

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 27, 2025

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) was held at 10:17 AM on Thursday, February 27th, 2025, 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/2025.htm>.

Present were: Chairman **Deryl Loar**, Commissioner, District 3, Vice Chairman **William Lundy Parden**, Disabled Representative; **Jennifer Idlette**, Public Education Representative, **Bob McPartlan**, Florida Department of Children and Families (FDCF) Representative; **Modeline Acreus**, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Representative; **Yvelouse Augustin-Leow**, Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (FAHCA) Representative; **Laura Koursaris**, Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FDVR) Representative; **Dalia Dillon**, Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Representative; **Wendy Grow**, Florida Association for Community Action (FACA) / Economic Opportunities Council (EOC) Representative; **Milory Senat**, Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) Representative **Dale Shepperson**, Career Source Resource Center Representative;

Absent were: **Melissa Arndt**, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Representative; **Danica David**, Citizen's Advocate and **Dr. Harry Hurst**, Citizen Advocate Representative.

Present were IRC staff: **Ryan Sweeney**, Assistant Planning & Development Services Director; **Mark Vietze**, MPO GIS Planner; **Patti Johnson**, MPO Staff Assistant and **Kim Moirano**, Recording Secretary. Also present were **Karen Deigl**, Executive Director, Senior Resource Association and **Chris Stephenson**, Transportation Director.

THREE VACANCIES: Children at Risk, Senior Community Representative and Medical Representative.

Call to Order

Chairman Deryl Loar called the TDLCB meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Sweeney stated that Brian Freeman had a scheduling conflict with the MPO Advisory Council and he was filling in.

Election of Vice Chair – Action Required

ON MOTION by Deryl Loar, SECONDED by Ms. Dalia Dillon, the Board voted unanimously (9-0) to re-elect Mr. William Lundy Parden as Vice Chairman for 2025.

Approval of Minutes of the November 21, 2024, Regular Meeting – Action Required

Chairman Loar asked if there were any additions or corrections to the TDLCB Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2024.

ON MOTION by Mr. Bob McPartlan, SECONDED by Mr. William Lundy Parden, the Board voted unanimously (9-0) to approve the November 21, 2024, minutes as presented.

Milory Senat arrived at 10:01 a.m.
Laura Koursaris arrived at 10:03 a.m.

Senior Resource Association Recognition – Drivers of the Year Awards – No Action Required

Mr. Chris Stephenson, Transportation Director, Senior Resource Association introduced their Go Line Driver of the Year for 2024. He announced that they were honoring Mr. Walter Cadavid. He is a competent professional at SRA. He actually used to be a professional soccer player in Colombia and when he moved to America, he got a CDL and has been driving for SRA since July of 2022. He drives Route Two in Vero. He has tripped more passengers in the last two and a half years than any other Go Line driver that we have. He's done 70,000 safe miles, which is accident-free miles since he started working for us two and a half years ago. He never had any type of accident and he's very reliable on the schedule. He always looks great and he's a driver that we can point other drivers to and say we want you to be like Walter. Joe, their Training Manager will put new hires with Walter to train them to learn how to do the job correctly. That's just one of the things that they're proud of Walter about and something that really helped them qualify Walter for this award 2024 was during Hurricane Milton they needed drivers to help trip people to and from the Special Needs Shelter that were evacuating their homes because of that and Walter was one of our drivers who helped us do all that. He's very deserving of this award.

Planning Status Report – No Action Required

Mr. Mark Vietze stated that at the November 21st meeting Dr. Hurst requested to coordinate with the Chair to send out a letter of appreciation going into the holiday season. That letter was issued on December 31st of last year.

Additionally, the other big items that Planning staff has undertaken is the Safe Streets for All Program Study which they've done four workshops across the County. That program is going to open up some additional funding sources for some of the pedestrian stuff and how that affects us. The other big item to be aware of is they had a Hands-Free Resolution go forward both at the Board of County Commissioners and then the MPO Board. Current state law allows you to have your phone in your hand looking at maps or otherwise. It makes texting while driving or the existing law very difficult to enforce if there is not a Resolution to support it.

Community Transportation Coordinator Status Report – No Action Required

Mr. Chris Stephenson, Transportation Director, Senior Resource Association presented an overview of the First Quarter which was October, November and December of 2024, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

Mr. Stephenson stated that the quarterly ridership for the first quarter was slightly down that mainly had to do with October's ridership, which was impacted by Hurricane Milton. They expect their Community Coach ridership to be slightly above where it was last fiscal year by the end of this fiscal year. For this first quarter it was just slightly decreased. As you can see every month since then it has been above last year's numbers.

