

**OKALOOSA – WALTON TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Okaloosa Administration Building 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, FL 32579**  
**April 18, 2024**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Nathan Boyles, CHAIR	Okaloosa County Commission
Anthony Vallee, VICE-CHAIR	DeFuniak Springs
J.B. Whitten	Crestview
Joe Blocker	Crestview
Andrew Rencich	Crestview
Bobby Wagner	Destin
Teresa Hebert	Destin (Alternate)
Dick Rynearson	Fort Walton Beach
Tracey Dickey	Freeport
Bill Schaetzle	Niceville
Carolyn Ketchel	Okaloosa County Commission
Mel Ponder	Okaloosa County Commission
Paul Mixon	Okaloosa County Commission
Donna Johns	Walton County Commission
Danny Glidewell	Walton County Commission
William "Boots" McCormick	Walton County Commission

**MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

Torey Geile	Destin
Travis Smith	Fort Walton Beach
April Sutton	Mary Esther
James T. Wood	Mid-bay Bridge Authority
Christine Wasdin	Valparaiso

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Scott Davidson	Hurlburt Field
Christy Johns	FDOT
Douglas Capps	Crestview
April Rencich	Crestview
Kristen Ward	Hurlburt Field
Samantha Graves	City of Freeport
Samantha Cutsinger	Okaloosa County
Gloria DeBerry	Fort Walton Beach
Bobby Nabors	Fort Walton Beach
Jim Bagby	FL-House Dist. 1

## O-W TPO Meeting Minutes

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Mrs. JB Whitten	Citizen
Randy Showers	Okaloosa County
Matt Vera	Hurlburt Field
Judy Lorenz	Okaloosa County
Allison Sullivan	Okaloosa County
Jeff Cozadd	City of Destin
Kristen Schell	Niceville
Latilda Hughes-Neel	Freeport
Jack Kiger	Eglin Airforce Base
Stephen Sharon	Walton County
Mike Martin	City of Freeport
Dana McIntyre	Eglin Airforce Base
Colby Cleveland	FDOT
Dustin Castells	FDOT
Jared Kirkland	FDOT
Lynn Hoshihara	Okaloosa County
<u>Virtual Attendance</u>	
Bruce Barnhart	Citizen
Kasey Cuchens	ECRC Chair
Leigh Moore	Scenic Walton
Olen Pettis	FDOT
Scott Brannon	Walton County

### **EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:**

Austin Mount  
Mary Beth Washnock  
Tiffany Bates  
Leandra Meredith  
Angela Bradley  
Gary Kramer  
Jill Nobles  
Katie Fults  
Tammy Neal  
Virtual Attendance  
Gabrielle McVoy  
Jill Strickler  
Gina Watson

### **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE**

*Chairperson Boyles called the meeting to order, and the pledge was recited.*

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Boyles asked to add Resolution OW 24-08 to the agenda for discussion.

**Councilman Blocker moved to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Ketchel seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

### **HURLBURT FIELD TRAFFIC UPDATE**

Colonel Kristen Wood, Hurlburt Field, addressed the board about how traffic is impacting Hurlburt Field. Colonel Wood discussed the mission impact and why it is significant for Hurlburt Field. Colonel Wood discussed the three missions of Hurlburt Field within the special operations wing, campaigning against great power operations, contingency operations, and crisis response missions.

Colonel Wood discussed the crisis response mission and the importance of the efficient movement of traffic. Colonel Wood stated that Hurlburt Field members can be called out at a moment's notice to support a soft ground element to either save Americans from bad places or kill bad guys that are threatening Americans. Colonel Wood stated that the concern with traffic is that they need to be able to get forces out to Hurlburt Field to generate aircraft, to marshal cargo, to process personnel, and to get them out the door and off the ramp in a speedy fashion. Colonel Wood discussed the traffic on Highway 98 and how it is a major concern. Colonel Wood stated that Hurlburt Field wants to help be part of the solution and is willing to do what they need to support traffic relief on Highway 98.

Councilman Vallee discussed traffic issues on State Roads 285 and 85 and requested that FDOT conduct a study on bottle necks on the corridor and possible solutions. Bryant Paulk stated that there were several studies already in the works in the region.

Jim Bagby, the District Director for Congressman Gaetz, spoke regarding the congressman's concerns with traffic and affordable housing, specifically as it affects Hurlburt Field. Jim Bagby recommended asking staff to come back to the board and give an update on all the current projects and plans.

