

**OKALOOSA – WALTON TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Chautauqua Hall, 95 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435**

**February 15, 2024**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Nathan Boyles, CHAIR	Okaloosa County Commission
Anthony Vallee, VICE-CHAIR	City of DeFuniak Springs
Joe Blocker	City of Crestview
Andrew Rencich	City of Crestview
Bobby Wagner	City of Destin
Tracey Dickey	City of Freeport
Dick Rynearson	City of Fort Walton Beach
Carolyn Ketchel	Okaloosa County Commission
Paul Mixon	Okaloosa County Commission
Donna Johns	Walton County Commission
<i>Virtual Attendance</i>	
Bill Schaetzle	City of Niceville
Christine Wasdin	City of Valparaiso

**MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

J.B. Whitten	City of Crestview
Torey Geile	City of Destin
Travis Smith	City of Fort Walton Beach
Mel Ponder	Okaloosa County Commission
Danny Glidewell	Walton County Commission
William "Boots" McCormick	Walton County Commission
James T. Wood	Midbay Bridge Authority

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Scott Davidson	Hurlburt Field
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Kristen Schell	City of Niceville
Anna Hudson	Walton County
Mark Brock	FDOT
Daniel Henkel	City of Niceville
Jack Kiger	Eglin Airforce Base
Jared Kirkland	FDOT
Gloria DeBerry	Fort Walton Beach
Allison Sullivan	Okaloosa County BOCC
Mike Martin	

Virtual Attendance

Carla Hodges

FDOT

**EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:**

Austin Mount

Mary Beth Washnock

Tiffany Bates

Rae Emary

Leandra Meredith

Angela Bradley

Gary Kramer

Jill Nobles

Howard Vanselow

Tammy Neal

Virtual Attendance

Katie Fults

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Boyles asked to add an item to the agenda to discuss future joint and non-regularly scheduled TPO meetings.

**Councilman Rencich moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mayor Wagner seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**PUBLIC FORUM:** There were no speakers.

**FDOT UPDATES:**

Bryant Paulk updated the board on three upcoming projects, stating that FDOT will hold a hybrid public alternative meeting Tuesday, Feb. 20 concerning the U.S. 98 "Around the Mound" Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The project limits cover State Road 30 (U.S. 98/Miracle Strip Parkway) from S.R. 189 (Beal Parkway) to the west end of the Brooks Bridge in Okaloosa County. Bryant Paulk stated that the hybrid meeting will be from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Citizens can attend virtually at [www.nwflroads.com/virtualmeetings](http://www.nwflroads.com/virtualmeetings). Those unable to participate online can attend in person, at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center, 1250 Miracle Strip Parkway SE. Preregistration is required for virtual attendance and in-person attendance is encouraged.

Bryant Paulk reported that there will be a virtual project update meeting on March 6, 2024, to discuss the intersection improvements on US 98 in Destin at Palm Street and Sandprint Drive.

Bryant Paulk stated that there will be a virtual project update on March 12, 2024, on the resurfacing project on US 98 from the Santa Rosa/Okaloosa County line, east to Josie Road. The project will improve turn lanes along the corridor and will construct a westbound turn lane at A21 Road.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of August 2023 Meeting Minutes**

**Mayor Rynearson moved to approve the November 2023 O-W TPO meeting minutes. Commissioner Wasdin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**ADD ON ITEM:**

Chair Boyles stated that neither he nor the other TPO members were involved in the recent planning for the joint TPO meeting that occurred on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chair Boyles requested that either the TPO chair or the TPO board be involved in all future planning of any joint TPO meeting.

Commissioner Ketchel stated that based on the invitation and the hotel, she felt the optics were not good for a government event and she would support a motion for the TPO board to be involved in the planning process and scheduling of all future joint TPO meetings.

