

OKALOOSA – WALTON TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING MINUTES
Chautauqua Hall, 95 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435
May 15, 2025

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bobby Wagner, Vice Chair	Destin
J.B. Whitten	Crestview
Doug Capps	Crestview
Shannon Hayes	Crestview
Todd Bierbaum	DeFuniak Springs
David Schmidt	Fort Walton Beach
Tracey Dickey	Freeport
April Sutton	Mary Esther
Doug Tolbert	Niceville
Carolyn Ketchel	Okaloosa County Commission
Paul Mixon	Okaloosa County Commission
Donna Johns	Walton County Commission
Tony Anderson	Walton County Commission
Danny Glidewell	Walton County Commission
Cheryl Sawyers (Non-Voting)	

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

James T. Wood (Non-Voting)	MidBay Bridge Authority
Drew Palmer	Okaloosa County Commission
Trey Goodwin	Okaloosa County Commission
Christine Wasdin	Valparaiso
Torey Geile	Destin

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Christy Johnson	FDOT
Latilda Hughes-Neel	Freeport
Samantha Graves	Freeport
Kristen Shell	Niceville
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Ted Corcoran	Fort Walton Beach Chamber
Scott Bitterman	Okaloosa County
Roy Petrey	Okaloosa County
Mary Beth Washnock	Gude
Kathy Rudd	Gude
Tyrone Scorsone	Kittleson & Associates
Scott Davidson	Hurlburt Field
Matt Vera	Hurlburt Field

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

Kandase Lee
Tiffany Bates
Annie Arguello
Rae Emary
Gary Kramer
Jill Nobles
Tammy Neal
Leandra Meredith
Roshita Taylor
Elizabeth Merino
Virtual Attendance
Gina Watson

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Vice Chair Wagner called the meeting to order. The pledge of allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was held for fallen soldiers.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Sutton moved to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Capps seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Vice Chair Wagner asked for introductions of TPO members and staff for the benefit of the new members and the audience. Introductions were made.

PUBLIC FORUM

Ted Corcoran spoke in favor of the Around the Mound project, stating that its completion will be a generational change for the area. He asked that the TPO keep the priority of this project high.

FDOT UPDATES:

Bryant Paulk provided an update on the Statewide SIS Plan's Needs Plan development, soliciting input from the TPO. It covers the most important corridors throughout the district, mostly related to the transfer of goods and services and connectivity to airports and other traffic facilities. Bryant Paulk explained the corridors that are on the SIS network throughout Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Bryant Paulk asked for projects for the Statewide SIS Needs Plan to consider for funding in a Cost Feasible Plan.

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Bryant Paulk reported that the resurfacing of Eglin Parkway from Richbourg Avenue in Shalimar to US 98 in Fort Walton Beach will be let for construction in July and workers should be out there by October.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of December 2024 Meeting Minutes**
- 2. ALL COMMITTEES: Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-06 Adopting the FY 2025 – FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Year 2 (FY 2026) Amendment**

Commissioner Glidewell moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Mixon seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. ENCLOSURE A – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE** - Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-08 Amending the FY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to add the Right-of-Way Phases for SR 85 (South Ferdon Boulevard) from Live Church Road to PJ Adams Parkway Capacity Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 2201717 in FY 2024/2025 and FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$23,100,003
- 2. ENCLOSURE B – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE** - Consideration of Resolution BAY 25-09 Amending the FY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program to Add Railroad Utility Phase for the Wilson Street Railroad Crossing Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4565681 in FY 2024/2025 at a Total Cost of \$287,343

Bryant Paulk provided a brief update of the two TIP amendments. The SR 85 project is a right of way acquisition which is advancing faster due to a local government funding contribution.

The Wilson Street railroad crossing will include full replacement of lights, gates, battery back-up, and detection system.

It was noted that the amendment and all documentation associated with Enclosure A should be corrected from "Live Church Road" to "Live Oak Church Road." Staff and Bryant Paulk agreed to make sure this change was made.

Council Member Hayes moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 25-08 and Resolution O-W 25-09 amending the FY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program. Mayor Whitten seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Wagner	Yes
Mayor Whitten	Yes
Council Member Capps	Yes
Council Member Hayes	Yes
Council Member Bierbaum	Yes
Council Member Schmidt	Yes
Council Member Dickey	Yes
Council Member Sutton	Yes
Council Member Tolbert	Yes
Commissioner Ketchel	Yes
Commissioner Mixon	Yes
Commissioner Johns	Yes
Commissioner Anderson	Yes
Commissioner Glidewell	Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

3. ENCLOSURE C - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE AND PUBLIC HEARING -

Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-03 Adopting the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Gary Kramer explained the TIP's role in the process of development of transportation projects from conception to construction, then noted that the complete draft plan, along with comments received during the public input period, were sent to the board members earlier in the month.

