

**Minutes of the Florida MPO Advisory Council**  
**Staff Directors' Advisory Committee**  
**July 23, 2015**

**Staff Directors:**

Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO, Chair  
Harry Reed, Capital Region TPA, Vice-Chair  
Greg Stuart, Broward MPO  
Bob Herrington, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO  
Lorraine Lance, Collier MPO  
Mary Bo Robinson, Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa-Walton and Bay County TPOs  
Marlie Sanderson, Gainesville MTPO  
Pat Steed, Heartland Regional TPO  
Beth Alden, Hillsborough County MPO  
Pamela Richmond, Lake-Sumter MPO  
Donald Scott, Lee County MPO  
Harold W. Barley, MetroPlan Orlando  
Carlos Roa, Miami-Dade MPO  
Denise Bunnewith, North Florida TPO  
Greg Slay, Ocala/Marion County TPO  
Beth Beltran, Martin MPO  
Nick Uhren, Palm Beach MPO  
Jim Edwards, Pasco County MPO  
Whit Blanton, Pinellas County MPO  
Ronnie Blackshear, Polk TPO  
Lois Bollenback, River to Sea TPO  
Michael Howe, Sarasota/Manatee MPO  
Bob Kamm, Space Coast TPO

**Others in Attendance:**

Carl Mikyska, MPOAC Executive Director  
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel  
Brigitte Messina, MPOAC  
Jeff Kramer, USF/CUTR  
Karen Seggerman, USF/CUTR  
Carmen Monroy, FDOT  
Yvonne Arens, FDOT  
Thomas Hill, FDOT  
Karen Brunelle, FHWA  
Lee Ann Jacobs, FHWA  
Sherrie Carver, Heartland Regional TPO  
Gary Huttman, MetroPlan Orlando  
Ali Atefi, Pasco MPO

Sarah Ward, Pinellas MPO  
Councilmember Jim Wood, Okaloosa-Walton TPO  
Mayor Susan Haynie, Palm Beach MPO  
David L. Hutchinson, Sarasota/Manatee MPO  
Mary Schoelzel, FDOT  
Kellie Smith, FDOT  
Claudia Calzaretta, FDOT  
Vickie Wyche, FDOT  
Lorena Cucek, FDOT  
Shundreka R. Given, FHWA  
Vontra Giles, FHWA  
Robert Jones, FCRC Consensus Center  
Hal Beardall, FCRC Consensus Center  
Wiley Page, Atkins  
Jeff Arms, HDR  
Fabrico Ponce, VHB

### **1. Call to Order**

Mr. Peter Buchwald, Chair, St. Lucie TPO, called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. The Chair welcomed Ms. Pat Steed and Ms. Sherrie Carver representing Florida's newest MPO, the Heartland Regional TPO. He also recognized Ms. Carmen Monroy who succeeded Mr. Jim Wood as the Director of the FDOT Office of Policy Planning. He welcomed all in attendance and self-introductions were made.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Sarah Ward, Pinellas County MPO, made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2015 Joint Meeting of the MPOAC Governing Board & Staff Directors' Advisory Committee. Mr. Greg Slay, Ocala/Marion County TPO, seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **3. Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

### **4. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Carl Mikyska, MPOAC Executive Director, reported on the MPOAC budget referring to attachment 1 of the agenda package under the Executive Director's Report. During the period from April 1 – June 30, 2015, approximately \$129,859 was spent. The remaining balance for the fiscal year was \$4,416. Mr. Mikyska credited the outgoing Executive Director, Mr. Howard Glassman, with keeping the MPOAC on budget for the year.

Mr. Mikyska then provided a legislative update referring to attachment 3 of the agenda package under the Executive Director's Report. The Florida legislature, during the June special session, approved SB2514-A redirecting revenues from additional fees imposed on certain motor vehicle registration transactions (commonly known as the "New Wheels On the Road Fee") from the General Revue Fund to the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF), an amount totaling \$99 million. Of those revenues redirected to the STTF, 6.9 percent are intended to be used to fund the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), an estimated \$14.2 million in Fiscal Year 2015/2016. The law also created the Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network as a component of the Florida Greenways and Trails System and required funding to be allocated to the network in the Florida Department of Transportation program and resource plan.

