 2012. Florida has two new urbanized areas – one in Citrus County and one in Highlands County. An MPO must be designated to represent these urbanized areas – either a new one or an existing one. The Department will be having discussions with the Florida Transportation Commission (FTC) who has interest in this topic. The FTC is forming a subcommittee (trade and logistics, future corridors, MPO designation, and regional governance and boundaries) with the intent to provide guidance on those issues, particularly merging MPOs or increasing regional cooperation. Ms. Neill commented on activities that each MPO will be taking in response to changing urbanized area boundaries, such as smoothing urbanized area boundaries. The Department will be discussing FHWA PL and FTA 5303 planning funding formulas and Mr. Glassman will be participating in those meetings.

A discussion ensued regarding urbanized area boundaries. A question was asked regarding the federal Surface Transportation Bill affecting PL funding, however, the Department has done no calculations of possible impacts to date. Several questions were raised regarding urbanized areas and reapportionment addressing timelines, criteria for delineation, the process for review, etc. – all of which will be answered over the next several months through the process. One member noted that maps now included major non-residential urban facilities but failed to include an airport. It was noted that there is a process to appeal the boundary and also that the boundaries have yet to be smoothed.

Concern was raised that the FTC would be making recommendations regarding MPO representation and it was asked that MPOs receive notice of FTC meetings. The next FTC meeting is at Port Canaveral on May 9th and 10th. There was additional discussion regarding regional coordination among MPOs. Mr. Glassman stated that he attends FTC meetings and will ensure that MPOs are kept abreast of the conversation. Further concern was expressed that coordination efforts are not reported from the FDOT Districts to the state level and that FDOT communication to the FTC and other issues to MPOs could be improved.

Bob Romig introduced Juan Flores, State Freight Logistics and Passenger Operations Administrator, who will be on the July MPOAC meeting agenda.

4b. FHWA Report

Ms. Karen Brunelle, FHWA, Director, Office of Project Development gave the FHWA report. She noted that the current Federal surface transportation law (SAFETEA-LU) has been extended for 90 days until the end of June. Currently, there are ongoing discussions regarding the 2013 transportation appropriations bill and it appears that the 2013 obligation levels will be the same as 2012 levels. The proposal also includes another \$500 million in Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grants. In other good news – FHWA has filled the vacant environmental coordinator

position with Buddy Cunill, a former FDOT employee with plans to better link planning and the environmental process (NEPA).

Lee Ann Jacobs of FHWA reported that the LRTP expectations letter has been revised to incorporate comments from the MPOAC and FDOT and the draft will be soon shared for additional review by the MPOs. With regard to Census issues, Ms. Jacobs directed attention to the schedule in the agenda packet. FHWA is watching the Federal Register for the list of designated Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). The FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty Executive Geographic Information System ([HEPGIS](#)) beta version is now available publicly. She described some of the new features of the system. In response to questions regarding new funding for new TMAs, etc., she noted that the decision is up to Congress.

Ms. Jacobs also noted that FHWA has issued a Call for Service regarding any training needs. This issue is usually addressed during certification, however, the schedule has changed and the call was issued earlier this year. Members are asked to contact Ms. Jacobs regarding any training needs within the next week. She indicated that they have been seeking training in regard to federal planning (PL) funds. Absent approval for that training, she may put together some informational slides. Members generally agreed that this would be good training and recommended adding FTA planning grant information to such training. A member thanked FTA and FHWA for providing Environmental Justice (EJ) training.

4c. FTA Report

Mr. Keith Melton, FTA, Community Planner, Office of Planning & Program Development, began the FTA report by directing attention to the materials provided in the agenda packet. Recently, FTA along with FHWA and FDOT conducted planning and certification reviews for the TMA in Jacksonville (North Florida TPO). They will soon be performing those reviews in the Tallahassee area (Capital Region TPA) and the Naples area (Collier County MPO).

