



Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Board Draft Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 8, 2024

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

Voting Members Present:

Mayor Trish Pfeiffer, TPO Chairlady
Commissioner Bill Braswell
Commissioner Rick Wilson
Commissioner George Lindsey
Commissioner Neil Combee
Mayor Bill Mutz
Commissioner Sara Roberts-McCarley
Commissioner Guy LaLonde, Jr.
Commissioner Bill Reed
Mayor Nat Birdsong
Vice Mayor Brian Yates
Commissioner Jack Hilligoss
Commissioner Jordan Helms
Mayor Omar Arroyo

Representing:

City of Bartow
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 Winter Haven
City of Winter Haven
City of Lake Wales
City of Auburndale
City of Haines City

East County Voting Members:

Mayor Nancy Daley

Representing:

City of Lake Alfred

South County Voting Members:

Commissioner Jim Watts

Representing:

City of Fort Meade

East County Alternate Members:

Commissioner Willie Quarles
Commissioner Jeremy Clark

Representing:

Town of Dundee
City of Davenport

Advisory Members Present:

L.K. Nandam

Representing:

FDOT, District One

Ryan Kordek
Elizabeth Voss

Polk County TPO
TPO Legal Advisor

Other Persons Present:

Edith Perez
Stephen Pack
David Turley
Kristi Smith
Katherine Chinault
Chuck Barmby
Tracy Kiley
Lynda McMillan
William Roll
Annette Crews-Downs
Julia Davis
Angela Kaufman
Lorenzo Thomas

Representing:

Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
City of Lakeland
Citrus Connection
Citrus Connection
Kimley-Horn
Polk TPO
Polk TPO
Polk TPO
Polk TPO

1.Call to Order

Chair Pfeiffer called the TPO Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2.Confirmation of Quorum

Annette Crews-Downs, Polk TPO staff, confirmed a quorum. Commissioner Watts represented the South County Bloc and Mayor Daley represented the East County Bloc. Advisory Council members present were Secretary Nandam, FDOT, Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO, and Elizabeth Voss, Polk County Legal.

3.Opportunity for Public Comment

Chair Pfeiffer opened the floor for public comment. There were none.

4.Agenda Review

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, presented the agenda which included Polk TPO Executive Director Quarterly Timesheets and expense reimbursements, Draft Amendments to FY 2024/25-2028/29 Transportation Improvement Program, Carbon Reduction and Resiliency Plan, Collier to Polk Regional Trail Master Plan update, State of the Transportation System Report, TPO Bicycle Safety Video, and Polk County SS4A Grant update.

Consent Agenda

5. Approve Minutes of February 8, 2024

6. Approve TPO Executive Director Quarterly Timesheets and Expense Reimbursements

Motion: Motion to approve Consent Agenda items by Commissioner Combee, seconded by Commissioner McCarley. Motion carried without dissent.

Other Action Items

7. Public Hearing on Draft Amendments to FY 2024/25-2028/29 Transportation Improvement Program

Angela Kaufman, TPO Staff, presented the Draft Amendments to FY 2024/25-2028/29 Transportation Improvement Program. The Roll-Forward Report includes federal and state projects programmed in FY 2023/24 that were not completed. FDOT requested Polk TPO to include these projects in the FY 2024/25-2028/29 TIP to ensure eligibility for federal and state funding is maintained. No changes or amendments have been made regarding funding or overall scheduling of these projects. Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval at the July 25, 2024, meeting and TPO Staff is requesting the TPO Board approve the Roll-Forward Report as an amendment to the FY 2024/25-2028/29 Transportation Improvement Program as requested by FDOT. Floor opened to public comment and there were none.

Motion: Motion to approve the Roll-Forward report by Commissioner Combee, seconded by Commissioner McCarley.

Roll Call Vote Required. Roll call vote taken and it was a unanimous vote.

8. Review/Approve of the Carbon Reduction and Resiliency Plan

William Roll of Kimley-Horn presented the Carbon Reduction and Resiliency Plan. The Resilience and Carbon Reduction Planning overview is to assess the vulnerability of the transportation system to hazards, identify projects that address the impacts of hazards and that are eligible for resilience and carbon funding, and to prepare recommendations for the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Assessing vulnerability gives an understanding of the system's vulnerabilities, develops a prioritized list of assets that are at risk to hazards, gives informed decisions about the relative costs and benefits of potential mitigation options, and supports making decisions on how to best prioritize solutions with limited resources. Commissioner Combee asked if the pots of money are distributed by FDOT District and what each FDOT District puts into the Resiliency fund.

L.K. Nandam responded that the state gets a certain amount of allocation based on formula funding for resiliency, based on the funds received from collected gas taxes. A portion of that is allocated to each MPO based on population, and, a certain amount is kept at the state level for the state highway system and all district candidate projects, and the decision is made a state level. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended the TPO approve the Transportation Resiliency and Carbon Reduction Plans for Polk County.

Motion: Motion to approve the Transportation Resiliency and Carbon Reduction Plans for Polk County by Commissioner McCarley, seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Motion carried without dissent.

