

**Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Board
Draft Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Polk County Administration Building, Commission Boardroom
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Voting Members Present:

Commissioner Martha Santiago
Commissioner Bill Braswell
Commissioner Rick Wilson
Commissioner Rebecca Troutman
Mayor Sara Roberts McCarley, **Chair**
Mayor Pro Tem Guy LaLonde, Jr.
Commissioner Stephanie Madden
Commissioner Terry Coney
Commissioner Ashley Troutman
Mayor Brian Yates
Commissioner Nat Birdsong
Commissioner Travis Avery
Vice Mayor Vernel Smith
Vice Mayor Nancy Daley

South County Bloc Members:

Council Member Adam Greenway, **Vice-Chair**
(Voting Member)

Central County and Ridge Bloc Members:

Commissioner Marisol Ortega (Voting Member)

Advisory Members Present:

Wayne Gaither
Ryan Kordek
Heather Bryan

Other Persons Present:

Angela Kaufman
Tracy Mullins
Cindy Mitchell
KC Rivera
Nicole McCleary
Edith Perez
Robert Lee
Sharon Garrett

Representing:

Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland
City of Winter Haven
City of Winter Haven
City of Auburndale
City of Haines City
City of Lake Alfred

City of Frostproof

Town of Lake Hamilton

Representing:

FDOT, District One
Polk TPO Director
TPO Legal Advisor

Representing:

Polk TPO Staff
Polk TPO Staff
Polk TPO Staff
Polk TPO Staff
Citrus Connection
FDOT
Member of the Public
Member of the Public

INTRODUCTION

1. Call to Order

Chair Sara Roberts McCarley called the TPO Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Confirmation of Quorum

KC Rivera, Polk TPO staff, confirmed a quorum. Council Member Adam Greenway represented the South County Bloc and Commissioner Marisol Ortega represented the Central County and Ridge Bloc. Advisory Council members in attendance included Wayne Gaither (FDOT), Ryan Kordek (Polk TPO), and Heather Bryan (Polk County Legal).

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chair Roberts McCarley opened the floor for public comments.

Robert Lee expressed concerns regarding the Central Polk Parkway East alignments being evaluated by Florida's Turnpike.

Sharon Garrett expressed concerns about the potential loss of her family land in connection with the planned Central Polk Parkway East.

Chair Roberts McCarley closed public comment.

4. Agenda Review

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, provided an overview of the Board's agenda and highlighted the action items. These included public hearings for the Draft Amendments to the FY 2025/26–2029/30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Draft FY 2026/27–2030/31 TIP. Additional action items included appointments to the Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA) and review and approval of the Draft 2026 Priority Transportation Projects. He noted that the Board would also receive presentations on the Lakeland Intermodal Center PD&E and an update on the Vision Zero Action Plan.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Approve TPO Board Meeting Minutes – April 9, 2026

6. Approve Interlocal Agreement and Waiver of Conflict between Polk County and the Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) for Legal Services

Motion: Motion for approval of the consent agenda made by Vice-Chair Greenway, seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Motion carried without dissent.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

7. Public Hearing on Draft Amendment to the Polk TPO's FY 2025/26 – 2029/30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Angela Kaufman, Polk TPO Staff, presented a proposed amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a railroad safety improvement at the East Central Avenue crossing in Lake Wales. The public hearing for this amendment to the TIP was published in the local newspaper and online but received no comment.

Chair Roberts McCarley opened the floor for public comments. There were none. The floor was closed for public comments.

Motion: Motion for approval was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Vice-Chair Greenway. Motion carried without dissent.

Roll Call vote was taken and approved without dissent.

8. Public Hearing on the Polk TPO's Draft 2026/27 – 2030/31 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Angela Kaufman, Polk TPO staff, presented the draft FY 2026/27–2030/31 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She provided an overview of major planned investments, including highway, bridge, resurfacing, bicycle, pedestrian, trail, transit, and rail safety projects. Ms. Kaufman also reviewed the history of public comments on the TIP, the comments received during the current cycle, and the community's feedback. The public hearing for the proposed TIP amendment was published in the local newspaper and online. She also informed the board of the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) recommended action.

