

OKALOOSA – WALTON CITIZENS’ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Okaloosa Administration Building, 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, FL 32579

April 18, 2024

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Alexander Barthe, CHAIR
Amy Jamieson, VICE CHAIR
Bill Cox
Yvonne Earle
Robert J. Rennie
Don Cleveland
Doug Tolbert
Catherine F. Ward

Virtual Attendance:

Wanjiku Jackson
Harrison Harsch

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Yvonne Shanklin
Gary Adams
Matthew Cox
Steven J. Czonstka
Neill O’Connell
Hunter Harmon

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Scott Davidson	Hurlburt Field
Christy Johns	FDOT
Anthony Vallee	DeFuniak Springs
Terry Shaw	Kinley Horn

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

Austin Mount
Mary Beth Washnock
Tiffany Bates
Leandra Meredith
Angela Bradley
Gary Kramer
Jill Nobles

Tammy Neal
Virtual Attendance
Gina Watson

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Chair Bathe called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

PUBLIC FORUM: *None*

FDOT UPDATES: Chair Barthe asked for an update on the signals at SR 85 at US 90 and Antioch and US 90. Christy Johnson stated that the parts have been ordered but there is still not an update on those intersections. Chair Barthe also inquired about Highway 285 safety improvements and Christy Johnson stated that there was no update.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of February 2024 Meeting Minutes

Yvonne Earle noted two changes to the minutes, stating that the discussion about nepotism that she seconded stated that it passed, but it did not pass. (Note, the motion that passed was the motion to add the discussion about nepotism to the agenda. The motion regarding nepotism, specifically, did not pass. The minutes, as written, were correct). Yvonne Earle also stated that the minutes stated that the Eliza Jackson school was performing a study, but it was being conducted by the Safety Council. Mary Beth Washnock stated that the change would be made.

Yvonne Earle moved to approve the February CAC minutes as amended. Robert Rennie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

2. ENCLOSURE A – Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-04 Adopting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 – FY 2026 Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

3. ENCLOSURE B – Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-06 Issuing a Letter of Support for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Prioritization Process Pilot Program (PPPP) Discretionary Grant Application

Bill Cox moved to recommend that the TPO approve the remaining consent items. . Amy Jamieson seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **ENCLOSURE C - ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-05 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 presented the recommended LRTP amendments.

Doug Tolbert moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 24-05 amending the OW 2045 LRTP. Robert Rennie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

2. **ENCLOSURE D - ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-03 Adopting the 2024 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Ranked Projects for FDOT District 3 Fiscal Year 2026 – 2030 Tentative Work Program– *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff***

Jill Nobles presented the 2024 TA set-aside ranked projects for FY 2026 and stated that the final priority ranking is due to FDOT on April 26th. ECRC staff will submit the final ranking from the TPO to FDOT.

Bill Cox moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 24-03 adopting the 2024 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside ranked projects for FDOT District 3 Fiscal Year 2026 – 2030 Tentative Work Program. Robert Rennie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. **ENCLOSURE E - ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Approval of Letter of Support for Fort Walton Beach “Around the Mound” Project – *Austin Mount, ECRC Staff***

Austin Mount presented a letter of support for the Fort Walton Beach “Around the Mound” project design and asked that the CAC consider recommending the TPO’s approval.

Amy Jamieson moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign a letter of support for the Fort Walton Beach “Around the Mound” project. Yvonne Earle seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

4. **ENCLOSURE F - ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Approval of Letter of**

Support for Destin Crosstown Connector- *Austin Mount, ECRC Staff*

Austin Mount presented a letter of support for the City of Destin's Crosstown Connector and asked that the CAC consider recommending the TPO's approval.

Yvonne Earle moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign a letter of support for the Destin Crosstown Connector. Robert Rennie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

5. ENCLOSURE G – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 24-07 Amending the Okaloosa-Walton TPO, TCC, and CAC Bylaws – Austin Mount, ECRC Staff

Austin Mount presented the recommended changes to the O-W TPO and advisory committees' bylaws. The most recent update was a change to the TPO's quorum requirement, and it occurred on January 13, 2021. Yvonne Earle asked if the members online counted towards quorum. Austin Mount stated that it is a state law that virtual attendees don't count towards the quorum, but if there is a quorum physically present, the virtual attendees can vote.

Amy Jamieson moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign O-W 24-07 amending the Okaloosa-Walton TPO, TCC, and CAC Bylaws. Robert Rennie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. ENCLOSURE H - ALL COMMITTEES – Introductory Presentation for the Smart Regions Master Plan – *Terry Shaw, P.E., Kimley-Horn*

Terry Shaw presented the Smart Regions Master Plan. Chair Barthe asked if signalization falls under smart regions. Terry Shaw stated that there are opportunities on a state-wide basis for technology deployments as well as a federal grant program specifically dedicated to advanced technology deployments. Chair Barthe asked about further funds to help with projects such as Highway 285 safety improvements and better signalization such as flashing yellow caution lights at SR 85 and US 90 going over the overpass, as well as at the blind curve at Antioch and US 90.