FTA is streamlining the environmental review (NEPA) process and plans to have what they hope are improvements by October/November 2012. Improvements include expanding the list of categorical exclusions in the grant process and specifically include bus rapid transit and street car projects. He noted a new livability and sustainability initiative that allows FTA funds for pedestrian and bicycle projects near transit routes and stations within a defined area (1/2 mile for pedestrian projects). More information is available on the FTA website. In addition, changes to the New Starts and Small Starts programs are forthcoming in the fall that will reduce process timelines. Deadlines for most of the discretionary funding programs have passed; however, Tribal Transit and Over-the-Road Bus Applications are due soon.

Mr. Melton noted that the civil rights reports are getting much more scrutiny within FTA and the FTA Civil Rights ADA Assistance Line (1-888-446-4511). This area is currently sharing the civil rights officer based in Kansas City but a new one for this area should be appointed soon.

Members had questions regarding apportionment. Apparently only fifty percent of the apportionment notices have gone out and the others will be issued later this year.

5. Florida's Future Corridors Initiative

Mr. Bob Romig, FDOT, State Transportation Development Administrator, made a presentation on the Florida's Future Corridors Initiative. He noted the information in the agenda packet as well as the additional handouts (slide presentation). FDOT Secretary Prasad's "Florida's 21st Century Vision" called for planning a transportation system that maintains Florida's competitive edge by not only meeting current needs, but also meeting forecasted needs. The 2060 Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) seeks to achieve long-range visions in transportation decision-making, related to future growth and development of Florida's regions. This includes considerations of future corridors. Highway trends need to be coordinated with future land use through regional visioning efforts to maximize transportation investments. Concepts related to getting the most out of existing roadway capacity through managed lanes has been implemented very successfully in South Florida. Future corridor emphasis is focused on how to better connect areas of the state to serve our economy, particularly in terms of freight movement.

A member stated the educational benefit of FHWA coming to teach MPO board members about managed lanes, mass transit, etc. has resulted in the MPO considering these alternatives on many facilities. Ridership is greatly increasing on these lanes. The MPO is anticipating a planned visit by Juan Flores regarding the private sector freight needs in South Florida resulting from the widening of Panama Canal. Bob Romig noted that the transit component (express buses) of the managed lanes has been successful; people have been left at the station due to overfull vehicles.

One member noted that we need to be agents of change – even when it is controversial. It is our job to plan for the future. Members shared stories of project controversies that have turned out to be great decisions for their time. Members expressed concern regarding areas that should be avoided by future corridors. Bob Romig pointed out that the Department has better tools available to identify such areas and for providing visual information to stakeholders on these issues. One member inquired how funding would be handled and would these projects be considered part of the Strategic Intermodal System. Mr. Romig indicated that these projects are considered SIS projects and funding would be handled the same as for other SIS corridors and that they would very likely be toll facilities. He reminded the group that this is a planning effort and that many steps must be taken before any projects are realized. FDOT contacts regarding future corridors include Bob Romig and Kathy Neill. A member suggested that an advisory group be put together including MPOs and local governments to determine the logistics of how such corridors get coordinated with local government plans. Mr. Romig suggested that the discussion occur at the regional visioning level.

6. MPOAC Transportation Revenue Study

Michael Howe, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, introduced Steve Reich with the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida (USF). Mr. Reich reported on the MPOAC Transportation Revenue Study findings and recommendations which were under consideration as an action item. He referenced the material in the agenda packet and stated that the CUTR research team had reviewed the comments from the last meeting with Mr. Glassman and the staff and addressed them in the proposed study recommendations. They determined that there was a natural division between the first six revenue enhancing options that should be forwarded to the Legislature for proposed action and the remaining eight options of which the Legislature should be made aware. He reviewed the six revenue options in greater detail, including:

1. Two cent fuel tax increase per year for 5 years (10 cents) indexed – *State*
2. Index all fuel taxes not currently indexed – *Local*

3. One cent municipal optional sales tax – *Local*
4. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Study
5. Five cent local diesel tax – *Local*
6. Return motor vehicle licensing (MVL) fee, registration fee and title fee increases to the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) (*from General Revenue to the State Transportation Trust Fund*)

T.J. Fish, Lake-Sumter MPO requested an amendment to Option #3 – That all counties with an MPO be eligible to seek this funding option. Karl Welzenbach, Volusia TPO, motioned to transmit to the Legislature and Governor information on the State’s unfunded transportation needs and the 14 options to reduce the funding shortfall and recommend they initiate legislative action to implement the top six revenue options (including amending Option #3 to include all counties with an MPO). The motion was seconded by Mary Bo Robinson, Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa- Walton, Bay County TPOs. Howard Glassman noted that the Revenue Study Advisory Committee would reconvene to determine the appropriate time, organization, and mechanism to convey these options to the Legislature. The vote was called and the motion carried with Lucie Ayer, Collier MPO abstaining from the vote.

