

MINUTES



January 27, 2022



8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.



Participants

Committee Voting Members

Gregory Stuart | Broward MPO (Chair)
Greg Slay | Capital Region TPA
D’Juan Harris | Charlotte County-Punta
Gorda MPO
Beth Alden | Hillsborough TPO
Beth Beltran | Martin MPO
Rob Balmes | Ocala/Marion County TPO
Valerie Neilson | Palm Beach TPA
David Hutchinson | Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Peter Buchwald | St. Lucie TPO

Committee Alternate Members

Lakshmi N. Gurram | Charlotte County-
Punta Gorda MPO
Scott Philips | Collier MPO
Alex Trauger | MetroPlan Orlando
Kevin Walford | Miami-Dade TPO

Friends of the Committee

Chelsea Favero | Forward Pinellas
Scott Koons | Gainesville MTPO
Cayce Dagenhart | Hernando/Citrus MPO
Ron Gogoi | Lee County MPO
Steve Bostel | Space Coast TPO

MPOAC Staff

Mark Reichert | MPOAC
Lisa Stone | MPOAC
Jeff Kramer | CUTR

Other MPO Participants

Paul Flavien | Broward MPO
Robert Esposito | Hernando/Citrus MPO
Eric Christianson | Emerald Coast RC
Mary Beth Washnock | Emerald Coast RC
Brandy Otero | Collier MPO

FDOT Participants

Alison Stettner | FDOT
Erika Thompson | FDOT
Jennifer Fortunas | FDOT
Abra Horne | FDOT

FHWA Participants

Cathy Kendall | FHWA
Karen Brunelle | FHWA
Carlos Gonzalez | FHWA

Other Participants

Daniel Crotty | SEPI, Inc.
Noel Comeaux | Healthy Communities, LLC
Wade Carroll | Metro Analytics
Mike Williamson | Cambridge Systematics
Erin Lasala | Cambridge Systematics
Todd Brauer | Whitehouse Group
Tom Brandenstein | Whitehouse Group
Nicholas Torres | Whitehouse Group

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **Gregory Stuart** (Committee Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.
2. The **Committee Chair** asked for a motion to approve the July 29, 2021, Meeting Minutes. **Greg Slay** made the motion, **Peter Buchwald** seconded, and all were in favor.
3. **Todd Brauer** gave the Proposed Membership Changes presentation.
 - a. A survey and outreach were conducted to establish Committee membership and ask who will serve in the Member and Alternate positions of the Committee for their agency.
 - b. Non-member agencies chose a staff member to serve as the Friend of the Committee, which will be its point of contact and input to the Committee.
 - i. The **Committee Chair** asked for a motion to approve the addition of the six new agencies into the official Committee membership. **Greg Slay** made the motion, **Valerie Neilson** seconded, and all were in favor.
 - ii. The total number of member agencies was expanded from nine to 15, or 63 percent of the MPOAC.
 - iii. The **Committee Chair** asked for a motion to approve the Friends of the Committee list. **Dave Hutchinson** made the motion, **Greg Slay** seconded, and all were in favor.
 - iv. A question was asked if it was possible for a Friend of the Committee to become a voting member and the **Committee Chair** stated that it was possible as long as it is approved by a motion.
4. **Mark Reichert** gave the Proposed Bylaw Update.
 - a. He welcomed Committee members to review and provide feedback on his draft of the bylaws and expects to have his revised draft ready to present by the April meeting.
 - b. The **Committee Chair** stressed to his membership the need to propose any bylaw changes before the April meeting.
5. **Tom Brandenstein** gave the Committee Outreach Survey Results presentation which targeted input in three main areas: Membership, the Freight Priorities Program (FPP), and Committee activities.
 - a. FPP results indicated that there was majority support to expand the program to include projects outside the State Highway System (SHS) while still enforcing the project readiness requirements.
 - b. The Committee Activity section results were used as a guide to create the One-year Strategic Plan and gather presentation topic interest.
 - c. The **Committee Chair** welcomed an offer from **Karen Brunelle** to have the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) give a presentation to the Committee on the freight-specific changes to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL).
6. **Mike Williamson** presented on the Freight Priorities Program and discussed how survey results were used to develop program expansion recommendations.
 - a. The recommendations to the Committee included expanding eligible projects to non-SHS roadways, truck parking, intermodal logistics center (ILC) access, and rail. Also, a total submission limit of six projects (Three SHS and Three Non-SHS)

was given while keeping the project readiness requirements in place for all project types.

- b. The Committee discussed the proposed changes:
 - i. Some issues raised during the discussion included:
 - 1. Projects not meeting the currently set readiness requirements could benefit from being included in the list to obtain funding for these early-stage planning studies.
 - 2. Federal dollars should be steered towards the off-system projects due to the larger availability of funds for the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS).
 - 3. Concern that expanding the FPP to include too many projects could diminish the meaningfulness of the program especially when not all of the projects on the current list are receiving funding.
 - 4. A question on why a cap was being set on projects that met the proper readiness requirements. An answer was given that the cap was originally added to create a statewide balance on submissions to the list.
 - 5. Concern for giving equal weight to the on-system and off-system projects on the list, with the belief that the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) should be the priority.
 - 6. Projects being added to the list should be eligible for the INFRA discretionary grant program.
 - 7. The need to work with DOT to designate what is considered to be a part of the NHFN, especially the Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) and Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFC), was emphasized by multiple members.
 - ii. **Dave Hutchinson** motioned the below statement, **Peter Buchwald** seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

I would make a motion that we approve the changes as presented, with one caveat that the additional off-system projects be focused on identifying potential additions to the National Freight Network.
 - c. The presentation was concluded with a timeline for this year's FPP process and a note that the application would be moving to an online format.
7. **Todd Brauer** presented the One-Year Strategic Plan. **Dave Hutchinson** made the motion to approve the plan, **Valerie Neilson** seconded, and all were in favor.
8. **Nicholas Torres** presented on the Passenger Rail Initiative.
- a. The **Committee Chair** stated his excitement for the passenger rail workshop in April and encouraged agencies to invite interested elected officials to attend.
 - b. There was a question asked on how members were to provide input for the State Rail Plan update and a response was given that input would be gathered in a survey sent to Committee members and through an educational program on past rail project successes.
9. The **Committee Chair** moved to the Administrative Items.
- a. A recommendation for reformatting the meetings to allow for more time would be made at the Staff Director's meeting.

- b. The new Committee membership will be taken to the Governing Board for approval.
 10. The **Committee Chair** opened the floor for Public Comments. There were none.
 11. The **Committee Chair** thanked everyone and concluded with the Meeting Adjournment.
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MOTIONS

1. Approval of July 29, 2021, Meeting Minutes – **Passed**
 2. Approval of the new Freight & Rail Committee membership list – **Passed**
 3. Approval of the new Friend of the Committee list – **Passed**
 4. Approval of the presented changes to the FPP, with the caveat that the additional off-system projects be focused on identifying potential additions to the National Freight Network - **Passed**
 5. Approval of the One-Year Strategic Plan – **Passed**
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ACTION ITEMS

- Conduct training webinars for the Freight Priorities Program highlighting the new changes for 2022 and the online application process.
- Once training has concluded, open the FPP online portal for agency project submissions.
- Finalize the 2022 FPP list for the April Committee meeting.
- Conduct a passenger rail workshop at the April Committee meeting.