

**Florida MPO Advisory Council
Meeting of the Governing Board
April 29, 2021
Orlando, Florida
Meeting Minutes**

Governing Board Members in Attendance:

IN-PERSON (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 14 WITH 9 MAKING AN IN-PERSON QUORUM):

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Capital Region TPA, Chair
Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Sandy Johnson, Broward MPO
Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO
Commissioner Terry Burroughs, Heartland TPO
Mr. Charles Klug, Hillsborough TPO
Commissioner Susan Adams, Indian River County MPO
Commissioner Michael Smith, Forward Pinellas
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando
Mayor Dick Ryneason, Okaloosa-Walton TPO
Commissioner Phillip Walker, Polk TPO
Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Councilmember Andrea Young, Space Coast TPO

IN-PERSON (OTHERS):

Jeff Kramer, MPOAC, Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
John Waldron, MPOAC
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel
Abra Horne, Florida Department of Transportation
Mark Reichert, Florida Department of Transportation
Alison Stettner, Florida Department of Transportation
Brenda Young, Florida Department of Transportation
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA
Brian Freeman, Indian River County MPO
Donald Scott, Lee County MPO
Gary Huttman, MetroPlan Orlando
Jason Loschiavo, MetroPlan Orlando
Virginia Whittington, MetroPlan Orlando
Georganna Gillette, Spacecoast TPO
Dave Hutchinson, Sarasota/Manatee MPO

VIRTUAL (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 7 THAT CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO A QUORUM):

Commissioner Mary Alford, Alachua County, Gainesville MTPO

Commissioner Bill Dozier, Bay County TPO
Commissioner Bill McDaniel, Collier MPO
Commissioner Josh Blake, Lake-Sumter MPO
Commissioner Craig Curry, Ocala/Marion County MPO
Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO
Councilmember Billie Wheeler, River to Sea TPO

VIRTUAL (OTHERS):

Commissioner Craig Estep, Lake-Sumter MPO
Tia Boyd, CUTR
Mary Beth Washnock, Bay County TPO
Paul Flavien, Broward MPO
Anne Mclaughlin, Collier MPO
Chelsea Favero, Forward Pinellas
Scott Koons, Gainesville MTPO
Mike Woods, Lake Sumter MPO
Ron Gogoi, Lee County MPO
Cynthia Lambert, MetroPlan Orlando
Leilani Vaiaoga, MetroPlan Orlando
Julia Davis, Polk TPO
Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO
Greg Scott, Polk TPO
Laura Carter, Space Coast TPO
Stacie Blizzard, Federal Highway Administration
Karen Brunelle, Federal Highway Administration
Jamie Christian, Federal Highway Administration
Carlos Gonzalez, Federal Highway Administration
Cathy Kendall, Federal Highway Administration
Jim Martin, Federal Highway Administration
Holly Liles, Federal Transit Administration
Siaosi Fine, Florida Department of Transportation
Scott Phillips, Florida Department of Transportation
Dana Reiding, Florida Department of Transportation
Erika Thompson, Florida Department of Transportation
Rakinya Hinson, Florida Department of Transportation
Erich Zimmermann, National Association of Regional Councils
Mike Williamson, Cambridge Systematics
Daniel Crotty, Whitehouse Group
Ned Baier, Volkert

There were an additional 6 people attending virtually who were unlabeled or identified only by a phone number

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Nick Maddox, Chair, Capital Regional TPA, called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m. and a quorum was determined. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. All in attendance introduced themselves. Those attending online were then given an opportunity to introduce themselves.

A motion to allow online members to participate in the meeting due to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19 and to remove item 6E & 6F from the agenda was made by Commissioner Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA. A second was made by Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO. The motion was approved unanimously.

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JANUARY 28, 2021 MEETING**

Commissioner Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, moved to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2021 MPOAC Governing Board meeting. A second was made by Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO. The motion carried unanimously.

