

FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MAY 8, 2009

MEETING NUMBER 172

The one hundred and seventy-second meeting of the Florida Transportation Commission was held May 8, 2009, at the Jacksonville Transportation Authority Boardroom, 100 North Myrtle Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida. Chairman Marcos Marchena called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Members in attendance were: Chairman Marcos Marchena, Commissioners Calloway, Conrecode, Pullum, Rose, Lanahan, Walton and Mazurkiewicz. Commissioner Criser was unable to attend.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the March 3, 2009 Commission Meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Marchena opened the meeting by thanking Michael Blaylock and Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) staff for hosting the Commission meeting.

The Chairman also thanked Rick Ferrin and staff for making arrangements for a very informative three hour tour of JAXPORT yesterday. He noted that JaxPort is fast becoming one of the most important ports along the Eastern Seaboard, from both a trade perspective and a national defense perspective. The Port authority has found ways to expand their operations that will continue to yield huge economic benefits for this area and for the state as a whole for decades to come.

The Chairman recognized District Two Secretary, Charlie Baldwin. He noted that the Commission heard about the good work coming out of this region at the Work Program Review last month, and asked if Secretary Baldwin would like to comment. Secretary Baldwin welcomed the Commission to District Two.

Chairman Marchena reported on the following:

- The Department has a number of modal plan updates in process and the Commission has representation on several of the Committees. A policy review will be held on each when the draft plans are completed.

- Commissioner Calloway serves on the 2010 Seaport System Plan update committee and provided an update to the Commission. The purpose of the 2010 Seaport System Plan is to develop a plan that compliments earlier department and Florida Ports Council planning work and also provides guidance for future seaports investments. Currently there are statewide working groups, comprised of representatives from 25 entities, meeting on an ongoing basis. These working groups are guiding the policy development section of the plan as well as providing technical input on port statistics and forecasts. The main purpose of the breakout groups is to draft policy recommendations to address key issues that include work on the SIS designation and eligibility issues and to provide recommendations to the SIS Leadership Committee. At this time staff are converting guidance and input from the working groups into policy recommendations to be used in developing the initial draft Seaport System Plan. Those recommendations will include clarification of the state's role in supporting seaports, addressing how best to help our ports compete with other states, identifying options for funding seaports to encourage economic growth, and making recommendations on SIS designation and eligibility criteria as they relate to seaports. The planned activities include: May 18-19 – next full meeting of the working group, June 4 – meet to review recommendations on the policy section of the plan, September - present the draft Seaport System Plan to the working group for review and comment, October and November - public comment period for the draft plan, December – submit for consideration and adoption by the Department and Secretary.
- The Chairman addressed a question from the March FTC meeting regarding the implementation of last year's legislation which calls for indexing tolls on the Turnpike system. The question was raised regarding the cost of delaying the indexing until 2012. David Tassinari worked with Bill Thorp and Jim Ely to try to come up with some data that answers that question. The bottom line is that there appears to be an approximate loss of about \$110 Million by delaying the indexing of tolls on the Turnpike system until 2012. This was provided for information purposes only and may be a discussion item at a later date.
- The Chairman noted that Commissioners Lanahan and Mazurkiewicz participated on a Performance Measures Working Group teleconference which was held to discuss potential changes to the existing measures for FDOT. The performance measure information showing the proposed changes was forwarded to the Commissioners. The Chairman asked if there were any questions or comments, and if everyone had enough time to adequately review the recommendations. There were no questions. A motion was made to accept the measures, the motion was seconded, and the performance measures for 2009 were adopted.
- Sally Patrenos provided an update on the Commission budget. The budget is tracking well and the Commission continues to practice conservative fiscal management. We are currently running at about 65% of our budget for this time of year. If we continue to conserve as we have tried to do, we are going to leave a small amount of money on the table at the end of the fiscal year. Commissioner Lanahan requested that a copy of the detailed budget be provided at the next meeting.

