

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD

MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 22, 2024

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) was held at 10:00 AM on Thursday, February 22, 2024, in the County Administration Building "B", Room B1-501, 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, Florida.

Note: Audio and video recordings of the meeting can be found at
<https://www.ircgov.com/Boards/TDLCB/2024.htm>.

Present were: Chairman **Deryl Loar**, Commissioner, District 4, Vice Chairman; **William Lundy Parden**, Disabled Representative; **Jennifer Idlette**, Public Education Representative; **Bob McPartlan**, FDC&F Representative; **Marie Dorismond and Modeline Acreus**, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Representative; **Victoria Anderson**, FAHCA Representative; **Melissa Arndt**, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Representative **Amber Young**, Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FDVR) Representative; **Dr. Harry Hurst**, Citizen Advocate Representative; **Milory Senat**, Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) Representative; **Danica David**, Citizen's Advocate; **Dalia Dillon**, Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Representative.; and **Jennifer Sideregts**, CSRC Representative.

Absent were: **Darlene Silverstein**, Medical Community Representative, **Angela David-Green**, FACA Representative.

Present were IRC staff: **Brian Freeman**, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Staff Director; **Jim Mann**, MPO Senior Planner; **Mark Vietze**, MPO GIS Planner; **Patti Johnson**, MPO Staff Assistant and **Kim Moirano**, Recording Secretary. Also present was **Karen Deigl**, Executive Director, Senior Resource Association and **Chris Stephenson**, Transportation Director, Senior Resource Director.

TWO VACANCIES: Children at Risk and Senior Community Representatives.

Call to Order

Chairman Deryl Loar called the TDLCB meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Loar requested that everyone identify themselves and who they are affiliated with.

Karen Deigl introduced Stephanie Lowe from the Tile Program. The Tile Program is a nine-month program. She works at the Center for Urban Transportation Research out of the University of South Florida. They are under contract with the Florida Department of Transportation Central Office to run the Statewide Transit Training and Technical Assistance. They host in partnership with FDOT the Transit Immersion Leadership Experience Program. Each transit leader from around the State were visiting transit agencies and also participating in monthly webinars to get exposed to what transit agencies are doing throughout the entire State. They had been to Jacksonville and this week they were visiting with SRA and with St. Lucie County. In April they'll be visiting the FDOT Central office in Tallahassee. The agencies may send their staff to participate in the program at no cost. The only expenses for the agency is the travel associated with that and there are no enrollment fees.

Danika David arrived at 10:03 a.m.

Election of Vice Chair – Action Required

ON MOTION by Dr. Harry Hurst, SECONDED by Mr. Bob McPartlan, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to re-elect Mr. William Lundy Parden as Vice Chairman for 2024.

Approval of Minutes of the November 16, 2023, Regular Meeting – Action Required

Chairman Loar asked if there were any additions or corrections to the TDLCB Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2023.

ON MOTION by Dr. Harry Hurst, SECONDED by Mrs. Wendy Grow, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to approve the November 16, 2023, minutes as presented.

Planning Status Report – No Action Required

Mr. Brian Freeman stated that there is a workshop coming up at the end of the month that FDOT is hosting which is the County Road 510 improvement project. This includes County Road 510 with the US-1 intersection. There will be a virtual session on Tuesday, February 27th and an in-person workshop on Thursday, February 29th. There are some different concepts that are being looked at for that intersection, which is one of the busier intersections in the County. Some of the possibilities include doing a grade separated intersection with an overpass for 510 that would go over both the railroad crossing and US-1 and different degrees of having that.

Community Transportation Coordinator Status Report – No Action Required

Mr. Chris Stephenson, Transportation Director, Senior Resource Association presented an overview of the First Quarter that ended December 31st, 2023, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

Mr. Stephenson stated that their Community Coach had done 9,985 trips on the ADA side. 100 percent of their Trip and Equipment Grant money has been used. Those are for the TD passengers in the County. 94% is their on-time performance for the first quarter so far and that's a 2% increase compared to the same time last year. They received 129 applications and 123 of them were approved. The total number of active riders on the Community Coach this year was 3,333. For the first quarter of the fiscal year, they received 16,416 phone calls on the Go-Line Community Coach side of the Call Center, 728 calls for the Advantage Ride. Their average wait time on the phones for both of those lines was only 17 seconds. The standard is we need to answer in under a minute.

The Advantage Ride Program was the program which started in October of 2020. In January, we did 3,714 passengers for that program. It's by far the busiest paratransit program on the Treasure Coast. Since its inception in October of 2020, SRA has done over 130,000 trips for people with developmental disabilities on the Treasure Coast. For the quarter, SRA has done 24,540 trips and that's a 40% increase compared to the same time last year. SRA has gotten some Innovative Service Development Grant money to run that program and is it benefiting individuals with developmental disabilities, not just in Indian River County, but in St. Lucie County and Martin County as well.