**Councilman Rencich moved to direct staff to coordinate any planning efforts for future joint TPO meetings with the TPO chair prior to the event being scheduled. Mayor Wagner seconded the motion, and it was approved with Commissioner Ketchel opposed.**

**1. ENCLOSURE A - ALL COMMITTEES - Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-01 Requesting AMTRAK to Restore Stations and Passenger Service in Northwest Florida – Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff**

Gary Kramer presented and stated that both TCC and CAC recommended approval.

**Commissioner Mixon moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 24-01 requesting AMTRAK restore stations and passenger service in Northwest Florida. Mayor Rynearson seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

**2. ENCLOSURE B - ALL COMMITTEES - Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-02 Approving the Evaluation Criteria for Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) Staff Ranking of Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Projects - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff***

Jill Nobles stated that as per the UPWP, ECRC staff is re-evaluating the adopted evaluation criteria used to rank candidate projects. Comments will be collected through January 19, 2024.

**Councilman Vallee moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 24-02 approving the evaluation criteria for ECRC staff ranking of TSM projects. Mayor Wagner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

**3. ENCLOSURE C - ALL COMMITTEES - Request to Proceed with Amending the Okaloosa-Walton 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan to Include (1) Destin Cross-Town Connector in the Cost Feasible Plan, (2) West 98 Collector in the Needs Plan, (3) JW Hollington Connector Road in the Needs Plan, (4) Mack Bayou to Sandestin Lane Connector Road in the Needs Plan, (5) CR 3280 Extension in the Needs Plan, and (6) Freeport Waterfront Improvements in the Needs Plan - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff***

Jill Nobles stated that this request is to proceed with amending the O-W 2045 LRTP. Jill Nobles presented the six projects.

**Commissioner Ketchel moved to authorize the TPO staff to proceed with amending the Okaloosa-Walton 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan to include (1) Destin Cross-Town Connector in the Cost Feasible Plan, (2) West 98 Collector in the Needs Plan, (3) JW Hollington Connector Road in the Needs Plan, (4) Mack Bayou to Sandestin Lane Connector Road in the Needs Plan, (5) CR 3280 Extension in the Needs Plan, and (6) Freeport Waterfront Improvements in the Needs Plan. Councilman Vallee seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. ENCLOSURE D - ALL COMMITTEES - Schedule for Development of the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2026-2030 Project Priorities - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff***

Jill Nobles presented and stated that this item will be up for adoption in June.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES -TPO ONLY**

Tiffany Bates gave a legislative update, stating that ECRC staff has been tracking Senate Bill 1226 and House Bill 1301, related to FDOT. Tiffany Bates discussed the transportation industry bills, Senate Bill 266, and House Bill 287, and Senate Bill 1032, and House Bill 7049, which impact MPOs and the MPOAC.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS** (no presentation necessary):

1. TCC and CAC November 2023 Meeting Minutes
2. O-W TPO November 2023 Actions Report
3. Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Letter
4. U.S. 98 "Around the Mound" Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
5. City of Destin Request for Inclusion of the "Cross-town Connector" Project in the Long-Range Transportation Plan Letter
6. Florida Commerce Signed Letter for OW TPO TIP for FY 2023/2024 – 2027/2028
7. Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Educational Workshop Agenda
8. 2024 OW TPO Meeting Schedule

**OTHER BUSINESS:** The next O-W TPO meeting will be held on April 18, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. The CAC will meet at 9:30 a.m. and the TCC will meet at 1:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the Okaloosa Admin Building, 1250 N. Eglin Pkwy., Shalimar, FL 32579.

### **ADD ON ITEM:**

Councilman Schaezle stated that he got recent training at a local MPOAC training event and would like to relinquish his position as alternate to attend the MPOAC Governing Board. Mary Beth Washnock asked if there was anyone who would like to take his place as the alternate.

**Councilman Vallee moved to appoint Mayor JB Whitten to serve as the alternate on the MPOAC Governing Board. Mayor Rynearson seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

*The meeting was adjourned.*