

FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF: September 10, 2015

MEETING NUMBER: 210

The two hundred and tenth meeting of the Florida Transportation Commission was held on September 10, 2015 in the Florida Department of Transportation, Executive Conference Room, 605 Suwannee Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

ATTENDANCE:

Members in attendance were: Chairman Trumbull, Commissioners Browning, Sebesta, and Wright. Participating by teleconference: Commissioners Ellington, Ferré, Frazier, Howse, and Kigel.

CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS:

Chairman Trumbull called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. He announced that Secretary Boxold will be organizing breakfast meetings when he travels out of Tallahassee, like the one Chairman Trumbull attended today in Panama City, where he invites area leaders to discuss transportation issues.

REVIEW OF UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS:

Executive Director Bob Romig announced that the Tolling Workshop scheduled for September 21st in Orlando may have to be postponed due to some commissioner scheduling issues. We will be looking at possibly rescheduling that meeting at a later date. The next regular meeting of the Commission is scheduled for October 28th and 29th in St. Petersburg. On the afternoon of the 28th we will be touring the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. The morning of the 29th will be dedicated to the annual performance review of the Department. Our final meeting of the year will be on November 30th in conjunction with the FDOT Autonomous Vehicle Summit in Jacksonville being held on December 1st and 2nd. Our meeting on the afternoon of the 30th will be to conduct our statutory review of the Florida Transportation Plan, the Strategic Intermodal System Plan, and the Freight Mobility and Trade Plan with the intent of issuing a resolution in support of those plans or offering comments for the Department to consider.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING THE SELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Chairman Trumbull mentioned the main purpose of this meeting is to interview Brad Swanson for the Executive Director position. The meeting was turned over to Senator Sebesta as Chairman of the Executive Director Search Sub-committee. Senator Sebesta invited comments from the other members before Mr. Swanson was brought in for the interview. Commissioner Ellington expressed his concerns with the selection process. Commissioner Browning asked if the Commission can make a final decision at this meeting. Mr. Romig stated that the motion offered by Commissioner Wright that passed unanimously at our last teleconference directs the Commission to take up the selection of the Executive Director at its next scheduled meeting; which would be this one. So, yes, a final decision can be made by the full Commission during this meeting.

Brad Swanson introduced himself to the Commissioners and provided an overview of his credentials.

After an exchange of questions and comments between Mr. Swanson and the Commissioners, Commissioner Browning moved that Brad Swanson be nominated to the full Commission as the next Executive Director of the Florida Transportation Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kigel and passed unanimously by the members of the Search Sub-committee. The meeting was then handed back over to Chairman Trumbull so the full Commission could take up the recommendation of the Search Committee to hire Mr. Swanson for Executive Director. Mayor Ferré moved that a formal offer be made to Mr. Swanson for the position of Executive Director and that the Chairman have the authority to negotiate that offer today. The motion was seconded by Senator Sebesta. The motion was passed unanimously by the full Commission. It was agreed that Mr. Swanson would start on October 19th and Bob Romig would stay on at least for a month to help with the transition.

DISCUSSION OF MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES RELATED TO THE COMMISSION:

Commissioner Browning revisited the issue of the proposed Tolling Workshop scheduled for September 21st. He suggested the meeting be postponed since there is a possibility of a number of commissioners not being able to attend due to a scheduling conflict. After some general discussion and checking of schedules it was determined that there was definitely a need to conduct the meeting and Mr. Romig was instructed to find an appropriate alternative date.

Commissioner Howse mentioned he has received the Business Development Initiative (BDI) data and has spoken with Secretary Boxold about it. The Secretary advised him to talk with Brian Blanchard with questions about the data. Commissioner Howse would like to tag onto the beginning or end of one of our Commission meetings to have that discussion between the BDI Sub-committee (Howse, Ellington, and Browning) and with Mr. Blanchard. He invited any other commissioners to participate. It was recommended that our next meeting notice be expanded to include a meeting of the Sub-committee.

Commissioner Wright asked if the Centralized Customer Service System is going to be an item of discussion at the Tolling Workshop. He reminded everyone that Secretary Boxold has expressly asked the Commission to get involved to help build some consensus among the different players in the process. Commissioner Howse explained how we have arrived at the current situation where it appears some of the players want to back out of the agreement to consolidate the back room operations. He said our job is not to be the mediator between the different players, but the facilitator to get the process moving forward once again. After some discussion by other members of the Commission, Commissioner Wright asked if the Commission has a role in the resolution of this issue. Chairman Trumbull stated the Commission does have a role since it was instrumental in getting the process off the ground. He also stated that Secretary Boxold needs time to have his team work through the process before the Commission reasserts itself into the process. Based on the ensuing discussion that ranged from the cost to collect a toll to how the customer data base is maintained, Commissioner Wright stated the Commission obviously has a role to play.