Commissioner Mixon moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 25-03 adopting the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. Council Member Sutton seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Wagner	Yes
Mayor Whitten	Yes
Council Member Capps	Yes
Council Member Hayes	Yes
Council Member Bierbaum	Yes
Council Member Schmidt	Yes
Council Member Dickey	Yes
Council Member Sutton	Yes
Council Member Tolbert	Yes
Commissioner Ketchel	Yes
Commissioner Mixon	Yes
Commissioner Johns	Yes

Commented [TB1]: We may want to make note that Mayor Wagner opened it up to public comment for the public hearing part?

Commissioner Anderson Yes
Commissioner Glidewell Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

4. ENCLOSURE D - ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-04 Adopting the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2027 – FY 2031 Project Priorities

Jill Nobles provided a PowerPoint presentation and explained the project priorities development cycle and where it fits into the overall development of transportation projects from concept to construction. Jill Nobles then explained the types of projects in the priorities and highlighted public comments that were received, specifically changes that were requested by local governments. There was a lot of support for moving the Around the Mound and the PJ Adams Pkwy. /Antioch Rd. at Crab Apple Avenue intersection realignment and signalization project up in the ranking.

Rae Emary provided further information on the public feedback that was received, including an impressive 421 completed surveys. Tourist impacts, school start and stop times, as well as congestion, specifically during peak hours, were the main areas of commute frustration that were reported. Construction zone delays were not listed very high. Most survey takers gave comments and many of them were about congestion on US 98 and SR 85, needed signal timing improvements, more and safer bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the need for alternative routes.

Scott Davidson said that the survey was widely distributed at Hurlburt Field and many of the comments likely came from personnel there.

Mayor Whitten spoke to the need to move Non-SIS Priority #12 up to address safety and to accommodate the residents of a 150 home subdivision located there. After numerous attempts to alleviate the situation with FDOT, there have been several improvements made, but the requested traffic light has not been approved due to the needed location not being a true intersection. Mayor Whitten explained that aligning Old Antioch Road with Crab Apple is critical to getting the traffic light in place and asked that this project, which has been stalled at #12 for the past three years, be moved to #9.

Commissioner Johns spoke to the need for safety improvements at SR 20 and Thompson Road in Walton County.

Commissioner Anderson spoke to the need for safety features at SR20 and US 331. There are back ups due to accidents on a nearly weekly basis and both roads are critical to moving Walton County.

Council Member Sutton asked Mayor Whitten if there was any way the City of Crestview can contribute funds to the #12 project in order to get it done faster. Mayor Whitten said he would pursue this option and was hopeful.

Commissioner Ketchel suggested swapping projects within each county as opposed to moving projects that would result in others from the adjacent county falling lower in priority. Jill Nobles said the CAC had a similar thought.

There was general discussion about how to proceed and Jill Nobles provided the advisory committee recommendations.

The CAC's recommendation was to approve the Project Priorities with the following changes: 1) move SIS Priority #4 to #2, 2) move the current #12 Non-SIS project higher in priority, at the TPO's discretion, and 3) move the current #9 TSM Priority, SR 189 at Poquito Road, higher in priority, at the TPO's discretion.

The TCC's recommendation was that the TPO add the Perry Avenue one-way study to the Non-SIS Priority #2, Transportation Planning Studies, to keep the current SIS Priority #1, US 98 in the #1 position, to incorporate the DeFuniak Springs Airport priorities as submitted, and asks that if changing the priority of any SIS projects, that such changes should only have an impact on projects within the same county. In other words, to not adversely affect the ranking of the other county's projects.

Commissioner Ketchel moved to re-prioritize the provided draft TSM priorities as follows: #9 becomes #3, #3 becomes #2, and #2 becomes #9. The motion was seconded and was approved by a vote of 13 to 1, with Council Member Tolbert voting in opposition.

Commissioner Mixon moved to switch SIS Priorities #1 and #2, making Priority #1 SR 85 from McWhorter Avenue to PJ Adams Parkway, and making Priority #2 US 98/SR 30 from the Santa Rosa County line to east of Cody Lane interchange. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ketchel. There was much discussion about the validity and need of each of these projects being ranked #1.