- The Chairman acknowledged receipt of the resignation letter from Commissioner Calloway and read the letter to the Commissioners. The Chairman recognized the time he has served on the Commission (almost eight years). The Chairman commented on his very deliberative, very thoughtful way of addressing issues and said he has been very impressed along the way with his ability to “capture the essence of an issue and to make us think, and to always keep us thinking about the importance of transit.” The Chairman provided additional comments and presented Commissioner Calloway with a plaque of recognition for his service.

Commissioner Calloway thanked the Chairman, Commissioners and Commission staff for their commitment on transportation. He expressed thoughts of his collegiality and recognized the processes that have been employed by the Commission and with the state industry of stakeholders. He also addressed the ability of the public and private sector to work together for the benefit of the state on transportation issues.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Sally Patrenos provided a legislative update. Commission staff started this Session out tracking about 125 transportation related bills. By the end of Session there were 4 bills related to transportation that made it through to the point that they can be signed by the Governor.

- The safety belt enforcement bill has been signed by the Governor. This bill will enable the state to qualify for about \$35 million of federal money that previously we were unable to qualify for and it is seen as a tremendous boost to the safety of our highways. Another bill that made it through was termed “transportation package lite.” It was the same bill that was passed last year, but the Governor vetoed based on language relative to turnpike procurement and splitting out the contract. That language was removed from the bill and it has been passed.
- The Jacksonville Transportation Authority language passed this year which expands the responsibilities of the JTA. It also provides that the Commission will take over oversight of this body.
- The appropriations bill is still in process.

Sally addressed several items that did not pass and/or get approval:

- Four of our Commissioners were not confirmed in the Senate. This was part of about 173 appointees that did not make confirmation. It is expected that they will be confirmed in the next 45 days.
- The age for driver licenses did not change.
- Regulation of cell phone use (including texting) in cars did not pass.
- Did not institutionalize red light cameras.
- Did not prohibit FDOT from leasing existing assets, or from dealing with foreign entities on P3 agreements.
- Did not achieve commuter rail.
- Did not get the \$2 rental car surcharge that would have provided Tri-Rail with a dedicated funding source.

AGENCY REPORT:

- Chairman Marchena commended Secretary Kopelousos and staff on the work handled during the legislative session.
- Secretary Kopelousos thanked Commissioner Calloway for helping FDOT have a vision for transit through the state. She acknowledged the disappointment on Sunrail but stated that it is about the bigger picture of transit within the state. She ensured Commissioner Calloway and the Commission as a whole that the FDOT team is ready to move transit forward within the state. She acknowledged appreciation of Commissioner Calloway's work within the FTC, community and other activities he is involved in.
- Secretary Kopelousos provided an update on the budget situation. FDOT started with a possibility of a \$420 million sweep of cash and more in commitment. She discussed the breakdown of funds, including state transportation trust fund, toll facilities trust fund, employee salary reductions, cash balances, federal funding, and other related issues. She emphasized that it is the FDOT policy to maintain safety, preservation, and maintenance of our current system.

The Department will be receiving \$35 million in federal funds since the Governor signed the seatbelt law. There is some flexibility in these funds, but also limitations. It is a requirement that \$1 million be used for behavioral type safety (e.g. campaigns, education); otherwise, funds can be used for other types of safety such as road improvements.

Secretary Kopelousos reported on the following:

Public-Private Partnership (P3s) Projects:

- Closed deal on I-595 in Broward County = \$1.2 billion spent on construction with a total project cost of \$1.8 billion. This project is moving in the right direction.
- I-75 – Project going smooth, eight months ahead of schedule.
- I-95 Express is underway - receiving positive feedback.

Other/Upcoming Projects:

- Crosstown connector in Tampa Bay area
- SR836-826 interchange project
- First Coast Outer Beltway – looking to move forward
- Alligator Alley – proposals due May 18
- Port of Miami Tunnel – working with locals to have a final discussion with the current proposer (initial meeting held on May 7, including county and city officials). Would like to close on this project before June 1.