- **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- A. **UPWP REPORT**

Mr. Jeff Kramer, Interim MPOAC Executive Director/Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), presented the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Report showing expenditures and budget for the third quarter of state fiscal year 2021 (January-March 2021). During his presentation, Mr. Kramer thanked the group for the opportunity to serve as the MPOAC Interim Executive Director. He shared that the MPOAC is operating under budget. Mr. Kramer explained that there was less travel and lower labor costs in the budget because a full-time executive director is not in place. AMPO and NARC dues, which represent significant costs, were paid in the 3rd quarter. The summary financial table was provided in the agenda packet.

- B. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Kramer presented a legislative update of bills that MPOAC and the transportation community are tracking through the 2021 Florida Legislative Session. Mr. Kramer thanked Carl Mikyska, Pasco County MPO, for continuing to update and share the Florida legislative newsletter. He encouraged those who receive the newsletter to share it with anyone who will benefit from the information and to call with questions they may have.

Mr. Kramer reminded the meeting attendees that April 30th is the last day of the regular session. There are several high profile, controversial proposals and as a result there was somewhat less time for transportation proposals. The following items were discussed:

- The 72 hour cooling off period following the publication of the general appropriations act
- The state budget is \$101.5B compared to \$92B in the current fiscal year. A smaller budget was expected, but revenue estimates increased (including federal American Rescue Plan funds, much of which will be for transportation purposes). The total transportation budget is \$10.4 billion, with \$9.4 billion in the FDOT Work Program.
- Key Transportation Bills include:
 - SB 100 – eliminates Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) as we know it, but maintains improvements for US 19 North and funds a PD&E study for an extension of Florida’s Turnpike to the Suncoast Parkway
 - HB 353 – permits bikes with no seats (elliptical bikes) to operate on public roadways
 - SB 566 – relating to motor vehicle rentals and peer-to-peer car-sharing program surcharges
 - SB 950 – revising requirements for motor vehicles passing bicyclists and other non-motorized vehicles
 - HB 1113 - Midblock crossing (still being considered as of 04/28/2021)
 - HB1126 - general transportation bill. Moves due dates for MPO project priorities from Oct 1st to Aug 1st
 - SB 1194 - transportation “train” that includes language separating the Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) from the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) and does not require that TBARTA coordinate the regional Transit Development Plan (TDP) with area MPO plans
 - HB1289 – autonomous vehicle (AV) bill allowing low speed autonomous delivery vehicles to operate on roadways with 35mph speed limits
- Bills to keep an eye on next legislative session include:
 - SB138/140 electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure – did not pass, but would have required a registration fee for electric vehicles comparable to state gas tax paid by an average internal combustion vehicle
 - SB 62 Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) – did not pass, but would have repealed several provisions pertaining to Regional Planning Councils
 - There were hopes for a hands free driving bill, but such a bill was not considered this legislative session

Mr. Kramer reported that he will be completing legislative updates once the bills are signed into law.

• AGENCY REPORTS

A. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Mark Reichert, Administrator for Metropolitan Planning, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), updated the members on FDOT activities and brought forward information of importance to the membership.

Mark Reichert updated the group on the following topics:

- Federal stimulus funds
 - CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act) – March 2020, FAST Act extension with an additional \$39M in general funds of which \$31M is allocated through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program of which \$13M were STBG–urban allocation (SU) funds
 - CRRSSA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act) – December 27, 2020, \$470M went to FDOT, \$89M was sub-allocated to Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). The TMA funds are mostly boxed for next year to make sure budget is available to spend. There is no guidance yet on the remaining \$381M
 - American Rescue Plan – March 11, 2021, \$1.9T was allocated for various programs. \$10.2B went to Florida and the Governor said that \$2B will be used for transportation. The plan has a carve-out of \$30.5B for transit and \$8B for airports. There is no guidance from FHWA or FAA on how much will come to Florida.
 - American Jobs Plan - \$2.3T, of this amount, \$932B is for infrastructure of which \$571B is for transportation - \$115B to highways, \$80B to intercity rail, \$135B to electric vehicle infrastructure, \$110B to transit, \$25B to airports, \$17B to ports, \$44B to megaprojects, \$20B to Safety, and \$25B to equity
 - Highway funding is directed towards “fix-it-first” projects rather than new capacity, which could be problematic for states like Florida
 - Reauthorization of the FAST Act is still to come, but FDOT has taken the following positions:
 1. The new authorization must provide state, local and private partners the long-term funding certainty they need to effectively plan and deliver projects
 2. Such reauthorization must, at a minimum, address the long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund in a fiscally responsible manner
 3. Congress should distribute funds to the states using existing funding formula mechanisms
 4. Due to Florida’s explosive population growth, Congress should use the most-current census data available in distribution formulas
 5. Congress should emphasize streamlining and program simplification – while resisting new program creation

- Legislative update
 - Overall State Budget is \$101.B. FDOT's budget is \$10.26B of which \$9.447B is for the FDOT Work Program. Member projects total \$89.46M. The \$2B extra for FDOT is outlined in the federal appropriations bill, contingent upon receiving the COVID-19 Relief funds. \$1.750B is for state highway system projects, with the remaining \$250M being appropriated to the state's seaports. There is also a \$17M sweep of the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF)
- Status of bills as of 10:00 am 4/29/21
 - SB 1126 (Department Bill) – is back in Senate as of 4/29. It revises the date for MPO's annual submissions of project priorities to the FDOT districts for purposes of developing the FDOT's tentative work program and MPO transportation improvement programs from October 1 to August 1
 - HB 1385 (Department Bill) – House companion bill was laid on the table on 4/27
 - SB 1194 (Transportation Train) – Passed the Senate 39 – 0 and on the Third Reading Calendar in House 4/27. 4/28 passed House, sent back to Senate
 - HB 57 (Transportation Train) – Laid on the table in House on 4/27
 - M-CORES (SB 100) – Passed Senate 39 – 1. Passed House 115 – 0. It allows for alternatives to extend Suncoast using US 19 and an extension of the Turnpike to a logical terminus, but eliminates the original southern corridor
- FDOT planning award ceremony was held on April 9th
 - 2020 Planning Professional of the Year: Conroy Jacobs (Osceola County, Transportation & Transit)
 - 2020 Planning Organization of the Year: Forward Pinellas
 - 2020 Planning Innovation of the Year: Mayor Castor's Crosswalks to Classrooms Program (City of Tampa)
- MPOAC Leadership Meeting
 - The meeting was held in person on April 19th-20th. Secretary Thibault joined the meeting
 - Notes have been shared with the group
- Partnership Quarterly Meeting
 - Notes will be shared from the March 9th quarterly meeting
 - Don Scott, Lee County MPO, and Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Executive Director/CUTR, participated for the MPOs.
- FHWA Florida Planning Finding meeting in July
 - The group was reminded that the meetings are annual and the next meetings are scheduled for July 6 and 7th. Mr. Reichert invited the staff directors to participate
- FHWA Peer Exchange on Transportation Performance Management (TPM)
 - On April 9th, FDOT participated in an FHWA sponsored Peer Exchange with other state DOTs on the coordination efforts between FDOT and our MPOs on TPM. FDOT was asked to participate because of how well they have coordinated on the effort
- Unified Planning Work program (UPWP) template
 - On April 14, there was a working group meeting to discuss the UPWP template. Mr. Reichert shared that there was a lot of MPO participation. There is a follow-up on May

7th, 2021 and the group was asked to participate in this meeting. It was stated that the goal is to have an end product to help the review process