In the first quarter of the fiscal year on their fixed routes, SRA did 320,000 passenger trips which is a 1 percent increase from last year and a 4 percent increase from 2 years ago. Last year was their highest ridership ever on the fixed route. So far for the first quarter of the fiscal year, SRA continued to see growth. SRA has a big annual report that the staff and County MPO have to work on together which has to get submitted to the National Transit database which got submitted at the end of January.

SRA's ridership breakdown for the Go Line showed about 26 percent of their riders are riding Routes 2 and 4, which are their main corridor routes on State Road 60 and US 1. 22 percent are in Gifford, 18 percent are in the North County, either Fellsmere or Sebastian and then 17 percent are from the South County and 10 percent are going to the routes that either go to the far east or far west end of the service area either out to the beach or out to the CVS Distribution Center and then 7 percent of their ridership comes from Route 9 which is the route that connects the south end of the County with the north end of the County. Year to date ridership comparison shows their biggest growth is on Route 15, which is

the route that connects Indian River County with St. Lucie County going down to the Indian River State College. That's a route that FDOT has given SRA a Corridor Grant for. Saturday ridership is to the beach or out to the CVS Distribution Center in the West side of the County and then 7% of our ridership comes from Route 9, which is the route that connects the South. 22% of their ridership came from Gifford and that's actually up 1% from where it was this time last year. Gifford has three fixed routes running through it actually shows that they have a lot of transit service for the actual size of Gifford. Mr. Freeman stated the way the routes are laid out each originate in Gifford and then they provide service through different areas of Gifford and then go to different areas of the County where they connect to other routes. Ms. Deigl stated our highest ridership has always been between the ages of 20 and 35, right in that range more so than any other age group. Mr. Freeman stated that every five years when we do our Transit Development Plan is when we get that profile through the Onboard Passenger Surveys that are conducted. There were around 1,200 surveys that were conducted at this time last year. That was the highest survey response rate they've gotten compared to previous efforts. Mr. Stephenson states there are people in their 60s and 70s that ride the Go Line. It offers them a lot of independence if they can physically and cognitively navigate the system, which is what they prefer to ride. They want the Community Coach to be for people who have physical limitations or cognitive limitations. We see a lot of people that are elderly that are still able to get out and use the bus system to go where they're trying to get. Ms. Deigl stated that they will include in their report the demographics of the elderly people. Mr. Stephenson stated Saturday ridership is very high. 46,000 people rode on Saturdays in the first quarter of the fiscal year. The Go Line on time performance showed 92% of their stops were met on time and only 6% were slightly early and 2% were slightly later than that.

The bus shelter program shows they have 504 bus stops, 51 of them have shelters at them and 15 of them have semi seats at them. SRA has 58 shelters total in the community because there are some stops that have multiple shelters per stop. They do have 11 locations that they're hoping here this Spring they'll get 15 new bus shelters. They will have a total of 74 shelters.

Mr. Stephenson discussed the local advertisers who advertise on the bus system. Those agencies are helping them with their local match that they need every year, and this money gets contributed towards the local match that they need to run their service. More than a decade Frosting's has been advertising on the Route 1 bus.

Road calls have had a decrease from last year. There was a 27% decrease in the number of road calls. Most of those were things that did not sideline a bus for very long at all. They had six complaints in the first quarter of the fiscal year. Last year they had one complaint for every 54,000 passenger trips and this year they had one complaint for every 55,000 passenger trips. The 6 complaints were from 6 different individuals. SRA has an eligibility specialist whose job is to walk someone through how they can become part of the Community Coach Program. If there is a reason why they're not eligible, they will connect them with what they can do to ride the Go Line. Some people are just not made eligible because they haven't given us all of the information they need to. They have a third-party assessment that they can send someone to if they're trying to qualify as an ADA person. They take them to the Treasure Coast Community Health in Fellsmere and they have to go through a physical and cognitive assessment to see if they actually can ride the fixed route or if they do need that door-to-door trip because what they're tasked with doing as the CTC is they want to make sure that the most vulnerable demographic of people in the County get the services so the Community Coach is for the people who cannot access the Go Line either because of physical or cognitive disability. If there's people who have the physical and cognitive ability to ride the Go Line that's where they're going to try and move them. So, if TCCH's assessment does say these people can ride the Go Line they'll go out and teach them how to ride it so that they don't have to use up one of their Community Coach spots. Mr. McPartlan states that one of his concerns is the 130,000 developmental disability rides that have been done through the Treasure Coast. He inquired whether there is funding there to continue that service because again these are the individuals who are the most vulnerable. Ms. Deigl stated that SRA is eligible to apply for the grant for one more year. This past year the CTD approved an Innovative Service development Grant for three years. They will be applying for \$1.5 million for both St. Lucie County and ourselves because they operate for both Counties for this program. What they have been told is that they are unsure whether or not they will be getting the full amount. There's some movement in the Legislation. There's a House

