

Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council
Executive Committee Meeting
Florida Hotel – Orlando, Florida
October 24, 2024

ATTENDEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Andrea Young, Space Coast TPO
David Hutchinson, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Dick Rynearson, Okaloosa-Walton TPO
Kandase Lee, Florida/Alabama TPO
Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando

Others (In-person):

Chris Rosenberg, Miami-Dade TPO
Colleen Nicoulin, River to Sea MPO
Curlene Thomas, FHWA
Donna Green, FDOT
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA
Jennifer Fortunas, FDOT
Joseph Nuender, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Marybeth Soderstrom, Heartland Regional TPO
Nicole Estevez, Renaissance Planning
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel
Ronique Bishop, FHWA
Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas
William (Bill) McDaniel, Collier MPO

Others (Virtual):

Amy Beckmann, FDOT
Carol Scott
Charles Koppernolle
Gerald Goosby, FDOT
Jeff Sheffield, North Florida TPO
Joseph Sullivan, FHWA
Kia Powell, FDOT
Mary Tery Vilches, Miami-Dade TPO
Ralph Yoder, Florida Transportation Commission
Robert Esposito, Hernando/Citrus MPO
Stephen Browning, FDOT

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Uribe called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

No public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/NOTES

The Committee reviewed and unanimously approved the meeting minutes for April 25, May 15, July 1, and August 2, 2024. Mayor Rynearson made a motion, which Dave Hutchinson seconded.

BUDGET REVIEW 2023/2024

Mark Reichert presented the budget, noting that the expenditure rate of 32.4 percent appeared higher than expected due to upfront payments of AMPO and NARC dues, which accounted for nearly \$200,000 of the budget. However, operational expenses stood at a more accurate 18.5 percent, aligning well with the 25 percent benchmark for the fiscal year. The Committee members expressed satisfaction with the clarity of the new budget format, which eliminated confusion over negative balances. A motion to approve the budget was made by Kandase Lee and seconded by Mayor Rynearson, passing unanimously.

MPOAC BUDGET REVIEW

Paul Gougelman summarized the results of the Executive Committee's annual evaluation of the Executive Director's performance. Mr. Gougelman noted that Mark Reichert received an overall score of 4.022 out of 5, noting that this reflected a strong performance. Mr. Gougelman explained the evaluation methodology, which involved averaging individual ratings from each Committee member across various criteria. While the scores reflected Mr. Reichert's strong, certain areas for improvement were highlighted.

One area of improvement identified was the need for clearer alignment between Mr. Reichert's work in Tallahassee and the strategic vision of the MPOAC Board. This included enhancing communication and collaboration between MPOAC, FDOT, and the legislature. Chair Uribe underscored the importance of defining Mr. Reichert's role more precisely to prevent any potential misinterpretation by external stakeholders and ensure his actions align with the Board's direction. Chair Uribe emphasized the need for consistent and unified messaging from MPOAC leadership to maintain credibility and trust with FDOT and the legislature. ***She suggested the Committee meet virtually in early December to identify and set a direction and expectations for the Executive Director and the MPOAC. Members broadly agreed with this as a next step.***

Committee members also acknowledged Mr. Reichert's accessibility and dedication, recognizing the unique challenge of balancing his dual role as MPOAC's representative while housed within FDOT's offices and the legislative challenges. Commissioner Andrea Young suggested incorporating a self-evaluation into future annual reviews, noting that such an exercise could provide valuable insights into the Executive Director's perspective on his strengths, challenges, and achievements. ***This suggestion received broad support from the Committee, as members agreed that understanding Mr. Reichert's self-assessment could help the Board better support his role and refine their expectations.***

Ultimately, the Committee unanimously approved the evaluation following a motion by Dave Hutchinson, which Mayor Rynearson seconded. The approval was accompanied by a commitment to

further discussions on refining Mr. Reichert's role and responsibilities, particularly in preparing for the upcoming legislative session and ensuring the MPOAC's strategic priorities are represented.

DISCUSSION OF SURVEY RESULTS/FUTURE OF MPOAC

Mark Reichert presented findings from the survey distributed after the July 24 meeting. The survey asked Governing Board members and Staff Directors to rank priorities for MPOAC's future. The response rate was strong, with 19 of 27 governing board members and 17 of 27 staff directors participating. The survey aimed to identify elements critical to a reconstituted MPOAC in the event of legislative action targeting the organization. Discussions highlighted the need for MPOAC to be proactive in defining its role and value to FDOT and the legislature.

Chair Uribe stressed the importance of preparing for the upcoming legislative session. Chair Uribe provided an update on her recent meeting with FDOT Secretary Jared Perdue. The meeting focused on fostering stronger relationships between MPOAC and FDOT leadership, particularly in light of legislative uncertainties. Secretary Perdue acknowledged the value of MPOAC and offered to facilitate introductions to legislative leaders to strengthen advocacy efforts. Chair Uribe emphasized building trust and ensuring MPOAC's actions align with FDOT's expectations. She emphasized that the MPOAC must present a unified vision to avoid misinterpretation or undermining.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL/TIMESHEETS

The Committee reviewed and ratified the Chair's prior approval of timesheets and travel expenses. Dave Hutchinson made a motion to approve, which Commissioner Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Uribe and Dave Hutchinson recapped the recent AMPO Conference in Salt Lake City. Chair Uribe was honored with the *AMPO National Outstanding Elected Official Award*, a significant recognition for her contributions to transportation planning. The conference included discussions on national transportation trends, reauthorization policies, and technical sessions. Chair Uribe highlighted the non-political nature of the event, which reinforced the importance of integrating infrastructure and transportation into future planning efforts. She urged other elected officials to attend future conferences, noting the insights gained from engaging with experts across the country.

Chair Uribe also expressed pride in the contributions of the Florida delegation at the conference and her honor in receiving a national award, which she credited to the collaborative efforts of planners nationwide. Uribe stressed the importance of MPOAC's role in advocating for infrastructure and transportation needs and ensuring that the organization maintains strong, trust-based relationships with FDOT and the legislature.

Uribe shared details of her recent meeting with FDOT Secretary Perdue, highlighting his willingness to facilitate introductions to key legislative leaders. She underscored the need for MPOAC to solidify its role and ensure its activities align with the expectations of the department and the legislature. She expressed concerns about potential legislative actions against MPOAC in the upcoming session and stressed the importance of maintaining credibility and trust with FDOT and other stakeholders.

Paul Gougelman echoed the need for MPOAC to strengthen relationships with FDOT and the legislature, noting the historical challenges in these areas. Dave Hutchinson and other members supported the idea of continuing proactive engagement, hoping to restore and maintain positive relationships.

Commissioner Andrea Young voiced agreement, citing community frustrations about inadequate infrastructure planning and the prioritization of minimum development standards. She emphasized the need for stricter enforcement and higher standards to ensure long-term sustainability and community safety. Kandase Lee added support, reiterating the importance of making actionable progress with the information from the Strategic Directions Plan and survey results.

Mark Reichert expressed his appreciation for the feedback and agreed that conducting a self-evaluation would be beneficial. He affirmed his commitment to leveraging the Strategic Directions Plan and the upcoming meetings with the Executive Committee to move the organization forward.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Uribe adjourned the meeting at 1:50 p.m.