

# **Florida Freight Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Florida Department of Transportation**

**605 Suwannee Street, Auditorium, Tallahassee, Florida 32399**

**May 23, 2017**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Mr. Rickey Fitzgerald.

## **ROLL CALL**

The following members participated in the Florida Freight Advisory Committee meeting on May 23, 2017: David Anderton, Port Everglades; Joe Arbona, Genesse & Wyoming Railroad Services, Inc.; Mark Bontrager, Space Florida; Pete Coultas, A. Duda & Sons, Inc.; Tony Cugno, Jacksonville Aviation Authority; John Dohm, Florida Transatlantic Holdings, LLC dba Florida Transatlantic Consulting; Richard Dubin, Caribbean Ship Services, Inc.; Scott Fernandez, Aqua Gulf Transport; Gary Goldfarb, Interport Logistics, LLC; Tisha Keller, Florida Trucking Association; Toy Keller, Florida Ports Council; Eric Lindstrom, Hillsborough County Economic Development Department; Robert Midgett, Walmart Logistics; Amy Miller, Port of Pensacola; Bob O'Malley, CSX; Stan Parkes, Crowley Logistics; Barbara Pimentel, Florida Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association; Ryan Stoeger, Mosaic; Jake Swab, Purina Animal Nutrition; Holly Munroe, FDOT; Rickey Fitzgerald, FDOT; Brian Hunter, FDOT, Justin Ryan; Jeremy Upchurch, FDOT; Jason Klempin, FDOT; Keith Robbins, FDOT; Nehama Bikovsky; Sheri Coven; Allison Deffenbaugh; Kwentin Eastberg; Paul Flavin; Gary Huttman; Jimmy McDonald, CDM Smith; Rob Palmer, RS& H; Greg Stuart, Broward MPO; Alissa Torres; Thomas Knox, CDM Smith; Norris Varkalhoff; Kevin Walford; and Casey Grigsby, CDM Smith.

## **AGENDA ITEM #1 - ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 21, 2017 MEETING**

**MOTION BY MR. GOLDFARB TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 21, 2017 MEETING. SECONDED BY MR. DOHM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **AGENDA ITEM #2 - ADOPTION OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR**

**MOTION BY MR. GOLDFARB TO APPROVE THE NOMINATION OF MS. AMY MILLER AS THE CHAIRPERSON AND MR. ROBERT MIDGETT AS THE VICE-CHAIRMAN. SECONDED BY MR. DOHM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **AGENDA ITEM #3 - NATIONAL HIGHWAY FREIGHT PROGRAM (NHFP) OVERVIEW**

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he wanted to review the questions that were asked during the last meeting and spoke in regards to the following items:

1. FDOT Freight Funding & Processes
2. Today's NHFP Agenda Item
3. NHFP Survey Results

Mr. Fitzgerald showed a video on “FDOT Work Program 101”.

There were some audio difficulties and Ms. Munroe stated that they would send the video out following the meeting.

Mr. Fitzgerald went through the work program process and stated that projects come to them as a need, go through the process, see what funding is available, and funding is limited. He also stated that freight funding is based on eligibility and whether there is any funding available.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that a Freight Project Need is Identified and then a funding source is chosen based on the project eligibility and funding availability. Examples of freight programs that are state-funded are: Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Loans, Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), and Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development (FSTED). Freight Programs that are federally-funded are: National Highway Freight Program (NHFP), FASTLANE Grants, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grants, and Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Credit Assistance.

Mr. Fitzgerald showed the completed National Highway Freight Network and stated that it was approved in April 2017.

Mr. Fitzgerald discussed the key inputs that go into creating the Program Priorities; eligibility requirements, stakeholder priorities, system approach, project costs, funding availability, and readiness.

Mr. Fitzgerald informed the Advisory Committee that this is the time for them to give their input into what other criteria FDOT should be considering when selecting freight priority projects.

Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed the survey questions and results.

**AGENDA ITEM #4 – DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF FLFAC NATIONAL HIGHWAY FREIGHT PROGRAM (NHFP) RECOMMENDATION**

Chairperson Miller reviewed the recommendations.

**MOTION BY MR. GOLDFARB FOR THE FLORIDA FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ENDORSE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY FREIGHT PROGRAM (NHFP) INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION. SECONDED BY MR. O'MALLEY.**

Chairperson Miller opened the item for discussion.

Chairperson asked if there are any additional comments or questions.

Mr. Goldfarb stated that he did conducted a mathematical scoring of the projects year by year, based on the funding available, and only 52% of the projects could be funded with the money available. He

stated that the survey was helpful in determining what is most important to the freight industry. He stated that if you look at the survey the number of projects between moderate and high impact is the same number of projects that we are currently looking at around the 50-52%. He suggested doing all the high impact projects and then adding in the moderate projects.

Chairperson Miller thanked Mr. Goldfarb for his analysis and perspective. She stated that she is curious how committee members arrived at their scores on the surveys. She stated that from her perspective she is not familiar with a lot of these projects except for the information that was provided with each of them. She stated that the way she scored the projects was based on the descriptions and how the projects impacted freight. She stated that the projects that spoke about freight and had concrete numbers ranked higher for her than the projects that didn't address freight. She stated that the way she scored might not be fair to the project because there might be a project that didn't discuss freight in their description but they have a high freight impact but we just don't know that.