**Councilman Vallee moved to have staff identify any bottlenecks in the O-W TPO corridor and to have staff bring back opportunities for relief and information about projects already in development. Councilmember Blocker seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

### **PUBLIC FORUM:**

Bobby Nabors spoke in support of the "Around the Mound" project.

Fort Walton Beach Councilmember Gloria Debary spoke in support of the "Around the Mound" project and stated at the last City Council meeting the city pledged \$100,000 to keep the project moving forward.

Ted Corcoran also spoke in support of the "Around the Mound" project. Ted Corcoran stated that this will be a generational project that board members will remember for the rest of their lives.

**ADD ON ITEM:**

Chair Boyles presented a resolution for the board to consider, stating that as a result of recent information coming from a Santa Rosa media outlet and more to come, the resolution was necessary to make crystal clear the position of the TPO. Board members expressed their concerns with a walk on item. Board members also expressed concerns with the costs of the February event. There was discussion about whether the ECRC CEO exceeded spending authority. Austin Mount stated much of the information in the media release was inaccurate and the board will be provided facts. Chair Boyles stated this resolution was necessary due to poor judgment on the ECRC CEO. Mayor Rynearson stated that he felt the resolution was premature and that the ECRC executive board has been tasked to produce the expenditures in detail at the next ECRC board meeting. Austin Mount stated that ECRC is going to provide a full report on all inquiries.

**Commissioner Mixon moved to authorize the chair to sign the presented resolution (named Resolution O-W 24-08) as presented. Commissioner Ketchel seconded the motion, and it was approved with Mayor Rynearson and Commissioner Vallee opposed.**

**FDOT UPDATES:**

Bryant Paulk updated the board on the Brooks Bridge project and the impact it had on spring break traffic. Bryant Paulk stated that FDOT discussed ways to handle the traffic issues on future busy days.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- 1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of February 2024 Meeting Minutes**
- 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**

**Mayor Wagner moved to approve the consent agenda items. Commissioner Ketchel 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.

**Commissioner Ketchel moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 24-05 amending OW 2045 LRTP 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. Councilmember Hebert seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call Vote**

Commissioner Boyles	Yes
Commissioner Vallee	Yes
Mayor Whitten	Yes
Councilmember Blocker	Yes
Councilmember Rencich	Yes
Councilmember Herbert	Yes
Mayor Wagner	Yes
Mayor Rynearson	Yes
Councilmember Dickey	Yes
Councilmember Schaetzle	Yes
Commissioner Ketchel	Yes
Commissioner Ponder	Yes
Commissioner Mixon	Yes
Commissioner Johns	Yes
Commissioner Glidewell	Yes
Commissioner McCormick	Yes

**The motion 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 by April 26<sup>th</sup>. ECRC staff will submit the final ranking from the TPO to FDOT.

**Commissioner Mixon moved to 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. Commissioner Vallee 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. This action was recommended to communicate the TPO board’s endorsement of a local cost share/pledge towards the proposed project.

**Councilmember Herbert moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign a letter of support for the Fort Walton Beach “Around the Mound” project. Commissioner Vallee 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. This action was recommended to communicate the TPO board’s endorsement of a local cost share/pledge towards the proposed project.

**Commissioner Ponder moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign a letter of support for the Destin Crosstown Connector. Mayor Ryneerson 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. The board discussed tabling the bylaws and having a committee look them over to make recommendations before the next meeting. The chair requested volunteers to serve on a committee to meet prior to the June meeting. The volunteers were: Councilmember/Vice-Chair Anthony Vallee, Mayor Bobby Wagner, Councilwoman Teresa Hebert, Commissioner Paul Mixon, and Commissioner Boots McCormick. There was discussion about the CAC appointees. Austin Mount clarified that the bylaws stated that board members have full jurisdictional appointments.

**Commissioner Mixon moved to table taking action on Resolution O-W 24-07 amending the Okaloosa-Walton TPO, TCC, and CAC Bylaws and to authorize the chair to appoint a subcommittee to review. Mayor Rynearson seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The volunteers consisted of Councilmember Vallee, and volunteers Mayor Wagner, Councilmember Hebert, Commissioner Mixon, and Commissioner McCormick, to review recommended bylaw changes prior to the next O-W TPO meeting.**

#### **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.

- 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. Angela Bradley 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.

- 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 stated that 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.

Mayor Whitten asked about the TCC quorum requirement. Mary Beth Washnock stated that the quorum is at the discretion of the committee chair.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Stay up to date with TPO events and activities on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EmeraldCoastRegionalCouncil](http://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](mailto:publicinvolvement@ecrc.org) or email Leandra Meredith at [Leandra.Meredith@ecrc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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.*