

NORTHWEST FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR AUTHORITY MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2013

1. Call To Order-Chairman Montgomery called to order the meeting of the Northwest Florida Transportation Corridor Authority at 10:00am CST on January 24, 2013 at the Panama City City Hall, Commission Chambers, Panama City, Florida.

Members Present:

Robert B. Montgomery, Chairman

Stephen K. Norris, Vice Chairman

James F. Anders, Secretary/Treasurer

Scott Gaby

J. Carey Scott III

Jason Peters, FDOT

Staff Present: Nick Beninate, General Counsel

Members Absent: Cheryl Sanders and Gordon Sprague

2. **Welcome** Chairman Montgomery welcomed everyone to the NFTCA meeting in Panama City, Florida. Chairman also introduced new Board Member, Scott Gaby to everyone. Chairman also mentioned that the other new Board Member, Gordon Sprague, was unable to attend this first meeting of 2013.

3. **Approval of Minutes** Monthly Meeting October 25, 2012.

Comment was made that in the meeting minutes, Item 2. Welcome states that "Chairman Montgomery welcomed everyone to the NFTCA meeting in Okaloosa County." The minutes should have read Walton County.

Motion made to amend the minutes and then the minutes could be approved. This Motion was made, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

4. Financial Report

Board Member Carey Scott provided newly formatted spreadsheet of Operating Budget 2012/2013. No change in the figures, but due to Florida Statutes, the balance sheet needed to be re-formatted to be compliant.

Motion made to approve the Budget, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

5. New Business

A brief explanation of the invoicing/payment process was provided to new Board Member, Scott Gaby.

A. Approval of Invoice – Harrison, Sale, McCloy, \$875.00

Motion made to approve, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

B. Approval of Invoice – HDR (Task 3), \$25,681.78

Motion made to approve, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

C. Approval of Invoice – HDR (Task 3), \$144,108.35

Motion made to approve, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

D. Approval of Invoice – HDR (Task 3), \$58,136.40

Motion made to approve, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

E. Approval of Invoice – Carr, Riggs (2011 Audit), \$5,000.00

Motion made to approve, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

F. Discussion/Selection of Executive Board & Financial Committee Members

The Chairman gave a brief explanation of the need for Financial & Executive Committees. With Mr. McGill no longer serving on the Board, there's no longer a Financial Committee. Steve Schnell (HDR) mentioned that previously there had been a 3-member Committee with an alternative designated.

Following this brief discussion, a Motion was made for Mr. Scott to be the 3rd person on the Financial Committee. This was Seconded and unanimously Approved.

G. Review of Recurring Dates for the Authority

The Chairman requested Nick Beninate prepare a schedule of recurring dates of Authority deadlines. The Chairman requested everyone keep it in a prominent place for future use and to bring to meetings.

H. Discussion of Master Plan Schedule

Steve Schnell told of May completion date for presentation to Florida Transportation Commission (FTC). Steve also requested that we have an interim meeting in March so that the Plan can be presented to the Board before the FTC presentation. Chairman suggested a 3/28/13 working meeting in Pensacola since this Board meeting was originally to be held in Pensacola.

Motion was made to have the interim working Board meeting in Pensacola on 3/28/13. It was Seconded and unanimously Approved.

I. Discussion of Master Plan Public Meetings

Steve Schnell told the Board of upcoming public meetings throughout the corridor. There will be 4 meetings in all and they will be held from 6 – 8 PM:

2/19/13 - Escambia and Gulf Counties

2/21/13 – Bay and Okaloosa Counties

Steve told Jason Peters (FDOT) that he would present to FDOT the week before the workshops.

J. Discussion of Project Benefits & Prioritization

Steve Schnell gave a PowerPoint presentation on Business Case analysis and prioritization of projects. A list of 35 projects that had been compiled from workshops held in 2012. The first workshop created an initial list of 41 projects. At the second workshop, stakeholders had a discussion of the projects and refined them per economic need/value. The third workshop was where the Team presented the preliminary benefit results to the stakeholders.

Scott Gaby mentioned a comment from Harry Reed (CRPTA) at the 3rd workshop about SR 22 to Sopchoppy. Steve told the Board that he addressed the comment with Harry immediately following the workshop.