- UPWP amendment thresholds
 - Recommendations are being developed based on the 2020 findings. The first meeting was on April 5th and they are making progress. Mr. Reichert shared that everyone is on board to cut down on UPWP amendments
- UPWP invoice tracker
 - The UPWP invoice tracker was created by an MPO Liaison in District 4. The tracker was shared with Liaisons to help with the budgeting process and liaisons are sharing it with MPOs. The group was encouraged to ask their Liaison about the tracker if they haven't received it yet
- UPWP Funds
 - The group was reminded to spend conservatively in the 1st Quarter of the fiscal year, but to still spend their funds - \$4.7M was left on the table during the Close-Out process
- FTA allocations
 - The annual FTA allocations have been released. MPO Staff Directors were encouraged to reach out to their Liaison if their Liaison has not yet reached out themselves. The allocations are for FFY 20/21 and available for spending by the MPO in state fiscal year 21/22
- Portal Update
 - FTA has indicated that they continue to have technical issues with the Portal on their side (it may be a Firewall issue), and as a result, they will no longer be using the Portal, not even as a document repository. Nothing changes for the MPOs. The MPO Staff Directors were asked to please continue to upload planning documents and amendments into the portal. FDOT will continue to conduct its reviews in the Portal and send copies of the document to FTA
- Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) targets
 - Due to the COVID-19 national emergency, FTA granted an extension of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) performance target compliance date to 7/20/21. The 180-day timeframe for MPOs to set targets begins when the MPO receives the safety targets from the transit providers. FDOT and MPO LRTP and STIP/TIP updates or amendments approved on or after this date must include Transportation Performance Management (TPM) elements for applicable transit safety performance measures and targets. The expectation from FTA is for MPOs to adopt transit safety targets ASAP if the transit agency has already adopted the PTASP regardless of the 180-day timeframe
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) consensus document
 - In the past, the TIP was used as vehicle to submit MPO Governing Board approval of the consensus document and, as a result, the consensus document approval died every year as the TIP was updated. It was recommended that MPOs take the consensus document to their Governing Board as separate document. Five MPOs decided to continue to use the TIP as the vehicle for Board approval of the Consensus Document and therefore, they must continue to do so this cycle. The five MPOs are: Charlotte

County-Punta Gorda MPO, Hillsborough MPO, Indian River County MPO, River to Sea TPO, and St. Lucie TPO

- Research projects
 - RSG (an FDOT consultant) will be reaching out to some of the Florida MPOs about a briefing paper addressing Transportation Equity. Also, Gannett-Fleming will be reaching out on a Resiliency project. In this project, they will be assessing the current state of practice in Florida for how MPOs are integrating resiliency into their long-range planning process and will be reviewing the 2045 LRTPs (that are available). They will also be assessing the specific data, tools, and guidance needed to advance climate planning for regional transportation agencies. They are hoping that the relevant MPO staff will meet with them (virtually) to share their perspectives on the current state of practice and needs. They will be reaching out in May to schedule interviews
- Announcing new FDOT Metropolitan Planning Administrator
 - Mr. Reichert shared that he will be retiring and tomorrow (04/30/2021) is his last official day with FDOT. Ms. Abra Horne will be his replacement. Mr. Reichert shared the following: Abra is a transportation planner with more than 25 years of experience. She has served as a local government representative at two MPOs. Managed eleven MPO push button contracts. Managed projects that required coordination with nine MPOs. And conducted corridor and policy studies throughout Florida. Abra also served as an in-house PD&E consultant project manager at the Turnpike Enterprise

Members requested that Mr. Reichert send his update report and the MPOAC leadership meeting notes to Jeff Kramer, who can disseminate the notes to the group.

B. FLORIDA DIVISION OF FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Cathy Kendall, Team Leader of the Planning Team, and Ms. Karen Brunelle, Director of Program Development, Florida Division, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), updated the members on the activities of the Florida Division Office of FHWA and brought forward information of importance to the membership.