Karl Welzenbach, Volusia TPO, moved that the MPOAC begin the process of a VMT study whether or not a funding partner can be found. Partners may include FDOT, 1000 Friends of Florida, Association of Counties, the League of Cities, or Chambers of Commerce. The motion was seconded by Dennis Dix, Hernando County MPO. Harry Reed, Capital Region TPA, offered an amendment to ensure that any such study take into account all current local efforts and avoid any duplication of effort. The motion, as amended, carried.

Agenda items 7 and 8 were presented in reverse order.

7. (Originally Item 8 on the agenda) State-to-State Peer Exchange: Florida-Tennessee

T.J. Fish, Lake-Sumter MPO introduced his concept for a state-to-state peer exchange as an annual outreach program. He introduced Mr. Michael Skipper, AICP, Director, Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Mr. Skipper presented on MPO collaborative efforts in Tennessee at the statewide level. He shared a publication with members entitled, “Moving Tennessee Forward: Models for Connecting Communities.” There are 11 MPOs and 4 TMAs in Tennessee with minimal reference to MPOs in state law. Mr. Skipper provided an overview of the Tennessee MPOs.

Members inquired about the makeup of the MPO Boards. Mr. Skipper replied that elected officials make up the 24-member MPO board in Nashville with the Tennessee Department of Transportation serving as non-voting members. He also indicated that votes are weighted on the MPO Board.

Members also inquired about the commuter rail system. Mr. Skipper described the system that was started on an existing rail line for \$40 million. Ridership has increased in the last few years due to fuel costs. The line is currently being extended.

8. (Originally Item 7 on the agenda) Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan

Mr. Jim Wood, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Chief, Office of Greenways and Trails, presented an overview of the schedule and process for the 2012 Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan update. He stated that this Plan is not just an update, it is a brand new plan and that there

is a role for MPOs in the planning process. He reviewed the different elements of the plan and pointed to maps that include the trails from all MPO long range transportation plans (LRTPs). He touched on the Florida Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program Designation Program as well as the Florida Recreational Trails Program. The office spends a lot of time and energy publicizing and promoting the trails, noting that the most frequent question received by Visit Florida is “where can I bicycle in Florida?”

Mr. Wood and his staff have completed 2 economic impact studies in the past year, one with Orange County that showed a \$42 million impact to the economy attributable to greenways and trails. In discussing outreach to private individuals, he noted that the Homebuilders Association of Florida says that trails are the number one amenity sought by homebuyers. Mr. Wood also discussed the East Coast Greenway, the Florida National Scenic Trail, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition, and other major connections to ecological greenways. He then discussed the Plan update schedule (including public workshops in September) and the Plan framework, both of which were handed out during the meeting. Specific note was made of the map update and importance of coordinating with the MPO LRTPs to address over 270 segments of greenways and trails throughout the state and that they were reviewing each trail segment by segment. After completion of the base map, priority corridors will be developed and gaps identified. The FDEP website has an overview of the plan and other information.

Mr. Wood introduced Mr. Herb Hiller from Deland who discussed the Florida East Coast Greenway that includes 3000 miles through 15 states and the District of Columbia. It includes 600 miles in Florida, 200 of which are already in place for safe bicycling and walking. He spoke eloquently of the benefits of trails to the community, tourism, economy, and individuals.

9. Communications

The Chair directed attention to the communications in the agenda packet.

10. Member Comments

Delegates from South Florida invited the MPOAC to hold a future meeting of the MPOAC in Southeast Florida.

11. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

12. Adjourn

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.