Scott Davidson spoke on behalf of Hurlburt Field, explaining the military mission and critical need of Hwy 98. He thanked the TPO for their hard work on moving this project forward.

There was then discussion of the critical need of other military installations in Okaloosa County.

Vice Chair Wagner called for the vote. **The motion passed by a vote of 11 to 3, with Commissioner Anderson, Council Member Sutton, and Council Member Tolbert voting in opposition.**

I need help with this one. I have no info.
? moved to swap the #11 and #4 priorities on the Non-SIS priorities list. The motion was seconded by ? and the motion failed by a vote of ? to ?

Commissioner Glidewell moved to approve Resolution O-W 25-04 adopting the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2027 – FY 2031 Project Priorities with the changes noted above, and to include the DeFuniak Springs Airport projects as submitted. The motion was seconded by ? and it was unanimously approved.

5. **ENCLOSURE E - ALL COMMITTEES** – Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-05 Approving the Scope of Services for the Okaloosa-Walton 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update and Appointment of Steering Committee Members

Jill Nobles asked for TPO volunteers to serve on the steering committee and provided the names of the CAC and TCC volunteers who would also be serving. Online attendance will be allowed for convenience, and the meetings will start within the next couple of months.

Mayor Wagner and Commissioner Anderson volunteered.

Commissioner Glidewell moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 25-05 approving the scope of services for the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan update and appointment of Wagner, Tony Anderson steering committee members. Council Member Hayes seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

6. **ENCLOSURE F - ALL COMMITTEES** – Nomination and Election of TPO Board, TCC, and CAC Chair and Vice Chair for FY 2026

Tiffany Bates stated that it is the time of year for the TPO and its advisory committees to elect officers for the coming year and provided the results of the TCC and CAC elections. Kristen Shell, with the City of Niceville was elected TCC chair, and Latilda Hughes-Neel was elected TCC vice chair. Amy Jamieson was elected CAC chair, and Robert Rennie was elected CAC vice chair.

There was discussion among the board members regarding who would like to or be willing to serve as the TPO's officers for the upcoming fiscal year.

Commented [TB2]: I'm afraid I'm not much help here; things were moving fast and from where I was seated, I could not keep up with the firsts and seconds. Hopefully, Tammy may have caught more as she was facing the folks? My notes of what I do have are with Jill's below

Commented [JN3]: It sounded like Commissioner Mixon - but that doesn't make much sense since those are Walton County projects

Commented [JN4]: Councilmember Bierbaum, I think

Commented [JN5]: Sounded like only one vote for

Commented [JN6]: Councilmember Bierbaum

Commented [TB7R6]: I had Mixon on this one; Tammy may be a tie breaker! LOL!

Commissioner Glidewell moved to elect Mayor Bobby Wagner to serve as TPO chair for FY 2026, Council Member Todd Bierbaum to serve as vice chair, and to ratify the TCC and CAC slate of officers for the same period. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

7. ENCLOSURE G – TPO ONLY – Appointment of a TPO Member to Serve on the MPOAC for the Remainder of CY 2025

Kandase Lee explained that former Fort Walton Beach Mayor Rynearson was the primary member of the MPOAC Governing Board, and with his departure there is a need to address the MPOAC membership.

Kandase Lee noted that Crestview Mayor JB Whitten, the current alternate, attended the last meeting.

Mayor Whitten stated that he has attended several MPOAC meetings as well as attended the training and would enjoy remaining on the MPOAC Governing Board in some capacity.

Council Member Hayes moved to nominate Mayor JB Whitten as the primary member. Commissioner Ketchel seconded the motion.

Immediately following, Council Member Sutton moved to nominate Mayor Bobby Wagner as the primary member. Council Member Schmidt seconded the motion.

Without proceeding to a formal vote on either motion, the Board conducted a silent (written) vote among the members. The results were as follows:

Mayor JB Whitten: votes
Mayor Bobby Wagner: votes

As a result, Mayor JB Whitten was selected as the MPOAC Governing Board primary member for the remainder of Calendar Year 2025, and Mayor Bobby Wagner was selected as the alternate member.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Commented [TB8]: Did we find these “results” in the scans Tammy mentioned? I do not recall the final count and we did not announce it in the meeting, only that Mayor Whitten was the winner of the ballot vote.