- General announcements
 - Cathy Kendall shared a notice from the US Census Bureau. The notice stated that they are taking comments on the proposed criteria to define urban areas based on the 2020 Census. Comments are due by May 20, 2021
 - Karen Brunelle shared an announcement about the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants (former TIGER and BUILD). The information provided in the packet includes the links for accessing the grants, which are due on July 12th, 2021. The grants focus on planning and capital projects. She encouraged everyone to reach out if they had questions
- Transportation Performance Management updates
 - For PM2 Bridge data, most MPOs are in fair or good condition and only a few have bridges that are considered poor. Those in fair condition will move to poor if projects

aren't submitted in a timely manner. The tables included in the agenda packet provide useful talking points when talking to FDOT about bridge replacement projects.

- PM3 tables included in the agenda packet include travel time reliability, sources are provided on each presentation slide. She encouraged everyone to reach out to planners if there are questions
- CRRSAA guidance
 - The guidance memo is included in the agenda packet. The slides from the presentation can be used as a cliff notes for the guidance document

● BUSINESS ITEMS & PRESENTATIONS

A. MPOAC FREIGHT PROJECT PRIORITIES LIST

Michael Williamson, Cambridge Systematics, and Daniel Crotty, Whitehouse Group, presented this item. The MPOAC Freight Committee identifies high priority freight projects on an annual basis to provide MPOs from across the state with an opportunity to collectively promote and endorse these projects for funding under the National Highway Freight program and other federal and state sources. The Freight Committee worked with the 27 Florida MPOs to develop the statewide MPOAC freight project priority list which will be shared with FDOT for consideration during the upcoming 5-Year Work Program development cycle. All projects have been screened by the Freight Committee to ensure that the projects support the agreed upon intent of the program. Each project listed in the document has the same priority.

Mr. Williamson described the program purpose and the summary of submittals. He reported that 18 of 27 MPOs submitted projects for a total of 36 projects. They worked with District freight coordinators and asked if projects were a District freight coordinator priority.

Mr. Crotty shared a map of the identified projects and noted that there is at least one project in each District. He proceeded to describe the list of projects for each district, concluding by requesting approval of the 2021 MPOAC Freight Project Priorities List.

Charles Klug, Hillsborough TPO, made a motion to approve the 2021 MPOAC Freight Project Priorities List and that the list be transmitted to Florida DOT. Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Don Scott, Chair of the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee, reported that the Staff Directors discussed multiple proposals made during the Freight Committee meeting related to modifying the eligibility requirements for the Freight Project Priority List, expanding the scope and purpose of the Freight Committee to include passenger rail development, updating the name of the Freight Committee to match the expanded scope and purpose, and to conduct a review of the membership of the Freight Committee. He shared that the Staff Directors passed a second motion to recommend approval to:

- modify the eligibility requirements for the Freight Project Priority List to include projects that were not already funded at some level and projects that might supplement or support the national freight network, but are not on the freight network
- update scope and purpose of the Freight Committee to incorporate rail
- change the name of the “Freight Committee” to the “Freight and Rail Committee”
- review and update the Freight and Rail Committee membership list

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, made a motion to approve the Staff Directors recommendations. Commissioner Phillip Walker, Polk TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. MPOAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Chair of the Governing Board, presented this item with assistance from Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel. Commissioner Maddox described that in February 2021, the MPOAC Executive Director announced his resignation, effective March 5, 2021. The MPOAC has limited experience filling the position of Executive Director (there have only been 2 Executive Directors in the history of the organization) and requires time to consider how to approach filling the position. At the request of the MPOAC Executive Committee made during a meeting held on February 24, 2021, Mr. Jeff Kramer with the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida (USF) has agreed to act as the Interim MPOAC Executive Director, providing the MPOAC with time to develop and execute a plan for filling the position of MPOAC Executive Director. Commissioner Maddox then asked for a report from the MPOAC Staff Directors’ Advisory Committee on this subject.