The legislature also approved HB 41 (also known as Gabby's Law for Student Safety) relating to hazardous walking conditions for public school students. HB 257 was also passed allowing a county or two or more contiguous counties to designate freight logistics zones so long as they are consistent with the local MPO long range transportation plan. Projects in the freight logistics zone plan will be eligible for special funding per specified criteria. Mr. Mikyska also noted that several pieces of legislation related to transportation and supported by the MPOAC, including bills related to distracted driving and the implementation of a mileage-based user fee study and pilot program, were not approved during the 2015 legislative session.

Mr. Mikyska then highlighted two legislative proposals that have been made to reauthorize the federal transportation program and provide continued funding for the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The "Generating Renewal, Opportunity, and Work with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency, and Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities throughout America Act" (GROW America Act), proposed by the US Department of Transportation, would reauthorize the federal transportation program for six years using a combination of current revenues and a new repatriation fee on currently untaxed foreign earnings by U.S. companies. The GROW America Act would prevent new MPOs from being designated within metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) already served by an existing MPO and require coordinated planning and performance target setting in areas where multiple MPOs are already designated within a single MSA. The GROW America Act would also authorize the creation of a high-performance tier of MPOs and grant them with certain benefits including sub-allocation of certain federal transportation funds and priority consideration for Metropolitan Planning (PL) Funds.

The "Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act" (DRIVE Act), proposed by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, is a six-year transportation authorization that provides for three years of guaranteed funding for the HTF. The Drive Act proposes two new programs including a National Freight Program and a program of Assistance

for Major Projects (similar to the existing TIGER Program). It would also speed up the project development process by allowing information gathered during the planning process, to the extent it is still current and relevant, to satisfy the environmental review process and allow agencies to avoid re-analyzing in the environmental process, proposed transportation project alternatives which were rejected during the planning process. The DRIVE Act would increase federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) sub-allocation to metropolitan areas, but reduces the overall amount of STP funding in the early years of the program, resulting in a dip in sub-allocated funds in the first few years of the bill. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) would be 100% sub-allocated to metropolitan areas at a flat amount of \$850 million per year for the life of the bill, increasing TAP funding in the early years of the program, but significantly reducing TAP funding in later years. The DRIVE Act also clarifies transit representation on MPO Boards and adds a new federal planning factor to improve system resiliency and reliability.

Mr. Mikyska recognized the formation of the newest MPO in the state, the Heartland Regional TPO (HRTPO) and noted that information on the HRTPO was provided in attachment 2 of the agenda package under the Executive Director's Report. He concluded his remarks by announcing the MPOAC Policy and Technical Subcommittee meeting had been scheduled for September 11, 2015 at the FDOT District 1 Auditorium in Bartow, Florida and welcomed all who wished to participate to attend.

A member requested that MPOAC members be kept apprised of rapidly-developing information regarding the freight logistics zones.

The Chair requested a brief report from Mr. Greg Stuart, the Freight Committee Chair. Mr. Stuart reported on federal legislative activities and a presentation on current Port Everglades. Freight traffic at the Port has increased by 26% due to direct access to rail. Several elected officials from the Governing Board suggested that more elected officials consider attending the Freight Committee meeting to gain a better understanding of regional freight issues facing MPOs.

## **5. Agency Report**

### **a. FDOT Agency Report**

Ms. Carmen Monroy, Director of the FDOT Office of Policy Planning, reported on the status of the combined effort to update both the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) and the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan. A 35-member steering committee is in place with Mayor Susan Haynie, Palm Beach MPO, serving as vice-chair and Councilmember Jim Wood, Okaloosa-Walton TPO serving as the vice-chair of the SIS Advisory Committee. The FTP will contain three elements including a vision element, a policy element, and an implementation element. At this time, the vision element is being addressed and includes new topic areas including alignment

with the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development and emphasis on providing more modal choices for people and freight, active transportation, workforce development, and customer service. The importance of regionalism is also being discussed in detail.