Federal Stimulus Dollars:

- Florida is required to present a plan to the legislature for approval (unlike other states). The plan went forward through the Legislative Budget Committee process, and obligated over 50% of funds required within the 120 day requirement. The Department is continuing to do the extensive reporting that is required. The Inspector General's Office is very involved in the process and provides an audit/evaluation on a regular basis. The goal is to create jobs, and as an added benefit, get transportation projects.

Legislative Update:

- The language for the "wall murals" legislation will be reviewed and corrected for next session.
- Discussed the legislation to increase truck weight limits (from 80,000 to 87,000 lbs.). This would be a significant impact to our current infrastructure.
- Addressed the revenue commission study, FDOT has a different view than MPOs. Not sure any additional benefit would be gained at this point. The long term vision is for increasing future transportation funding and transit plays an important role in this area.

Other/Discussion:

- Secretary Kopelousos announced the appointment of Brad Thoburn, State Transportation Development Administrator.
- There were discussions on decreased funding, budget cuts, and the implications on projects (moving to outer years, completing projects in process vs. halting projects). Secretary Kopelousos said the goal is once the department starts a project, it is committed to go through with it. When budget reductions occur, it is the Department's goal not to stop projects that are in mid-stream, but focus on capacity projects that we have not started and can be moved out.
- Bond financing was discussed. The Department will have a better sense of the bond market by the end of the fiscal year.

STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM (SIS) PLAN UPDATE:

Chairman Marchena introduced Debbie Hunt, Assistant Secretary for Intermodal Systems Development. Assistant Secretary Hunt provided a briefing of the Strategic Intermodal System Plan Update. The current plan has been in place almost five years. The system is not just about roadways, transit, rails, ports, and aviation; it is about moving people and goods in, around and out of the state. Five areas that the SIS Committee is focused on are: (1) emerging SIS, (2) trade and logistics, (3) urban issues, (4) community and environmental issues, and (5) actual implementation of the SIS program. Working groups have been formed and meetings held specific to these areas. A Committee meeting will be scheduled to go through draft policy recommendations from all the working groups that will form the basis for the new plan. The plan is scheduled to be completed by January 2010.

Secretary Kopelousos indicated that military facilities throughout the state are extremely important and more discussion will be held to identify which of those facilities need to be on the SIS and how to deal and coordinate with them.

JACKSONVILLE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (JTA) UPDATE:

Chairman Marchena introduced Michael Blaylock, Executive Director/CEO, JTA. Mr. Blaylock briefed the Commission on JTA operations. Chairman Marchena welcomed JTA to the group of agencies for which FTC provides oversight.

Mr. Blaylock provided background and a funding history of the JTA. He also introduced board members and acknowledged special guests. He stated that he is excited about passage of JTA bill and feels that this is a considerable milestone to position the authority to do what it was charged to do back in 1955. In 1955 they began as the Jacksonville Expressway Authority and in 1971 the name was changed to Jacksonville Transportation Authority. He discussed their engagement in the Better Jacksonville Plan established in 2000.

Mr. Blaylock addressed one question they often receive, “how did you get into the business of public transport and why do you think about the kinds of things you do?” JTA staff prepared a one minute video that tells the story of the JTA (presented video).

JTA has a unique agency history – has built 300 miles of roads and 12 major bridges. He presented listing of other facilities constructed by the agency and discussed regional bonding, transit ridership, economic impacts, and capacity issues. He also recognized the excellent partnership between JTA and FDOT and stated that it is the vision of JTA to provide options for public transport and mobility choice.

CONGRESSIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSPORTATION:

Chairman Marchena introduced and welcomed Congresswoman Corrine Brown, who serves on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and is also the Chair of the Railroad Sub-Committee. Congresswoman Brown expressed her disappointment in the issues related to Sunrail. She stated ... “where do we go from here? Failure is not an option and we have to figure out how to do it. We need to be the host in moving Florida ahead.” She discussed some specifics of the Sunrail project and how revenues could be addressed. Chairman Marchena acknowledged her comments and mentioned the Commission’s resolution that passed last year supporting mass transit such as commuter rail.