Don Scott, Chair of the Staff Directors’ Advisory Committee, provided highlights from the discussion from the Staff Directors’ meeting. He reported that:

- The Staff Directors recommended that the MPOAC Policy and Technical Committee provide information for the job description and the positives/negatives of extricating from or staying with FDOT, and then they will come back to the Governing Board at a future date. The motion for this recommendation was approved 20 to 4.
- There were concerns from the Staff Directors regarding the following:
 - What should be included in the position description and the advertisement,
 - Where and when the position should be advertised,
 - The vision and mission of the MPOAC as stated in the Strategic Directions Plan and how that relates to filling the vacant position,
 - How to handle the MPOAC Transportation Planner position, and
 - The costs and mechanics associated with this process.

Commissioner Maddox asked for additional details around the discussion. Mr. Scott answered that there was a lengthy discussion on the issues. Highlights from the discussion included:

- The future of the MPOAC Executive Director position,
- The pros and cons of separating from FDOT, and
- How these changes would impact the organization.

Commissioner Maddox asked if the conversion included extending the contract that ends in December 2021 for the Interim Director position. Mr. Scott confirmed that there was some discussion about the timeframe for the Interim Director contract between FDOT and CUTR. He clarified that the need for an extension depends on how quickly the process of developing the MPOAC Executive Director position description and hiring a candidate can be completed. The Staff Directors concluded that, in light of the limited timeframe for this process, the Policy and Technical Committee should meet as soon as possible to prevent delays. Governing Board members expressed similar concerns about the end date for the Interim Executive Director contract. It was indicated that they should move forward knowing they can come back after the process and make additional recommendations. Commissioner Maddox asked for clarification if concerns over the timeline could be addressed by extending the interim period. Chair Scott responded that there is not an issue with asking for more time (but not cost) in the Interim Executive Director contract.

Commissioner Maddox shared that there were previous discussions to better clarify the MPOAC Executive Director's role and tasks. There is flexibility in the way the statute is currently written and FDOT is exploring how to accommodate the needs of the MPOAC without a legislative update. One such suggestion was to require an MPOAC staff person in Tallahassee, but to give flexibility to the Executive Director and allow them to work off-site.

Commissioner Maddox presented two options to the Board members. The options presented were to:

1. Keep the MPOAC Executive Director description as is, with the new Executive Director understanding that the position will be under FDOT as the MPOAC determines if a legislative change is possible, or
2. Slow down and let the Policy and Technical Committee develop the job description, go through the approval process, and then advertise the new job description.

Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Director/CUTR, described the status of the Interim Director contract, explaining that the contract is not renewable, but it may be extendable. Alison Stettner, Director of the Office of Policy Planning, clarified that the contract can be extended, but new funding will require an additional contract. She explained that because there is now a contract mechanism in place, it should not take as long to create a new task work order (TWO) and allocate funding.

Mr. Kramer stated that by mid-Fall the timeframe would need to be established to ensure that there is adequate time for a new contract to be put in place on January 1st, if needed. Commissioner Maddox asked if they would be able to ask for an extension to April 1, 2022 if recommendations are provided for final approval by July and they immediately advertise

the position. Ms. Stettner stated that that timeline could work if additional funding is not needed. If additional funding is needed, a separate contract would have to be executed to provide additional time to cover the transitional period. Commissioner Maddox asked for clarification if a new contract could be in place for January 1, 2022.

Ms. Stettner clarified that there are two contracts with CUTR to support the MPOAC. The Interim Executive Director contract is an additional contract to increase support services so that Mr. Kramer can serve as the Interim Executive Director. Mr. Kramer explained that the Executive Director of the MPOAC doesn't work under a contract, the new hire would be a FDOT employee, and the interim Director contract wouldn't be necessary, but the existing support services contract would continue. To provide additional clarification, Ms. Stettner described the FDOT contracting process and available funding. Ms. Stettner further clarified that FDOT is balancing out of staff salaries and contractual services already allocated to the MPOAC. There is funding throughout the UPWP to cover contractual services and to hire. The contractual services exceed the Executive Director's current salary because there is more than one staff person on the new contract and additional incidentals are included.