Goal area themes have emerged including a broader look at safety and security of residents, visitors and businesses; an agile, resilient and high quality transportation infrastructure; efficient and reliable service for people and freight; and transportation solutions that support Florida's global competitiveness, quality places, and environment. The Strategic Intermodal System Policy Plan is addressing interregional connectivity, intermodal connectivity, and economic development. More information and the opportunity to give feedback is available at [www.floridatransportationplan.com](http://www.floridatransportationplan.com). Four workshops have already been held around the state. Upcoming workshops will be held on August 11<sup>th</sup> in Panama City, August 26<sup>th</sup> in Vero Beach, September 1<sup>st</sup> in Miami (since cancelled), and September 2<sup>nd</sup> in Tampa. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the FDOT will be in Orlando as part of the TRANSPLEX conference. The intention is to have the vision plan adopted by the end of calendar year 2015.

Ms. Monroy stated that she was previously the Southwest Area Director for FDOT District One. She noted that the process to develop PL Joint Planning Agreements and PL invoicing had become very challenging and that she plans to work toward increasing the efficiency of those processes. The Chair suggested that she bring the information to the upcoming MPOAC Policy and Technical Advisory Committee meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup> in Bartow.

Ms. Monroy closed by informing the membership that the FDOT was in the process of hiring a new trail manager with the creation of the Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network. Yvonne Arens, FDOT Office of Policy Planning, also noted that because funding is available for the Coast-to-Coast Connector, FDOT is currently seeking projects that are ready to accept that funding (up to \$5.5 million).

#### **b. FHWA Agency Report**

Ms. Karen Brunelle, Director, Office of Project Development, and Ms. Lee Ann Jacobs, Planning Team Leader at the FHWA Florida Division Office, shared FHWA activities.

Ms. Brunelle noted that the FHWA is waiting on new authorization given the extension of MAP-21. The federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) balance, without another extension of federal authorization, is scheduled to drop below \$4 billion at the end of July or early August which would trigger cash management procedures for federal funds allocation. Further, the HTF is expected to go below zero near the end of August without legislative action to infuse the fund with additional monies.

Ms. Brunelle continued by stating that additional information on federal proposed rulemaking related to MAP-21 was expected sometime in September. She reminded the membership that federal TIGER grant applications had been received in early June 2015 and that they were currently undergoing evaluation.

Ms. Brunelle concluded her remarks by reporting that, according to FHWA estimates, US driving had topped 1.26 trillion miles in the first five months of 2015, topping the record set in 2007, and that US driving has steadily increased for 15 consecutive months.

Ms. Lee Ann Jacobs then directed the member's attention to attachment 1 of the agenda package under the FHWA Report detailing the responsibilities and duties of FHWA- Florida Division transportation planning unit staff. She also stated that the FHWA-Florida Division Office had officially moved to its new location - 3500 Financial Plaza, Suite 400, Tallahassee, FL 32312, and that their phone numbers have not changed.

Ms. Jacobs informed the membership that the Annual Statewide Assessment Meeting related to the federal planning findings had been held on Tuesday, July 21, 2015 (a requirement for approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) and that comments related to the process were welcome. She closed by introducing a video entitled "The FHWA 2015 Research & Technology Story." The video highlighted the value of highway research and how FHWA's research and technology initiatives are making a difference. The video can be found at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/research/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/research/).

## **6. MPOAC Institute Overview**

Mr. Jeff Kramer, Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), presented an overview of the MPOAC Weekend Institute. The presentation included a summary of Institute activities for 2015, including attendance statistics and attendee survey feedback. He also introduced MPOAC Institute trainers, Mr. Scott Paine with the Florida League of Cities, Mr. Hal Beardall with the FCRC Consensus Center, and Ms. Karen Seggerman with CUTR/USF.

Mr. Kramer then presented some historical perspective on the Institute since it started in 2007, including the following statistics:

- 16 Institutes since 2007
- held in 6 different locations since 2007
- 223 total attendees
  - 74 (approximately 33%) from a County
  - 139 (approximately 62%) from a municipality
  - 10 (approximately 5%) from a modal or other agency
- 57% of attendees are still on an MPO Board

- 4.79 out of 5 overall evaluation score
- 8.5 overall average number of attendees sent by each MPO over time
- MPOs have sent as many as 19 and as few as 2 Board members to an MPOAC Institute over the years

Mr. Kramer noted changes that have been made to the program over the years based on feedback from attendees. He reminded the staff directors of the Institute materials that are available to them on line, although it is password protected.

