

BAY COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES
EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL (Designated staff)
Bay County Transit Office
1010 Cone Ave, Panama City, FL 32401
June 26, 2024

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Pamn Henderson, Chair	City of Callaway
Robert Carroll, Vice-Chair	Bay County Commission
William Dozier	Bay County Commission
Doug Moore	Bay County Commission
David Griggs	City of Callaway
Pat Perno	City of Lynn Haven
Brian Grainger	City of Panama City
Janice Lucas	City of Panama City
Josh Street	City of Panama City
Michael Rohan, Sr.	City of Panama City
Mary Coburn	City of Panama City Beach
Paul Casto	City of Panama City Beach
Jack Griffis	City of Springfield

Virtual Attendance:

Clair Pease	Bay County Commission
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MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Tommy Hamm	Bay County Commission
Judy Vandergrift	City of Lynn Haven
Jerry Smith	City of Mexico Beach
Jenna Flint Haligas	City of Panama City

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Lamar Hobbs	BayWay
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Kathy Rudd	CPWG
Sherri Foster	Transit
Harrisson Neilly	Transdev
Brandon Curvis	Bayway
Trey Kolmetz	Bayway
Gene Keen	Bayway
Ashley Stukey	Bay County
Lindsay Slautterback	Kimley-Horn
Bernie Thompson	Citizen
Richard Walker	Citizen

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Janet Walker

Citizen

Virtual Attendance:

Terry Shaw

P.E., Kimley-Horn

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

Austin Mount

Mary Beth Washnock

Gary Kramer

Leandra Meridith

Tiffany Bates

Angela Bradley

Jill Nobles

Virtual Attendance:

Gabrielle McVoy

Katie Fults

Howard Vanselow

Jill Strickler

Gina Watson

Renee Quick

Tammy Neal

CALL TO ORDER / INVOCATION / PLEDGE – Chair Pamn Henderson

Chair Henderson called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Moore asked to add a discussion regarding administrative support to the TPO. Bay County Commissioners provided a signed resolution from the county commissioners in support of this discussion.

Commissioner Griggs stated that he needed more time to review the information before discussing it today. After a consensus from the board, Commissioner Moore withdrew his motion and stated that he would bring it back at the August meeting to give board members more time to review the information.

Commissioner Carroll moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore, and it was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Rich Walker discussed his concerns regarding the SR 390 widening project, stating that the project has not been a priority and has taken years to be completed. Rich Walker stated that the project cuts the City of Lynn Haven in half and encouraged the board to make the SR 390 improvement project a higher construction priority and to stop putting new projects in front of it. Rich Walker asked the board when the project will be completed.

Janet Walker also discussed her concerns about the lack of progress on the SR 390 project and asked about the updated timelines on three projects. Janet Walker asked for updated information on CR 389 from SR 77 to the intersection of SR 390 and referenced the TPO's 2030 plan that stated that specific route would be widened to four lanes. Janet Walker asked if that window for construction is happening soon and when construction would continue past SR 77 and continue to the intersection of SR 390 and CR 389. Janet Walker also inquired about East 26th Street in Lynn Haven and when it is going to be joined to 26th Street on the west side.

Bryant Paulk stated that he would bring the Walkers' comments and questions to FDOT and would coordinate with ECRC staff on the responses.

Bernie Thompson asked the board not to approve of the GTC minutes or the draft bill language for the GTC item, informing the board that he made several public records requests and that not all his questions were mentioned in the minutes. Bernie Thompson requested the names of the task force that advised the GTC, and asked about the task force findings, the taxing authority, property rights and special districts. Bernie Thompson stated that he did not receive any of these items and just received a list of names of people on the task force.

Bernie Thompson encouraged the board to look at section five and the statement that this bill would give the GTC a wide range of powers to include acquisition of private property and to charge fees to citizens if it meets broad ideas of public purposes. The GTC minutes have been updated to reflect Bernie Thompsons comments.

FDOT UPDATE: FDOT Update - Bryant Paulk, AICP Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Urban Liaisons

Bryant Paulk reported that the US 231 at Star Ave/Titus Rd realignment project is scheduled for a February 2025 letting. The current construction estimate for this project is \$21million. The increase in the project estimate has generated the need for an LRTP amendment and FDOT will be sending a request to the TPO for this update.