Commissioner Maddox considered if the extension can be requested in July after the recommendations are provided. Commissioner Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO, hoped that the extension would get them beyond the session so that when a decision on an Executive Director is made, they would know the direction that the MPOAC is headed.

Commissioner Maddox suggested that they approve the Staff Directors recommendations and ask for feedback at the July meeting for the approval of the job description and strategies to address the arrangements with FDOT. The Chair requested a motion approving the Staff Directors recommendation for the Policy and Technical Committee to bring their findings in July for the Governing Board to approve and advertise following the meeting. He explained that they can make a decision to extend the timeline in the contract in July if necessary.

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, made a motion to approve the Staff Directors recommendation. Commissioner Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. PRESENTATION BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

NARC serves as the national voice for regions by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues, including in the area of transportation. Hundreds of MPOs across the country are NARC members, including all twenty-seven Florida MPOs. Erich Zimmermann is the Deputy Director of NARC and also the Director of Transportation Programs where he oversees NARCs efforts on behalf of MPOs. Mr. Zimmermann discussed

NARC services for its MPO members and provided an overview on current federal legislative and administrative issues, including the status of efforts to reauthorize the federal transportation law (FAST Act).

Mr. Zimmermann also summarized the national and state level efforts to identify a sustainable replacement for the motor fuel tax. This is in response to direction from the MPOAC Governing Board at their January 2021 meeting to work with transportation partners to hold a discussion on alternative transportation revenue mechanisms as part of a future MPOAC meeting agenda item.

Items shared by Mr. Zimmermann included the following:

- 35 states have either enacted and implemented vehicle miles traveled (VMT) programs, are testing VMT pilot projects, or are currently researching VMT options.
- Two regional groups of states, Road Usage Charging (RUC) West and the I-95 Corridor Coalition /Eastern Transportation Coalition (ETC), have coordinated efforts and resources around VMT issues to leverage resources and to focus funding efforts. The ETC recently put out results from a pilot study in Delaware and Pennsylvania.
- RUC West members are organized into three tiers of member States including states with policies enacted to implement RUC programs, states testing RUC programs, state researching RUC programs
- Oregon (OReGO), Utah, and Virginia have active programs replacing gas taxes with mileage-based programs. Mr. Zimmermann described these programs in greater detail
- Florida is included in testing Implementation Paths for Mileage Based User Fees (MBUF): The Coalition studies MBUF through ETC, and there is nothing specific to Florida at this time
- There is Federal legislation since the FAST ACT was authorized that funds some work in this area
 - The Surface Transportation System Funding Alternatives is the most recent distribution of funds (it is the 5th distribution of funds under this program).

Mr. Zimmermann made the following general observations based on his research:

- The road usage charge concept having been implemented in a red, a purple, and a blue state (Oregon, Utah and Virginia) indicates that the approach itself is somewhat nonpartisan
- These programs are not replacing what is being collected in terms of fuel tax
- At the state level there has been progress, but there is uncertainty as to whether there will be policy movement toward a similar approach at the federal level

Meeting attendees noted that in Oregon they implemented the program incrementally and asked if this was the case in Utah and Virginia. Mr. Zimmermann answered that in Utah, they went right into a program that was a part of a larger gas tax and user fee package. In Oregon a task force was created to look at some of these issues. Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Executive Director/CUTR, explained that Utah learned from Oregon. Mr.

Zimmermann added that he wasn't sure about Virginia, but explained that there was a change in party structure that has resulted in more aggressive strategies to find new avenues for funding.

D. MPOAC TRANSPORTATION REVENUE STUDY

Mr. Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Director/CUTR, provided an overview of the MPOAC Transportation Revenue Study published by the MPOAC in 2012. Recognizing that current funding sources were declining and unsustainable over the long term, the MPOAC funded a 2-year study with the goal of developing recommendations to deal with the future transportation funding needs of Florida's metropolitan areas and state. The MPOAC developed a set of 14 transportation revenue options that were both sustainable and innovative, including draft legislative language for 6 of the options. The study effort was guided by an advisory committee made up of diverse transportation interests representing business organizations, local governments, environmental groups, and freight shippers.