Doug Tolbert stated that he noticed the recent FDOT initiative which added streetlights, they were all on wood poles and strung together with above ground wiring. He stated that it looked like they were pursuing quantity versus quality. He asked if that was part of the metric. Terry Shaw that aesthetics is very important, but sometimes the utilities will maintain the lights and will use their poles instead of going through FDOT.

Don Cleveland asked if the streetlight fixtures could be dark sky compliant fixtures to reduce overhead impact. Terry Shaw responded that it's associated with approaching aircraft. He stated that they primarily focus on energy conservation and making sure that they are using lighting to enhance safety. Terry Shaw added that they look at it from a safety standpoint and an energy standpoint.

2. ENCLOSURE I – ALL COMMITTEES – Florida Greenways and Trails (FGT) Presentation – *Angela Bradley, ECRC Staff*

Angela Bradley presented the FGT presentation and stated that the original prioritization of regional trails was completed by the Council and provided to the Department of Transportation in March 2016. At the time, only seven regional trails were identified within the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS). Currently, there are 14 regional trails identified within the FGTS. Because of the additional statutory language, the Council will be developing a prioritized/reprioritized list of the current regional trails. Jessica Paul informed the board that ECRC presented two proposed trail projects to be ranked by the Florida Greenways and Trails Council on March 27, 2024. The Great Northwest Coast Connector and the US 90 Trail Corridor.

Chair Barthe asked if you had to overall quantify the difference between the Highway 90 corridor and the Great Northwest corridor, which would have the higher use, and which should be prioritized between the two. Angela Bradley stated that she thinks that the Great Northwest is used a lot and Walton County has planned for the corridor in that area. Chair Barthe asked if the organization should prioritize one. Angela stated that it will most likely come out of the plan and what the TPO and technical committee comes up with.

Yvonne Earle asked about the construction of the Bridge-to-Bridge path and if the construction would be done along with the Brooks Bridge project. Angela Bradley stated that she thinks it is fully funded and that it is a county project.

Wanjiku Jackson asked if one priority was selected over the other, how soon would it be available knowing that most of the population is on the northern side. Angela Bradley stated that ECRC staff requested the priorities be ranked and put on the Florida Greenways and Trails Network and then also asked it be put on FDOT's central network, so staff could plan, and local governments could ask for grants.

3. ENCLOSURE J – ALL COMMITTEES – Review of Draft O-W TPO FY 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program – *Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff*

Gary Kramer presented the draft O-W TPO FY 25-29 TIP and said this item will be up for adoption in June.

4. ENCLOSURE K – ALL COMMITTEES – Review of Draft O-W TPO 2026 – 2030 Project Priorities – Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff

Jill Nobles presented the draft O-W TPO FY 26-30 Project Priorities. This item will be up for adoption at the June TPO meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS (no presentation necessary):

1. TCC and CAC February 2024 Meeting Minutes
2. Joint TPO February 2, 2024 Workshop Summary
3. O-W TPO February 2024 Actions Report
4. 2024 O-W TPO Meeting Schedule

OTHER BUSINESS: The next O-W TPO meeting will be held on June 20, 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.

There was discussion about the importance of being persistent and taking information and discussion back to TPO members. Chair Barthe emphasized the importance of the projects the CAC discussed.

Chair Barthe discussed the importance of working with the military in the area. Chair Barthe discussed the major issues that the military families have in this area and discussed Project Sound.

ADJOURNMENT:

Stay up to date with TPO events and activities on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/EmeraldCoastRegionalCouncil or by subscribing to the Okaloosa-Walton TPO Interested Parties list : <http://eepurl.com/dqlsyH>

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or family status. Reasonable accommodations for access will be made in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and for languages other than English. Please notify ECRC Public Involvement of any special requirements or requests at publicinvolvement@ecrc.org or email Leandra Meredith at Leandra.Meredith@ecrc.org. You may also call 1800-226-8914 or 1-800-955-8771 for TTY-Florida. All requests should be made at least 48 hours in advance.

Introduzca la participación del público se solicita, sin distinción de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad, religión, discapacidad o estado familiar. La OPC hará arreglos razonables para el acceso a esta reunión de acuerdo con el Americans with Disabilities Act, y para los requisitos de idioma que no sea inglés. Notifique a la Ada Clark (ada.clark@ecrc.org) de los requisitos de acceso o el idioma en el 850-332-7976 ext. 227 o 1-800-955-8771 para TTY-Florida al menos 48 horas de antelación.