Bryant Paulk stated that the DuPont Bridge replacement project was let in May of this year. This was a \$350 million design/build contract awarded to Scott Bridge Co. Bryant Paulk stated that once contract time and other details are finalized FDOT will update the TPO.

Bryant Paulk reported there would be a public meeting for the SR20 from SR79 to US231 PD&E study on July 23rd at the Sand Hills Assembly of God Church. The church is located at 14032 Hwy 77 Southport, FL. The meeting is scheduled from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Chair Henderson stated that she spoke with Brian Pettis at FDOT about the letter the TPO sent to FDOT in April regarding the request for signage on the Thomas Drive Bridge; a work

order to install signage on the Thomas Drive flyover for eastbound traffic that warns drivers that the right lane is ending. Chair Henderson stated that they also discussed the MLK study and said its constructed with a restrictive median with various directional and full median openings. The restrictive median reduces overall conflicts between all roadway users, vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians and promotes the efficient and safe movement of people and goods. FDOT inquired that the Bay TPO board find out any specific intersection generating concern and FDOT would take the information and do a thorough evaluation. Commissioner Lucas stated that she would have to ask city staff for specific addresses. Chair Henderson stated that if Commissioner Lucas would provide any specific intersections, she would include her, Bryant Paulk and Brian Pettis on an email for follow up.

Commissioner Griggs asked if the US 231 at Atar Avenue/ Titus Road intersection project was included in the section of US 231 that is starting in February 2025 or is that just the widening of SR 231. Bryant Paulk stated that it is just the widening of SR 231, and that the realignment was basically pulled out of the SR 231 capacity projects but will be improved from a safety standpoint during the widening.

PLANNING AND TRANSIT CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **ALL COMMITTEES - Approval of April Meeting Minutes**
2. **ENCLOSURE A – TPO ONLY - Consideration of the Membership Certification for Bay County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards – *Howard Vanselow, ECRC Staff***

Commissioner Street moved to approve the consent agenda items. Commissioner Carroll seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PLANNING ACTION ITEMS:

1. **ENCLOSURE B– ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE – PUBLIC HEARING REQUIRED Consideration of Resolution BAY 24-15 Adopting the Bay County TPO FY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - *Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff***

Gary Kramer presented the Bay County TPO FY 2025-2029 TIP. Leandra Meredith presented the comments received and the public involvement element for the TIP.

Commissioner Moore moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution BAY 24-15 adopting the FY2025-2029 TIP. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dozier.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Henderson
Commissioner Carroll
Commissioner Dozier
Commissioner Moore
Commissioner Pease
Commissioner Griggs
Commissioner Perno
Commissioner Grainger
Commissioner Lucas
Commissioner Street
Mayor Rohan
Councilmember Coburn
Council Member Casto
Council Member Griffiths

The motion passed unanimously.

2. ENCLOSURE C - ALL COMMITTEES Consideration of Resolution BAY 24-14 Adopting the Bay FY 2026-2030 Project Priorities – *Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff*

Gary Kramer presented the Bay County TPO FY 2026-2030 Project Priorities. Leandra Meredith presented the public involvement section of the project and presented survey results. Commissioner Griggs stated that ECRC staff gave a presentation to the planning board, and it really helped the group understand what the TPO board does and how the Priorities work.

Commissioner Street asked if the additional phasing (Phase Six), from MLK Boulevard along 11th Street to East Avenue and next to the Lynn Haven Rail Trail was included in this presented priority list. Gary Kramer stated that it can be added at the pleasure of the board.

Commissioner Dozier stated that he would be happy to stay after the meeting with Bryant Paulk to help answer the Walkers' questions regarding the completion date of SR 390 through Lynn Haven.

Commissioner Moore moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution Bay 24-14 adopting the FY 2026-2030 Project Priorities with the SunTrail extension on Phase six. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dozier and the motion passed unanimously.

3. ENCLOSURE D- ALL COMMITTEES – Election of TPO and Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair for FY 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

The board chose to keep the chair and vice chair the same.

Commissioner Dozier moved to elect Pamn Henderson as TPO Chair and Robert Carroll as TPO Vice Chair for FY 2025. The motion was seconded by Council Member Coburn and was passed unanimously.

