



FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

Date: January 8, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: FDOT Burns Auditorium, Tallahassee

Welcome and Call to Order

Chairman Howse called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm

In Attendance

Chairman Ron Howse, Vice-Chairman David Genson, Commissioners John Browning, Richard Burke, Julius Davis, Alex Lastra, and Rusty Roberts.

Recognition of the Department's PE Trainees

- The Commission recognized the Professional Engineer (PE) Trainees from each district and encouraged them to fully engage in the training program, continue their professional development and advance their careers within the Florida Department of Transportation.

Consent Agenda Items

- On a motion by Vice-Chairman Genson and seconded by Commissioner Lastra, the consent agenda was unanimously approved, which included the minutes from November 8-9, 2023.

FTC Review of the Tentative Work Program, Ralph Yoder, Executive Director

- Executive Director Yoder provided a detailed explanation of the purpose and processes of the Tentative Work Program.

FDOT Agency Update and Secretary's Response to the Tentative Work Program Review

- Assistant Secretary Will Watts gave an overview of the PE Training Program.
 - The Department has graduated over 700 through the program to date and has retained approximately 25% as employees of the agency.
 - Success of the program is proven with over 150 senior leadership staff who are former trainees.
- Secretary Perdue reviewed the legislative budget recommendations for fiscal year 24/25 including highlights from the Tentative Work Program.
- The Secretary explained work program stability and how the Department reviews the overall program within the context of current market conditions, making strategic business decisions for the agency.
 - Commissioner Roberts noted a few bills filed this legislative session related to I-4 right of way for rail.

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- Secretary Perdue acknowledged current legislation has to do with right of way and how much space is needed for future rail corridor expansion.
- Commissioner Browning noted the Department should consider reserving right of way from Daytona to Orlando.
- Chairman Howse inquired if the Department has determined a way to give financial incentives for when the PE's pass their exam.
 - Secretary Perdue stated that the Department's training program includes incremental raises at specific milestones.
 - Assistant Secretary Watts added that the current structure allows the trainees to see the progression of salary increases.
- Commissioner Browning inquired of the number of new trainees each year.
 - Assistant Secretary Watts reported there are currently 45 PE trainees.
- Secretary Perdue thanked the Legislature for providing funding necessary to reduce the vacancy rate.

Districts, Turnpike Enterprise, Rail Enterprise Presentations of respective Work Programs

District Secretaries (or their designee), as well as the Executive Director of the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), and Assistant Secretary of Strategic Development Kim Holland (for the Florida Rail Enterprise) presented on their respective Tentative Work Programs.

- Commissioner Burke expressed appreciation for the financial highlights provided by Florida Turnpike Executive Director Liquori and inquired if other tolling authorities have similar metrics.
 - Executive Director Liquori confirmed that others do, and the metrics affirm the FTE is the highest rated toll agency in the market.
- Chairman Howse inquired about the current debt for the Turnpike.
 - Executive Director Liquori reported Turnpike debt is currently 3 billion dollars with an additional 4.4 billion dollars in the tentative work program.
- Commissioner Roberts commented on SR 44. He inquired if there are any plans to increase safety factors on that road.
 - District Secretary Tyler stated that District 5 staff are looking for ways to enhance the safety of this roadway. Additional signalization, rumble strips and other features have been installed.
- Vice-Chairman Genson expressed appreciation for District 1's partnership with local governments, stating the Sanibel Causeway is a really good example. Inland growth is occurring in Collier County and Vice-Chair Genson encouraged the Department to consider inland development in their long-range plans. He also expressed his thanks for widening SR 70.

Executive Director Update Ralph Yoder, Executive Director

- On a motion by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, the Commission unanimously approved the FDOT Tentative Work Program for fiscal years 2024-2025 to 2028-2029.

Public Comment

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The Chairman opened the meeting to public comment. There were no public comments.

Adjourn

With no other business to address, Chairman Howse adjourned the meeting at 5:10 pm.