Congresswoman Brown discussed the Reauthorization process and associated funding. She also emphasized the need to educate individuals and groups on these issues and discussed the importance of Public-Private Partnerships. Chairman Marchena thanked Congresswoman Brown for her support of Sunrail and Transportation.

FLORIDA RAIL SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE:

Assistant Secretary Hunt gave a presentation on the Florida Rail System Plan Update. It is a requirement that the Plan be updated every two years. Two primary elements of the Plan are Policy (which has been completed) and Investment (scheduled to be completed Summer 2009). Assistant Secretary Hunt discussed the details of both elements.

She also provided information on how the updated Plan will be different from the past plans in several areas: (1) Shifts from descriptive to strategic, (2) addresses both passenger and freight, (3) shows rail interaction with other modes, and (4) includes expanded stakeholder involvement. The next steps in the Plan update are: (1) Needs survey to be completed May 2009, (2) development of prioritization methodology, (3) development of the updated plan, and (4) 30-day public comment period.

JACKSONVILLE AIRPORT AUTHORITY:

Chairman Marchena introduced Michael Stuart, External Affairs Director, Jacksonville Airport Authority. Mr. Stuart welcomed the Commissioners on behalf of the Jacksonville Aviation Board. He offered an opportunity for the Commissioners to visit Cecil Field and shared with them that the purpose/focus is maintenance, repair and overhaul. They are currently developing this as an economic engine for Northeast Florida. He also requested that the Commission consider the relationship between airports and surface transportation. The need for surface transportation to move travelers and cargo in and out of airports is important for long term growth of the industry in Florida. He also invited Commissioners to visit the new concourses at the Jacksonville International Airport.

FLORIDA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION UPDATE:

Chairman Marchena introduced Wes Watson, Director, Florida Public Transportation Association. Mr. Watson addressed the new interest in and demand for public transportation. He acknowledged the FPTA's relationship with FDOT and thanked Secretary Kopelousos for her support.

Mr. Watson introduced Linda Watson, CEO, LYNX. Ms. Watson provided a presentation of the association, including a detailed overview, discussion on transit across the state, and the challenges and various ways we might be able to move forward. She also shared potential impacts to future rail efforts and why more transit is needed across America. U.S. transit ridership is growing and the majority of Americans support more transit and the use of public funds on transit. Chairman Marchena acknowledged Commissioner Calloway's attendance at the Association meeting last year and welcomes the opportunity for the Association to join partnerships with the Commission related to public transportation.

POLICY DISCUSSIONS:

Chairman Marchena led the discussion on a general level on policy which will be discussed in depth during the July 16 meeting. Policy papers will be distributed to the Commissioners in advance of the meeting for review purposes prior to discussion. The policy areas to be discussed are: (1) FRS Investments, (2) Federal (Re)Authorization, (3) Public Transit, and (4) Cash Forecast.

General discussion was held on recommendations of policy changes, funding issues, scorecard concept for public input, and performance measurements and outcomes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public outreach regarding transportation related issues. Chairman Marchena acknowledged the comment.

CONCLUSION:

[Please see this and all presentations made before the Commission on the Florida Transportation Commission web site at www.ftc.state.fl.us.]

The next Commission meeting will be held on July 16, 2009 in St. Petersburg Beach.

ADJOURN:

The Florida Transportation Commission meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED ✓ AS READ AS AMENDED

THIS 16th DAY OF JULY, 2009

CHAIRMAN

NOTE: If further detail of these proceedings is required, please contact Commission staff at 850-414-4105 or write to 605 Suwannee Street, Mail Station 09, and Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450. Meetings of the Florida Transportation Commission are recorded on video and audiotape.