Presentations and Status Reports

9. Collier to Polk Regional Trail Master Plan Update

Katherine Chinault, FDOT presented the Collier to Polk Regional Trail Master Plan update. The Vision for the Collier to Polk Regional Trail is to establish a paved, multi-use trail that connects and provides access to small towns, cultural and heritage sites, parks, preserves, wildlife corridors, and working lands. The Master Plan approach is to evaluate opportunities, define concepts and alternatives, position success, and deliver the Comprehensive Master Plan. Regional coordination and engagement include Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Collier, Hendry, Glades, Highlands, Hardee and Polk County. Other regional coordination includes Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, National Park Service, and the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes. Public open houses were held May 29th, May 30th, June 4th, June 5th, and June 6, 2024. During the five open house meetings there were over 100 attendees and 150+ comments. A virtual open house is available through CollierToPolkTrail.com. Key themes expressed were, “overwhelming support, build it now, focus on user experience, trail town approach is favored, and how long will it take”. The Collier to Polk Trail Master Plan will include The Trail Experience, The Region, Engagement, Planning the Trail, and The Path Forward. The Polk County section has 2 alternatives: Hardee County line to Fort Frasier Trail @ SR 60, and, the Fort Frasier Trail @ SR 60 to connect with Auburndale TECO. Ms. Chinault noted that FDOT District 1 is preparing for the PD&E phase across all segments of Collier to Polk corridor and PD&E’s may begin by late 2024. Commissioner Combee asked if the double sidewalk from SR 50 to Webster is connected to trails, because he wondered if it would ever be used. L.K. Nandam, FDOT commented that the sidewalk is in FDOT District 5, and he will get an update and bring it back to the next meeting. Commissioner Santiago asked if FDOT works with the towns to see what hikers might need or is work being done in each town on the trail, regardless of

public interest. Ms. Chinault explained that the trails are the focus of this project and FDOT has worked with the towns and cities to talk with them about what that might look like when the trail comes through the town and what amenities might be provided. To become a trail town and offer amenities each town or city would have to apply to receive those funds. FDEP handles the application process to become a trails town. Winter Haven and Bartow are both trail cities.

10.State of the Transportation System Report

Mr. Kordek presented the State of the Transportation System Report 2024. The State of the Transportation System Report is an overview of Roadway Performance, Safety, and Future Projections. Roadway Network Database includes 1,344 miles of state, county, and city-maintained roads in Polk County. An average of 18.8M vehicle miles are driven on major Polk County roads daily, and less than 1% of Polk County major roadways currently operate at a LOS E or F. Total VMT on Polk County's major roads increased by 12.7% in two years from 16,709 in 2021 to 18,837,913 in 2023. During the same two-year period, 78 roadway segments in Polk County recorded an increase in VMT greater than 25.0%. Without improvements and with a 2% annual traffic growth, 45 miles of Polk County roadways will degrade to Level of Service "F" in 10 years. Planned improvements in the 2045 LRTP are implemented, nearly 146 miles of Polk County roadways will reach Level of Service "F" by 2045. County and City maintained roadways with the highest rate of serious crashes include CR 35A, CR 540, CR 630, CR 17A and CR 655. This was an Informational item only.

11. TPO Bicycle Safety Video

Brittany Silva, Polk County Communications staff presented the TPO's new public service announcement Bicycle Safety video which was prepared by the TPO and Polk County Government Television (PGTV). It is being shared on social media and will be featured on the TPO Website. This was an Informational item only.

Reports

12. Executive Director's Report

Ryan Kordek and other TPO staff covered these topics:

Polk County Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Status

Julia Davis, TPO staff presented the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) project update. She recapped the history: Polk County was awarded a Safe Streets for All grant from FHWA. These funds

will be used to create a Vision Zero Action Plan. This plan will identify the top 20 most dangerous roads and 20 most dangerous intersections in Polk County. Ms. Davis noted that the TPO and County staff are presently in negotiations with the highest ranked consulting firm to develop the plan. Once the consultant starts, this plan will take approximately 2 years to complete. The plan is a county-wide initiative and there will be multiple opportunities for the public to get involved. Finally, Ms. Davis noted that the project would be looking for Vision Zero Champions.

Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit

A "Save the Date" flyer was distributed for the Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit. This regional event will be held on October 9, 2024. It is being hosted this year by the Hillsborough MPO, and will be held at a facility in Tampa Bay.

October 10th TPO Board Meeting - Discussion on Transportation Safety

Mr. Kordek stated that at the October 10th TPO Board meeting, there would be presentations by Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd and Polk County School Board Superintendent Frederick Heid on transportation-related safety. Mr. Kordek noted that Polk County School Board Superintendent has lost 22 students due to transportation-related fatalities.

Other topics

Mr. Kordek recognized Elizabeth Voss for her years of service of the Polk TPO.

13. Florida Department of Transportation

FDOT District One's Secretary Nandam announced that FDOT District 2 took a hit from Hurricane Debby. He went on to mention that road resurfacing is going to help the LOS for our Polk County roadways. Wayne Gaither, FDOT recognized the new MPO Liaison Supervisor, Kristi Smith.

12. Opportunity for Public Comment

Floor opened to public comment and there were none.

13. Board Member Comments

Commissioner McCarley commented about the MPOAC and how informative that meeting was. Mayor Pfeiffer announced that Citrus Connection's new service called, "The Squeeze" is now being offered in Bartow from 10am until 2pm. Commissioner McCarley commented

that community service organizations could engage with the Vision Zero Plan by donating car seats to those who cannot afford them.

14. Adjournment – Next meeting date is October 10, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully transcribed by Annette Crews-Downs, TPO 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.