Chair Roberts McCarley opened the floor for public comments.

Sharon Garrett expressed support for the resurfacing of existing roads but stated her opposition to any roads being routed through her property.

Mayor Pro Tem LaLonde requested clarification on project prioritization. He asked how projects are being ranked, how many have been completed or canceled, and how many related surveys have been submitted.

Angela Kaufman reported that we received 245 comments and 85 completed surveys. She explained that project prioritization is aligned with the priority projects list. She noted that staff will need to verify which projects have been completed and which have been canceled.

Ryan Kordek stated that two projects, New York Avenue Pedestrian Overpass and the SR 60 Railroad Overpass (CSX S Line), were previously removed. However, he noted that these projects were included in the TAC's motion to be added to the new TIP.

Commissioner Ashley Troutman asked for clarification regarding the decline in pedestrian funding and inquired whether funding decisions are made at the federal or state level.

Angela Kaufman responded that more funding is currently being directed toward road resurfacing projects and confirmed that the decision authority is the State.

Ryan Kordek explained that the TIP includes upcoming projects. He added that funding is not tied to specific projects, funds are allocated based on identified needs.

Wayne Gaither stated that a list of completed projects can be provided. He also noted that some projects are not fully completed but have advanced to different phases due to increased costs.

Commissioner Ashley Troutman asked whether approval of the TIP would finalize the Central Polk Parkway (CPP) project.

Ryan Kordek clarified that the CPP is a separate project being coordinated with the Turnpike Authority.

Wayne Gaither explained that the Turnpike Authority has its own funding source but works collaboratively with FDOT.

Chair Roberts McCarley closed public comment.

Motion: Motion for approval was made by Vice-Chair Greenway and seconded by Commissioner Braswell.

Roll Call vote was taken and approved without dissent.

Chair Roberts McCarley explained why this TIP is so important and explained what the MPO means to the new members.

9. Appointment to the Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA)

Cindy Mitchell, Polk TPO Staff, requested representation for the CFMPOA, noting that the board currently has a vacancy for the Polk TPO. She shared that she contacted Mayor Smith, who serves as the alternate, and confirmed he would be interested in becoming a member. She stated that if Mayor Smith is appointed as a member, a new alternate would need to be appointed.

Motion: Motion to appoint Mayor Smith as a member of the CFMPOA was made by Commissioner Santiago and seconded by Vice-Chair Greenway. Motion carried without dissent.

Chair Roberts McCarley asked the board if anyone was interested in serving as the alternate. Commissioner Terry Coney volunteered.

Vice-Chair Greenway suggested appointing Vice Mayor Clark of Davenport as the alternate due to his geographic proximity.

Commissioner Becky Troutman stated that while she understands the value of geographic consideration, she believes having someone from the west side would provide balanced representation. She noted that Commissioner Coney is present and willing to serve as the alternate.

Chair Roberts McCarley added that it is important to have municipalities represented from both directions within Polk County and expressed her appreciation for Commissioner Coney's willingness to serve.

Motion: Motion to appoint Commissioner Coney as alternate was made by Commissioner Madden and seconded by Commissioner Braswell. Motion carried without dissent.

Commissioner Coney stated that he resides along the I-4 corridor and is willing to learn and assist however needed.