Same day ridership they've been able to offer more same day ridership than they did last year. This is something that they take very seriously. They want to be a user friendly system. By offering same day trips to their passengers, that's something that they want them to rely on Senior Resource Associates. Mobile application bookings is something that they've really started implementing in the last year as their Community Coach passengers can use an app to book their trips.

Their on-time performance is very, very strong. It was at 96 percent in December. The industry standard was 75 percent. They hold themselves to a higher standard than that. They want it to be as close to 100 as possible. The total number of Community Coach unduplicated riders is 3,888 so this is the most vulnerable of Indian River County population. These are disabled and elderly individuals who have no other means of transportation.

Their call phone volume goes down whenever more people are using the app to book trips. As more people are using the technology to book their own trips, they don't have to go on to the Call Center to book trips. They've also seen the call wait times go down. These are all things that they track on a monthly basis just to be able to communicate to this Board how many people are using their service and the things they're doing to try and serve the Community.

The Advantage Ride Program has about 9.2 percent more riders than last year. This was expected because the State Commission for Transportation Disadvantage gave them 9.2 percent less funding so they knew going into this fiscal year that their ridership was going to be slightly decreased. It is still a very successful program. They've done 193,000 since the program started in 2020 and it's for the developmentally disabled on the Treasure Coast. It's a four-county program. It's Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie and Okeechobee Counties. They won that award for that program last year. They're always trying to find ways to continue that program because the funding for that program expires June 30th.

They listed the people who advertise on the bus. They wanted to make sure that the Board is aware of those organizations and individuals because that money that they get for having their ad on the side of the bus that goes towards the local match that they need to match State and Federal Grants. It has been over \$42,000 that has been raised. Normally it's about \$68,000 by the end of the fiscal year.

Go Line had a six percent increase from the previous quarter and a 19 percent increase from this time last year. This was a huge ridership growth. They expected to see that because of the extended hours. In May of last year, they extended the hours on the Go Line so they don't stop at 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. They stop at 9:00 p.m. now. On Saturdays they're running from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and now they run from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. so they've seen a very big ridership growth on the Go Line and they expect that to continue this entire fiscal year. It's been some very positive growth. It's not just during those extended hours that they've seen increased ridership. It's the hours leading up to the extended hours. They thought that a lot of that had to do with when someone feels confident going out at 7:00 p.m. because they know they're going to have to bus ticket them home and they might not felt competent going out that late before their hours were extended. Their Go Line on-time performance was 94 percent for the first quarter. All of the routes are having really strong ridership growth. These routes were designed with the entire community in mind. They like to see that all facets of the Community are using the extended hours and there's a lot strong ridership growth. They will have the highest Saturday ridership they've ever had by the end of this fiscal year.

The industry standard for the number of trips per revenue mile is .25 trips per revenue mile. They are 1.36 per revenue mile. For the number of miles they're putting on the vehicles they have a lot of riders on the bus during that time.

The number of road calls they had slightly went up. They had eight last year and nine this year.

They just finished all the bus shelters on Old Dixie. They have a couple more to install in Fellsmere and Sebastian but right now it says they have 55 shelters but the next time this group meets that number will be 70 because they've installed 13 since December and they will have a couple more between now and this next meeting. After about a three-year hiatus, they were able to get some bus shelters installed and so that number is now 70 bus shelters. The number of complaints you can see went up slightly. They had 6 complaints this time last year and this year they had 8. That means there was one complaint every 48,000 trips on the Go Line and Community coach. They do track those things and they want that number to be as low as possible.

Review of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2024/25 Planning Grant

- Action Required

Mr. Ryan Sweeney stated this is the planning grant that the MPO receives to provide the planning

and guidance for the TD system. This is for the activities for the second quarter period from October 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

ON MOTION by Mr. Bob McPartland, SECONDED by Ms. Wendy Grow, the Board voted unanimously (11-0) to move Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2024/25 Planning Grant.

Consideration of the 2025 Transportation Development (TDP) Annual Update - No Action Required

Mr. Vietze presented the Transit Development Plan Annual Update for 2025. The Transit Development Plan is a ten-year strategic planning document, both for the operational and capital needs of the transit system. Beyond the fact that it's just good housekeeping to have a ten-year plan, it's also a requirement PR for our State Block Grant. The State Block Grant gives us roughly \$700,000 a year, and that becomes part of the local match for the 5307 Federal Transit Administration. In 2023 was their last major update. That was done by Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida. This is the 2025 update and they didn't do a 2024 update. That was because last summer FDOT and the State Legislature changed Florida Administrative Codes so they pushed out that fifth year so their next one can be in 2029 and they're doing the first of the five incremental years.