There was a discussion with FDOT as to whether we needed to include this possible with possible future corridors on the project map that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Steve Norris said that this would be of interest to Gulf County. Steve Schnell mentioned that the Team recommends including SR 22 back to east connection, if ok with FDOT. Harry Reed wanted to see it included as a possibility. Jason Peters said one of the needed future corridors is an east/west corridor. Central Office has been coordinating with 1000 Friends and other environmental agencies but we need to be careful **not** to show these as definitive. The map needs to show Needs, not clearly defined projects. Jason mentioned Tampa to Jacksonville corridor.

Steve Norris asked if it was possible to do some shading to show potential needs – not definitive projects. Steve Schnell said that the map needed to be consistent with FDOT and Jason said that shading might be a good way to do it. Does it need to be included in this Master Plan update? Per Jason, the Plan should be able to be updated at a later time.

Jim Anders asked about Hwy. 20 to Airport; is there anything else? Steve explained that the Turnpike did a study and there wasn't enough traffic to do this section economically so it wasn't included in the Eglin Bypass. It was removed during an earlier study. Mr. Anders requested that we include Hwy. 20 from Niceville to 331.

Steve Norris asked to see some sort of analysis done to keep Gulf Coast Parkway visible.

Steve Schnell explained the Benefit Cost (B/C) ratios and indicated that anything over a 2.0 is considered to be a good investment. A 2.0 would mean that for every \$1 being invested, there is a return back to the public in terms of benefits of \$2. Nick Beninate asked about BRT inputs. Steve explained that we need to meet with county and RPC staff to get more precise assumptions. Currently the numbers are high because the assumptions aren't accurate.

Carey Scott said that the Team needs to be sure to stress that these numbers have been reached through a scientific methodology and not as a result of any one individual or government's wishes. Nick asked about qualitative numbers and Steve explained that several of the projects rank high both qualitatively and quantitatively. The projects will be prioritized based on the final B/C and qualitative results. Steve mentioned there are various ways the priorities could be presented including by region, project type and by mode.

Steve said that a memo will be distributed explaining the process and then the Board can provide their input.

Steve Norris asked if it's a good idea to put in completion dates for projects. Steve Schnell said that there can be a benefit to sequencing projects.

6. Public Comments

Phil Babiak of Navarre, representing himself, asked to make a comment. He was pleased the US 98 project ranked so high. He's very frustrated and concerned about the lack of east/west corridors south of I-10, especially between Hurlburt and SR 87. When there is a problem and traffic stops, there are no options. If someone's destination is south of I-10 and traffic stops, they must use Garcon Point or get off I-10 at Crestview. We are trying to keep our military here and we aren't able to satisfy their needs (travel to/from home, etc.) because their only road for travel is blocked or slow due to heavy traffic adding another hour to their commute. There are no options and no connector options. Thank you.

Steve Norris asked to speak about Gulf Coast Parkway. He met with Jason Peters and Tommy Barfield (FDOT) in December to discuss the GC Parkway. At the end of the day, there was still no agreement. Steve wants to continue discussions

with FDOT, good or bad. One of his major concerns is the Port becoming functional and the GC Pkwy. is critical to this.

Jason Peters said that the Gulf Coast Parkway project has been around a long time and FDOT is working to finalize the study within the next 2 years. The study was initially started through an earmark under Opportunity Florida; FHWA decided FDOT should take ownership. Jason mentioned it took several years to get a consultant under contract and revise the previous documents to be in compliance with the federal process. He mentioned with an EIS, you must carry all alternatives all the way through the study. This EIS is nearly complete and FDOT is expected to hold a public hearing for the project by late summer. Jason mentioned the southern section of Gulf Coast Parkway is funded because it is common to all alternatives currently under study. Steve Norris mentioned that FDOT should look at a more northern connection to US 231 or revisit the widening of SR 71. Jason said that FDOT is looking at all alternatives that meet the purpose and need and if an alternative alignment is added at this point in the study, it would add an additional 2 years to the study timeline. Gulf Coast Parkway is not a fix-all but Jason will be glad to sit down with Steve to discuss this further.

Steve Norris said that from those who are interested in Gulf Coast Parkway point of view, it's been 10 years so if it takes an additional 2 years to get the study right than FDOT should do so. Steve's goal is to make the Port successful and said he will keep pressing FDOT to look at other viable options.

7. **Proposed Next Meeting Date:** March 28, 2013 in Pensacola.
Motion made, Seconded and unanimously Approved.

8. **Adjournment:**
Motion made to adjourn, Seconded and unanimously Approved.
The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m. CST.