10. Review/Approve Draft TPO 2026 Priority Transportation Projects

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, presented the priority projects for Fiscal Years 2027/28 - 2031/32, noting twenty (20) recommended projects encompassing highways, intersections, transit, bicycle and pedestrian, and multi-use trails. He explained that the Board would adopt the priorities today, and funding for candidate projects would be determined in the fall when FDOT publishes their draft work program. Mr. Kordek reported that FDOT has allocated \$410 million for resurfacing 125 miles of State Highways in Polk County, and \$4.3 billion is currently invested in committed highway projects on both FDOT and County roads. He continued with an overview of road congestion based on the completed analysis for Polk County, presenting a map that identified approximately thirteen (13) miles of roadways currently failing in the county. An additional forty-three miles are projected to fail within five (5) years, with another 26.7

miles approaching congestion. Mr. Kordek noted that the long-standing SR 60 freight project had been removed, although the TAC has requested it be reinstated in the TIP and to be included in the priority projects. He also described a fully funded candidate project in the County's CIP, Thompson Nursery Road widening, for which the TPO is requesting five (5) million in TRIP funding from FDOT. Mr. Kordek then reviewed transit priorities, including the Citrus Connection Intermodal Center, which is seeking a \$1.6 million grant for design. He concluded with additional priority projects involving multimodal improvements and multi-use trails.

A lengthy discussion took place among the Board regarding the transportation projects.

Motion: Motion for approval was made by Vice Chair Greenway and seconded by Commissioner Coney. Motion carried without dissent.

PRESENTATIONS AND STATUS REPORTS

11. Lakeland Intermodal Center Project Development and Environmental (PD&E)

Nicole McCleary from Citrus Connection provided an update on the PD&E process, BUILD Grant application, and ongoing coordination with the Federal Transit Administration.

12. Vision Zero Action Plan Update

Tracy Mullins, TPO Staff, provided an update on the Vision Zero Action Plan. He explained what has been accomplished since the last update, outlined the work currently underway, and described the end goal.

REPORTS

13. Executive Director's Report

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, provided an update on recent activities including the April MPOAC meeting in Orlando where the committee approved regional freight priorities for the state which included two (2) projects on State Road 60 in Polk County. He noted that Chair Roberts McCarley made the motion for approval. Mr. Kordek also stated that FDOT Secretary Jared Perdue provided a presentation at the meeting and referenced several projects underway in Polk County including Moving I-4 Forward and construction at SunTrax in support of FDOT's Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) initiatives.

Mr. Kordek also referred to a handout on Federal Transportation Reauthorization and stated he attended a meeting in Lakeland in April where staff from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce were seeking comments from members of the public on the proposal.

Lastly, he referenced a meeting in Winter Haven he attended in May that focused on the Florida Wildlife Corridor and highlighted FDOT's wildlife crossing project which is currently under construction and is part of FDOT's Moving I-4 Forward projects.

14. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Wayne Gaither introduced the TPO intern, Chris Castro. FDOT is currently working on the Budget for the Work Program. He also explained the air marks, and the process for funding with categories and projects.

Chair Roberts McCarley asked when the board could expect to have a permanent District One Secretary.

Wayne Gaither explained that the interim secretary has been traveling throughout the district and that there is currently no permanent secretary appointed. He stated that he will keep us informed.

15. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chair Roberts McCarley opened the floor for public comments. Seeing none, closed the floor.

16. Board Member Comments

Commissioner Becky Troutman presented an issue of unauthorized signage placed within the public right-of-way, e.g., snipe signs. She provided documentation outlining the City of Bartow's enforcement approach, noting that violations carry a \$250 fine for posting unauthorized signs.

Chair Roberts McCarley asked whether garage sale signs were included in this policy.

Commissioner Becky Troutman stated that they cannot create special exceptions for specific types of signs.

Commissioner Ashley Troutman asked how signs promoting private parties would be addressed.

Commissioner Becky Troutman clarified that in such cases, the fine would be issued to the individual or entity benefiting from the sign.

Commissioner Ashley Troutman stated that he visited Ms. Garrett's property and encouraged other board members to do the same. He asked whether there are any additional proposed routes under consideration.

Wayne Gaither stated that the PD&E process evaluates alternative routes as part of its review. He also explained that he has met with Ms. Garrett to discuss the matter.

17. Adjournment – Next meeting date is August 27, 2026.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion made by Vice-Chair Greenway, seconded by Commissioner Braswell.

The meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Respectfully transcribed by KC Rivera, Office Manager IV.

Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, states that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.