They did the 2023 major update. The difference between a major update and an annual update, again in 2023 that's part of the Unified Planning & Work Program that MPO's overall work program it goes into the larger budget. The University of South Florida had some undergraduates come and they rode the bus and they did over 1,000 surveys. They did another 300 surveys on the internet and they did two public workshops for them as well. It ended up becoming about a 200-page planning document. In the intervening years they do an annual update and it's effectively a progress report or a report card. So, they look at the goals, objectives and performance measures that are outlined in the larger ten-year plan. They also add on a ten-year and intervening so there's always ten years.

One of the big things that Jonathan Roberson said to the Board was that everyone loves Go Line. There's a lot of support for it. They just wish there was more service. That's our Number one goal adding to the quantity and quality of the service. The transit system serves the community and it's really the transit system so that's building consensus because even though we do get a lot of funding from our partners both at the State and Federal level, of course, there's a local match. The third item is the coordination working with our partners and the fourth and final is ensuring that we have a safe transit system that's also accessible. We're doing a number of those things through the bus shelters, ADA transition and the like.

The Go Line ridership had a record ridership of 1.36 million riders for FY23-24. That is October 1 through September 30th. One of the objectives of goal 1 on the quantity of service was hitting 1.75 million riders by 2033 and with the ridership growth that we're seeing in theory we will hit that in FY27. There is 7.9 percent growth across the system, 7 of the 14 routes had over 9.1 percent or higher so 6 of the 10 are over 10 percent including some of our largest routes. We are the lowest cost per passenger trip system in the State. This is 2022 data. Two weeks ago FDOT released the 2023 data. The cost had gone up by 13 cents per passenger trip but the Go Line is still the most cost-efficient system in the State. This data was presented two weeks ago at the MPO Board meeting and an explainer from the TC Palm wrote a wonderful article about Go Line talking about how it's the most cost-efficient system in the State.

For the last year they've been talking about a Service Development Grant that the Board matched. It's \$1.2 million dollars over three years and it enables that additional two hours of service on Monday through Friday and an additional three hours of service on Saturday and it allows Route 13 to run on Saturdays as well. Route 13 runs from the mall out to the outlet mall and it also runs by a number of our mobile home communities on the south side of Rt. 60 out west of town. It has also led to additional ridership in that 5:00 p.m. to 7 p.m. time. There was a delivery of three new Gallig Low four buses, some additional service vehicles that have been ordered for a number of years replacing 20-year-old vehicles. They programmed a million dollars into their FY 2024 Section 5307 Grant that was recently awarded to

them. A number of the items on the operational side going into FY27 were actually implemented in 2024 so they're tackling these items head on and they're trying to get in front of them. It is a cost constraint environment but they're trying to hit all of their goals. Part of the Florida Administrative Code Updates is the 2025 list of priority projects. This goes into the Transportation Improvement Program that is the five-year Work Program so you have the North County Hub Construction that will happen. FDOT is going to do all the horizontal work for them as part of the 510 widening. It will still early this Summer. There is also the addition of Sunday operating hours that will happen in the outer years of the decade.

The TDP was adopted by the MPO Board on February 12th.

Review of Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2023/24 - Action Required

Mr. Ryan Sweeney stated the annual evaluation which occurred after the regular meeting of November 21st, 2024. There was a subcommittee that conducted the evaluation of CTC, which is SRA. In the materials they received a glowing review, straight 10s across the board.

ON MOTION by Ms. Dalia Dillon, SECONDED by Mr. William Parden, the Board voted unanimously (11-0) to approve the Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2023/24.

Other New Business – No Action Required

Mr. Bob McPartlan asked if there were any updates on the Transportation Development of Disabilities money coming for next year. Ms. Deigl stated that she had been working with St. Lucie County as a very close partner on that whole program and as Chris had mentioned earlier the funding is going away. It's \$1.3 million dollar annual project and they do about 3,500 developmentally disabled people on the Treasure Coast unduplicated and that's four counties they trip them in and it's usually to work and/or to education. They have an appropriations put in with Senator Grall and Representative Trabulsy for a \$1.35 million dollar appropriation. They're also looking at FDOT to see if there isn't any funds available. With the climate right now both at the Federal level and the State level they're not sure what's going to happen. There may be potential vouchers for IDD to use vouchers so that they could use any public transit or paratransit. The only concern on voucher situation is that these individuals need special attention and that any time you're tripping them the drivers need to have special training to be able. Mr. McPartlan asked if letters of support could be sent. Ms. Deigl stated that letters could actually be sent to SRA and they could pass it on to Senator Grall and Representative Trabulsy and Ken Pruitt.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

The next meeting of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board will be held on **May 22, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.**