

# NORTHWEST FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR AUTHORITY MONTHLY MEETING

## Meeting Minutes

February 25<sup>th</sup> 2010

1. Call To Order-Chairman Montgomery called to order the meeting of the Northwest Florida Transportation Corridor Authority at 10:00am CST on February 25, 2010 at the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

### **Members Present:**

Robert B. Montgomery, Chairman

Stephen K. Norris, Vice Chairman

James F. Anders, Secretary/Treasurer

Robert E. McGill III

J. Carey Scott III

Ashton J. Hayward III

Jason Alderman with FDOT

### **Staff Present:**

Nick Beninate, General Counsel

### **Members Absent:**

Cheryl Sanders

2. **Welcome** Chairman Montgomery welcomed everyone to the NFTCA meeting in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.
3. **Approval of Minutes** Monthly Meeting January 28, 2010.

**Motion by:** Stephen Norris

To approve minutes.

**Second by:** James C. Scott  
**Approved:** 6-0

**4. New Business**

**A. Approval of US 98 Franklin County Invoice #175779-H for \$10,979.21**

**Motion by:** Stephen Norris                      To approve invoice #175779-H  
**Second by:** Robert McGill  
**Approved:** 6-0

**B. Resolution to change bank account from Bay Bank & Trust to BB&T**

Chairman Montgomery stated that it is more convenient for him to use BB&T for NFTCA banking duties, rather than Bay Bank and Trust located in Panama City, as they have branch offices throughout the Panhandle.

**Motion by:** Ashton Haywood                      To change the bank account from Bay Bank and Trust  
to BB&T  
**Second by:** Robert McGill  
**Approved:** 6-0

Mr. Beninate stated that he would like for the Board to formally adopt a resolution that was verbally adopted at the January Meeting.

**C. Consider updates to 2009 Master Plan**

Mr. Anders stated that Wakulla County is missing a critical link from Gulf County to Tallahassee. He stated that the Board should keep the option of extending SR 22 on the table.

Mr. Norris stated that Gulf County needs a link east for better access to Tallahassee. He said that he understood it would require another crossing over the Apalachicola River and that there were sensitive environmental issues with the addition of another bridge. He thought the Board should keep this on the table as it is an important link.

Mr. Reissener stated that US 98 through Franklin County meets the goals and objectives of the Authority for travel times. The only need that was identified through the Master

Planning process was for hurricane evacuation and a sustainable east/west roadway that did not get damaged from storm surge.

Mr. Norris stated that he felt the Gulf County to Tallahassee connection was an economic concern.

#### **D. Review website updates**

Mr. Reissener began the discussion by asking the Board to recommend some rules on what comments should be posted and how HDR could better identify comments that should not be posted, such as those with profanity.

The Board discussed posting public comments to the website in a message board type format.

Mr. Beninate stated that this could be a legal issue with deciding which comments to post and which comments not to, those with profanity, etc.

Mr. Reissener stated that it may be easy to maintain the public comments on the website now, but once work starts to pick up, it could be very administratively intensive.

Mr. McGill asked if we could establish a Public Advisory link that is not maintained by the Authority.

Mr. Scott stated that the public can still email, call, or mail letters to the Board Members to express their comments and the on-line comments are not a necessity.

Mr. Robert Baronti Jr. with the West Florida Regional Planning Council stated that the local Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs) recently set up a Facebook account for public input and there were legalities involved. He cautioned the Board about starting one of these.

Mr. McGill stated that he did not want to spend additional fees to maintain this site as Administration fees are non-existent already.

Mr. Beninate stated that if one of these sites is set up, that by no means can Board Members exchange information among themselves.

It was decided that HDR would set up a commenting site and the Board would re-address the issue in April.

#### **Board Member Comments-**

Mr. Norris stated that he could not retrieve the agenda from the website. He also asked if the Resolutions could be posted to the website for the Public to see.

Mr. Montgomery stated that he had a video conference with FDOT and FHWA. Administrative funding should be agreed upon soon. The FDOT Secretary stated that funding should be available by the April meeting. The FDOT may execute a JPA (Joint Participation Agreement) to administer the funds.

Mr. Peters with the FDOT stated that these funds were still Federal funds.

Mr. Reissener asked if Federal funds were used for Administrative uses, would that federalize the entire Master Plan.

Mr. Peters was unsure, but said that FHWA intent was to fund administrative activities.

Mr. Montgomery stated that he would ensure that the Master Plan would not be federalized, otherwise the Authority would use the funds for a different activity. He stated that the Board is focusing on the Northwest Fl. (Eglin) Bypass. The Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives (DOPA) is the current activity that the Board would like to undertake.

Mr. Anders stated that all of the eight Counties were addressed except for Escambia.

Mr. Haywood stated that he did not have anything to discuss at this time.

Mr. Anders stated that the Legislative Session was coming up and asked if the Board should address anything.

Mr. Reissener stated that there is an application to the Revolving Trust Fund to complete the environmental study for the NW FL (Eglin) Bypass.

Mr. Montgomery also stated that the Turnpike has been contacted to conduct a toll feasibility analysis for that roadway. He would also look into the funding issues.

Mr. McGill asked if the FDOT had asked Turnpike to conduct the feasibility analysis.

Mr. Peters at the FDOT stated that a verbal request had been made, but the NFTCA should follow-up with a formal written request.

Mr. Montgomery stated that the Legal Team was working on that and Turnpike has knowledge of the request. He also stated that he would meet with the Eglin Officials to let them know of the NFTCA activity.

## **Public Comments**

Mr. Mike Anders, City of Ft. Walton Beach, asked if there was a link to the backup information such as Resolutions and “Master Plan” changes. He also asked if the Board could post information about he agenda items.

Mr. Montgomery stated that the Board considers changes to the Master Plan at each Public Meeting and that they take Public Comments and discusses changes. No formal Master Plan changes were planned for today’s meeting.

Chairman Montgomery stated that the next NFTCA Meeting would be:  
**April 22, 2010 in Wakulla County.**

Chairman Montgomery called to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion by:** James C. Scott : To adjourn the meeting.

**Second by:** Robert McGill

**Approved** 6-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 CST