PLANNING PRESENTATIONS ITEMS:

1. ENCLOSURE E – ALL COMMITTEES - Emerald Coast Safety Action Plan for the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant Update – *Lindsay Slautterback, Kimley-Horn*

Lindsay Slautterback gave an update on the Emerald Coast Safety Action plan for the Safe Streets for All Grant. Jared Schneider informed the board that as a recipient of an SS4A grant, ECRC will produce a Safety Action Plan. The Safety Action Plan will assist the ECRC and the TPO regions in achieving the target of zero fatalities and serious injuries.

2. ENCLOSURE F - ALL COMMITTEES – Introductory Presentation for the Smart Regions Master Plan- *Terry Shaw, P.E., Kimley-Horn (virtual)*

Terry Shaw gave an update on the Smart Regions Mater Plan, stating that the vision of the plan was to leverage smart technologies to enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors.

ENCLOSURE G - PLANNING INFORMATION ITEMS (no presentation necessary):

1. TCC and CAC January 2024 Meeting Minutes
2. Bay TPO Actions Report – April 2024
3. Letter to FDOT RE: Signage on Thomas Drive Bridge
4. Letter to FDOT RE: Request for Access Management Study on MLK Jr. Blvd.
5. Letter to TPO from Florida Department of Commerce RE: Submittal of TIP
6. Meeting Notice for Transportation Alternative Workshop (February 2024)
7. Letter to FDOT RE: TIP Amendment
8. MPO Joint Certification Statement
9. 2024 Bay County TPO Meeting Schedule

TRANSIT AGENDA

1. TRANSIT ACTION ITEMS: ENCLOSURE H – TPO ONLY – Nomination of Transit Subcommittee Member – *Mary Beth Washnock, ECRC Staff*

Mary Beth Washnock stated that following the April TPO meeting, staff received documentation from the City of Panama City Beach that Councilman Michael Jarman has been replaced on the TPO, thus creating a vacancy on the Transit Subcommittee and GTC. To maintain five seats on the Transit Subcommittee/GTC, Lamar Hobbs asked the TPO to appoint a replacement.

Commissioner Carroll moved to appoint Mary Coburn to the Bay County TPO Transit Subcommittee/Governance Transit Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dozier and was passed unanimously.

2. ENCLOSURE I – TPO ONLY - Consideration of Resolution Bay 24-16 Approving Draft Bill Language for Proceeding with the Necessary Legislative Process for Creation of a New Independent Transit Authority – *Ashley Stuckey, Bay County BOCC*

Ashley Stuckey informed the board that on June 3, 2024, the GTC met to consider recommending to the TPO and BOCC that the updated draft bill language be resubmitted to the Office of Bill Drafting Services for consideration and inclusion in the FY2025 Florida Legislative Session.

Ashley Stuckey stated that one of the sections that has been changed refers to the transit authority board itself and its membership. Previously, the county, the cities, and the TPO were required to select elected officials as its members. The new version states that the selected member does not have to be an elected official.

Ashley Stuckey stated that a citizen voiced concern over the non-ad valorem special assessment and that before the bill was submitted, all ad valorem taxation powers were taken out of this new version of the bill.

Ashley Stuckey stated that there was also discussion about the additional fees charged in section five and explained that they are no more than the powers the TPO and Bay BOCC have now. If this board was to be created, it would need to have the power to levy charges and fees.

Chair Henderson stated that she spoke to Representative Griffiths about the House bill and reasons it did not make it to committee. Representative Griffiths shared that some of the language in the bill didn't sit well with everybody. An example being the term

"independent special district". Chair Henderson stated that Representative Griffiths recommended tweaking the language of the bill before submitting again.

Mary Coburn asked about the language in Section 5D that states the GTC can collect fines from persons or property or vote for the provision and use of services. Lamar Hobbs stated that the county does not have fining authority, so he was not aware why that language was included. Ashley Stuckey stated that they would re-evaluate that language.

Ashley Stuckey stated that County staff can go back through the language and have it brought back at the August Bay TPO meeting to be voted on before it is taken to the Bay County BOCC. No action was taken.

TRANSIT UPDATE

LEGAL UPDATE – Burke, Blue, Hutchison, Walters & Smith, P.A.

OTHER BUSINESS – The next Bay TPO meeting will be held on August 7th, at 3:30 p.m. The TCC will meet at 11:00 a.m. and the CAC will meet at 1:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the Bayway Public Transit System, Administration and Meeting Facility, 1010 Cone Ave, Panama City, Florida 32401. For more information, contact Mary Beth Washnock, TPO Coordinator at marybeth.washnock@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976 x 228.

ADJOURNMENT