Bill that limits the amount of dollars for that program. They have it on the books that the CTD will have an approval of \$59 million for the Trip and Equipment Grant and although the Innovative Service Development Grant has been approved for \$4 million, they are only going to allow \$3 million for it and if they want the additional million, they have to take it out of the Trip and Equipment Grant and it is the feeling of a lot of systems. They've had some meetings, and they want to keep the Trip and Equipment Grant whole to the \$59 million because if they take it away, it will affect all Counties, whereas the Innovative Service Development Grant will only affect a few that have applied for it. What they're advocating is to ask them to give us \$1 additional million, like go to \$60 million for the Trip and Equipment Grant and then they will take \$1 million from that and put it towards the Innovative Service Development Grant. Right now, it's in the Appropriations Committee. They're having a lot of meetings with the committee members and where it's going to fall Ms. Deigl was not sure. Their funding no matter what, they'll take a hit because they receive funding for Innovative Service Development. They also get the T&E so if they don't get the extra million, they're going to take a hit in this community.

Review of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2022/23 Planning Grant

– Action Required

Mr. Brian Freeman stated that this is the quarterly progress report and reimbursement invoice in the amount of \$7,850 for the Planning Grant that reflects the activities that were done to support this committee and the program overall for the quarter of October through December 31st. The major project that was completed last quarter was the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Update which this Board approved at the November meeting. After review and approval, they will submit it to the State Commission for reimbursement.

ON MOTION by Mr. Bob McPartlan, SECONDED by Ms. Dalia Dillon, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to approve the Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2022/23 Planning Grant as presented.

Review of the Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2022/23 – Action Required

Mr. Freeman stated that this is something that we do annually or four out of every five years and in that fifth year we go through a selection process which is actually something we just did last year. It has been two years since we last conducted the annual evaluation. The practice of the TDLCB for many years has been to designate a subcommittee of the members of the TDLCB to serve as the evaluation subcommittee. The evaluation subcommittee works with MPO staff, and they put together the evaluation workbook that comes from the State Commission. We have an Evaluation Form that we use that breaks the review up into four areas that are coordination planning, operations cost, financial management and utilization of the four areas that they conduct to review. Mr. Freeman stated that SRA does an exceptional job functioning as the CTC and it's the recommendation for the subcommittee that the entire TDLCB approve the Annual Evaluation and recommend that the MPO approve it as well. It will be on their next meeting agenda for the MPO Board.

ON MOTION by Dr. Harry Hurst, SECONDED by Ms. Wendy Grow, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to move the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2022/23.

Review of TDLCB Bylaws for FY 2023/24 – Action Required

Mr. Brian Freeman stated that this is something that TDLCB is required every year is to review their Bylaws, to see if there are any changes that need to be made. There are no changes being proposed for this year, so we just need the action of the Board to keep the Bylaws the same.

ON MOTION by Mr. Bob McPartlan, SECONDED by Ms. Milory Senat, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to move to keep the TDLCB Bylaws the same for FY 2023/24.

Review of TDLCB Grievance Procedures for FY 2023/24 – Action Required

Mr. Brian Freeman stated that another activity that TDLCB is required to undertake each year is to look at the grievance procedures, to see if there are any changes that need to be made. There are no changes proposed for this year. He was not aware of any case where a grievance has worked its way up to this Committee but one of the functions of this Committee is to hear grievances and first that grievance would go to a subcommittee of the committee which is five members.

ON MOTION by Ms. Milory Senat, SECONDED by Dr. Harry Hurst, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to approve the TDLCB Grievance Procedures for FY 2023/24.

Review of the 2020 Community Characteristics Report – No Action Required

Mr. Brian Freeman indicated that this is an activity that MPO Staff undertook last year and presented to the MPO Board at its December meeting. This is the Community Characteristics Report but it's basically using data from the 2020 Census as well as what's called the American Community Survey or ACS which is a supplemental program to the Census that is run by the Census Bureau where every year 1 in 40 households receive that questionnaire that is mandatory that you fill it out.

Mr. Mark Vietz provided an overview of the 2020 Community Characteristics Report. Starting in 2003, MPO has produced this report and what they do is they aggregate the data at the track level, and they assign those values to communities within the County.

Other New Business – No Action Required

No public comments.

ON MOTION by Dr. Harry Hurst, SECONDED by Ms. Dalia Dillon, the Board voted unanimously (12-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

The next meeting of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board will be held on **May 23, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.**