Mr. Coultas asked where we are in the process? Are we supposed to be focusing on the list we were given or adding in additional projects?

Mr. Fitzgerald replied that the Committee is focusing on the list of projects provided because the deadline is in June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Coultas stated that he scored the projects based on their association with the three-main north south corridors: I-75, I-95, and US27. Any projects that were on those corridors received high impact scores and any projects that were on the side roads or adjacent received the moderate impact. He stated that this is just based on his perspective.

Chairperson Miller stated that they could all probably agree that the trouble spots are: I-75, I-95, and I-4 corridors and that is where all the traffic is and the majority of the freight congestion. She stated that allocating funding for improvements in those areas makes a lot of sense.

Chairperson Miller requested to go back through the list of projects that ranked high.

Ms. Keller stated that she agreed with going back through the projects, that we do have a limited amount of money, and we do have freight running through our state. Ms. Keller suggested rather than making sure that each District has a project she thinks that we need to look at what would benefit the state the most to connect those corridors with projects that allow the criteria that the FAST Act has identified for connectivity and congestion mitigation, etc. to be a statewide vision not a district by district, project by project vision. She stated that while these projects scored high because that is what the Districts had to offer, she is not sure this is solving our overall freight volume problem. She suggested taking a step back and looking at the corridors with the highest impact and fixing those corridors first and then identify where signaling and grade separations can help. She stated that when USDOT is evaluating these projects they won't be looking at them by district but how the projects can help us statewide to solve some of our freight mobility problems. She suggested looking at the overall system instead of just the value of a project within a district.

Mr. Dohm agreed with Ms. Keller and stated that we need to find connectivity statewide.

Mr. Goldfarb stated that if you look at the map and you look at the high impact areas they are almost identical.

Chairperson Miller asked Mr. Fitzgerald if he is looking for this committee to rank and prioritize these projects or just adopt the program you have provided with general guidance on how to direct the funding.

Mr. Fitzgerald replied that they are looking for the Committee's perspective on where they should be heading for these projects. They are looking to see if the Committee agrees with the projects that are listed as having a high impact or do they think that they should be categorized as moderate or low impact. He stated that they need to know from the Committee perspective how they would rank the projects either as a high, medium, or low impact.

Chairperson Miller stated that organically the highest ranked projects are the projects with the highest impact either method we used which is a good thing.

**MR. GOLDFARB WOULD LIKE TO MAKE AN AMENDMENT TO THE ORIGINAL MOTION THE FLORIDA FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ENDORSE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY FREIGHT PROGRAM (NHFP) INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION WITH HIGHEST PRIORITY GIVEN TO PROJECTS THAT SCORED 50% OR ABOVE HIGH IMPACT IN THE SURVEY THAT WAS GIVEN TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS. MR. DOHM SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION.**

Ms. Keller stated that trucking represents 75% of freight in the state and no other mode can pick up or distribute without truck so it doesn't make sense to not include highway. Discussion ensued about intermodal representation when selecting projects.

Chairperson Miller asked how DOT will rank the individual projects for the funding.

Mr. Fitzgerald replied that when we talk about SIS we are trying to leverage the funds across other offices as well. We don't just look at it from a project level but also a phase level.

Ms. Munroe stated that if we go this route of only funding a select number of projects that is only part of the process. We will also need to consider cost and phasing, which will take place after we receive your recommendation.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that we want to move these projects faster than they were moving before (advancing) and they have an impact on freight mobility.

Mr. Goldfarb asked if some of these projects have alternative funding than what we are discussing today. Ms. Munroe replied yes.

**MR. GOLDFARB WOULD LIKE TO MAKE AN AMENDMENT TO THE ORIGINAL MOTION THAT THE FLORIDA FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENDORSE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY FREIGHT PROGRAM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION WITH HIGHEST PRIORITY TO THOSE PROJECTS THAT RANKED AS HIGH IMPACT BY 50% OR MORE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, SECOND TIER PRIORITY TO THOSE THAT RANKED AS HIGH IMPACT BY 25% OR MORE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE REMAINING PROJECTS FUNDED AS FUNDING PERMITS, WITH STAFF USING THE SURVEY RESULTS AS A GUIDE FOR PRIORITIZATION PURPOSES. MR. DOHM SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION. MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**AGENDA ITEM #5 - PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments.

**AGENDA ITEM #6 - MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Bontrager asked if this process will be continued in future years or is this just a one year, one time opportunity?

Mr. Fitzgerald replied that this is the first cycle and we will have an additional cycle it goes on for five years ending in 2020. He stated to use these funds we need to have a Strategic Highway Network and Freight Network established and we can adjust them annually. He stated we also get our apportionment for the funds annually from FHWA. He stated that we look at it year by year but we do have a vision of it out further than one year.

Mr. Bontrager stated that from a space perspective Florida lead the world in launch activity and every single mode in Florida is used to enable space to happen. He stated the projects particularly on 528 are very important to the space mode, the improvements are very necessary. He stated that they have an ongoing concern regarding bridges because they only have two bridges that give them access to the Canaveral Spaceport, which is a challenge given the aging nature of them.

**AGENDA ITEM #7 - FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the next meeting will be in the Fall around October.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.