Since 2012, the MPOAC has advocated for the implementation of strategies to expand transportation revenue sources and stabilize transportation funding levels that are directly based on the revenue options identified in the MPOAC Transportation Revenue Study. Mr. Kramer shared that the brochure is provided in the agenda packet. The following items were discussed:

- State Trust Fund purchasing power
- State transportation taxes and fees
- The impact of electric vehicle miles traveled (EVMT)/autonomous vehicles (AV) on motor fuel consumption and revenue
- The 14 options that the MPOAC endorsed
- Top revenue options
- Remaining revenue options

Mr. Kramer pointed out that what came out of this revenue study remains the basis for the MPOAC Legislative Policy Position #1 which focuses on expanding transportation revenue sources and stabilizing transportation funding levels in Florida.

After Mr. Kramer's presentation, there was a discussion on the following topics:

- Revenue sources that can be used for infrastructure, including transportation infrastructure
- re-entry into the Paris Agreement (an international treaty on climate change) and national goals to reduce greenhouse gas pollution
- competing interests on actions that subvert the migration of people from internal combustion engine (ICE) to electric vehicles (EV)
- A holistic viewpoint of this shift and how Florida MPOs can avoid going in a different direction from the President's initiative
- Gas tax revenue decline and the impact on system maintenance

Mr. Kramer stated that technology can help address some of the concerns associated with future funding issues, particularly the issue of declining revenue generated by the current motor fuel tax. Two obstacles to moving to alternative mechanisms for providing sustainable revenue for transportation were 1) the potential of charging fees on the use of electric vehicles (such as a registration fee) to discourage people from switching from ICE to EV, and 2) the potential privacy concerns associated with a mileage-based user fee that employs tracking technology. A variety of states have explored other alternatives. For example, some states have employed the following strategies:

- The registration fee paid on alternatively fueled vehicles is the equivalent to what the average ICE vehicle would pay per year in motor fuel tax
- Placing a cap on fees such that alternatively fueled vehicles never pay more than an ICE vehicle as a way to avoid any unintended disincentives
- The privacy debate is attempting to be addressed with 3rd party agencies to collect the data and then destroy the data once the information has been used

Meeting attendees stated that a pay-as-you-go model is oftentimes easier than paying upfront and at some point a parity between users of AV and EV will need to be determined. This may translate to an impact fee on the front end when buying a new vehicle. The discussion continued to include the following topics:

- Potential pushback from the auto industry if there are upfront costs added to the price of electric vehicles. There is concern that the extra costs will impact people who want to purchase EVs with the intention of saving the environment and not just cost savings. It was explained that it will be up to legislators and local governments to reach a balance between the issues of cost savings versus environmental impacts.
- The feasibility of a pay-as-you-go model versus paying up front and how to address EVs that are already on the road, e.g. TESLAs, if a pay up front model is implemented. The programs Mr. Zimmermann described provides drivers with two options to pay registration up front or pay a per mile fee. The tradeoff is the privacy issue. There is also a distinction between knowing where someone has been versus how many miles they've driven. The states have to decide the approach they will use.
- Board Members asked follow up questions on the miles driven and the possibility of crossing state lines for gas/other benefits. States need to think about the impact that the weight of vehicles have. For example, a TESLA weighs more than a regular sedan and can cause just as much, if not more, damage and deterioration to the roadways. The states are not getting the necessary funding to replace these roads.
 - It was explained that the technology would provide the most accurate rates by using location-based mileage tracking. An algorithm is needed to determine how fees are returned to the jurisdictions.

• **MEMBER COMMENTS**

No member comments.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting of the MPOAC Governing Board will be on July 29, 2021. A meeting notice will be sent out at least one month prior to the meeting date.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:17pm