Staff directors shared comments made by attendees from their MPO Boards including appreciation of the content of the training, disappointment regarding the length of time it takes to accomplish a project, and appreciation for having the opportunity to meet and learn from other MPO Board members from around the state.

## **7. Strategic Plan for MPOAC**

Mr. Carl Mikyska, MPOAC Executive Director, presented the initial plans and draft outline of the effort to develop a strategic plan for the MPOAC. He distributed the outline and asked for comments or any other input to be submitted by August 6<sup>th</sup>. He requested volunteers to become members of the Strategic Direction Advisory Committee (SDAC). The SDAC will help to guide the strategic planning effort, helping craft the organizational mission and vision as well as goals and objectives. Mr. Mikyska stated that, ideally, the Committee would be comprised of an equal number of MPOAC Board Members and Staff Directors (not from the same MPO) and represent both small and large MPOs from across the state. Future steps include about 8 meetings, with the first meeting to be held on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Bartow (the same day as the MPOAC Policy and Technical Subcommittee meeting). There will also be a member survey conducted, providing the opportunity for all interested members to participate even if they cannot attend any of the SDAC meetings. The SDAC will be asked to guide the development of an implementation action plan. Member questions led to clarification that the survey would initially go to members of the SDAC, but would then be adjusted and sent to a broader audience to include all Board members and all Staff Directors.

The following members volunteered to serve on the Strategic Directions Advisory Committee:

1. Mr. Harry Barley, MetroPlan Orlando
2. Mr. Bob Kamm, Space Coast TPO
3. Mr. Greg Stuart, Broward MPO
4. Mr. Carlos Roa, Miami-Dade MPO
5. Mr. Whit Blanton, Pinellas County MPO
6. Mr. Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO

7. Mr. Bob Herrington, Charlotte County - Punta Gorda MPO

A request was made that a representative from northwest Florida be included on the SDAC.

**8. FDOT Data Collection outside UZA boundaries but within MPAs**

**a. Modeling training for non-modelers**

Mr. Thomas Hill presented an overview of the effort Florida DOT will be undertaking to collect travel data in the non-urbanized (non-UZA) areas of the state using a mobile application. The data collected will include trip purpose as well as auto occupancy. Because some of the data collected may be within MPO planning areas, but outside the defined UZA boundaries, the availability of this data could be useful to the modeling staff of the MPOs. FDOT will make this data available to MPOs once completed.

Mr. Hill also presented an overview of the resources available to MPOs for staff that are not modelers, but who would like to learn more about modeling or would like to become more involved in modeling efforts. More information is available at [www.fsutmsonline.com](http://www.fsutmsonline.com).

**9. Communications**

Mr. Mikyska noted that the communications for the quarter were included in the agenda packet:

- Summary of proposed federal legislation from Transportation for America. The proposed Senate Bill is titled "Senate Railroad Reform, Enhancement and Efficiency Act".

**10. Member Comments**

The Chair noted that this would be the last official meeting for Mr. Michael Howe, the Executive Director of the Sarasota/Manatee MPO, due to his retirement. Mr. Howe expressed his thanks to everyone and stressed that what they do does matter and is valuable to their communities. He then introduced Mr. David Hutchinson who will take over for him as Executive Director of the Sarasota/Manatee MPO.

Ms. Carmen Monroy, FDOT Office of Policy Planning, acknowledged all of the staff directors serving on subcommittees for the FTP update and expressed her appreciation for their service.

Ms. Karen Brunelle, FHWA-Florida Division Office, introduced all of her staff who were present at the meeting.

Ms. Pat Steed, Heartland Regional TPO, noted her return to the MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee after many years of absence. She initially served on the Committee in 1985 during the infancy of the MPOAC.

Mr. Bob Kamm, Space Coast MPO, reported that the Central Florida MPO Alliance had recently adopted Strategic Regional Priorities for the entire Central Florida area.

Ms. Beth Alden, Hillsborough MPO, noted that the MPOs in the Tampa Bay Region have also been conducting cross county/cross MPO project prioritization.

Ms. Sarah Ward, Pinellas County MPO, noted that the Pinellas County MPO had recently formally merged with Pinellas Planning Council, the land use planning entity for Pinellas County. She introduced Mr. Whit Blanton the new Executive Director for the Pinellas County MPO.

**The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 pm.**