

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD (LCB)**

Minutes of regular meeting held on September 20, 2017 (rescheduled from September 7, 2017 due to Hurricane Irma preparation) at the East Port Environmental Campus, Training Room A, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte, Florida 33980

MEMBERS PRESENT

Commissioner Ken Doherty, *Charlotte County Commissioner, (LCB Chair)*

Alan Skavroneck, *Local Private for-Profit Transportation Industry Representative (LCB Vice Chair)*

Mike Mansfield, *Economically Disadvantaged Representative*

Debi Stephens, *FDOT, District One Modal Development Office*

Joseph Sabatino, *Citizen Advocate*

M. Suzanne Roberts, *Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic (Medical Community Representative)*

Gwen Aubrey, *Elderly Interests Representative*

Cindy Montgomery, *Regional Workforce Development*

Joseph Martinez, *Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)*

Angela Hemstreet, *Children-at-Risk Representative*

Larry Brown, *Veterans Affairs*

David Wilson, *Disabled Representative*

ABSENT MEMBERS

Dottie Fulton, *Citizen Advocate-User-excused*

Cherrelle Rogers, *Department of Children & Families*

Shelby Yelvington, *Area Agency on Aging-Florida Department of Elderly Affairs*

Jill Mead, *Public Education-School Transportation*

Bruce Emmerton, *Division of Blind Services*

STAFF

Bob Herrington, *MPO Director*

Wendy Scott, *MPO Planner*

Gene Klara, *MPO Planner*

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rick Kolar, *Fleet and Transit Division Manager (CTC)*

Andrea McDonough, *Transit Division*

Zinnia Vargas, *Fiscal Services*

Michelle Edwards, *Transit Division*

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Ken Doherty called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He asked that each person state his/her name, and whom they represent.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

4. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: May 11, 2017 Meeting**
- B. LCB 2018 Calendar of Quarterly Meetings**

Alan Skavroneck made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda that included Minutes from the May 11, 2017 meeting and the proposed LCB 2018 Calendar of Quarterly Meetings. Debi Stephens requested that the spelling of her name be corrected in the May 11, 2017 Minutes (page 5). Mike Mansfield seconded the motion to include the correction, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Local Coordinating Board (LCB) Bylaws

Wendy Scott stated that the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged requires that the LCB Bylaws be reviewed annually. She noted that only minor revisions, including the rescheduled meeting date of this meeting and minor changes to the cover page, document headers and signature page were proposed for the LCB Bylaws.

Alan Skavroneck made a motion to approve the draft LCB Bylaws. Angela Hemstreet seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Annual Operating Report

Rick Kolar began his review of the 2016/2017 Annual Operating Report (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017) stating that total trips reported increased by over 13,000 from the previous year. He noted that trips for employment purposes nearly tripled from the previous reporting period.

Mr. Kolar noted a decrease in the number of Transportation Disadvantaged riders during the reporting period. He stated that this decrease is due in part to the fact that some TD riders have missing or incomplete TD eligibility forms. These forms were instituted in June 2017. Mr. Kolar noted that as of October 15, 2017, TD riders who have not provided complete TD eligibility forms and required documentation will no longer receive the \$1.00 TD rider discount. Mr. Kolar noted that his staff members are

providing ongoing assistance to riders who are experiencing difficulty with completing the forms.

Angela Hemstreet inquired if students with cognitive impairment issues would be eligible for TD trips. Mr. Kolar stated that a note by a medical professional or the students' program plan accompanying the TD eligibility form would meet the eligibility requirement.

Mr. Kolar stated that over the next calendar quarter nine new buses (Ford Connect vans) will be purchased by the County to improve and update vehicle inventory and reduce the number of roadcalls required when in service vehicles become inoperable.

Mr. Kolar noted that the cost per trip (average \$24.52) has increased by approximately 5%. He attributed this increase to higher labor costs. Alan Skavroneck noted that per trip costs could have shown additional increases, if not for the increase in ridership reflected during the reporting period. Debi Stephens suggested that terminology defining paid "coordination contractors" and "not-for-profit" coordinated contract partners (formerly known as "sweat equity" providers) be clarified so that the difference between these trip providers would be made apparent. Mr. Kolar agreed that this clarification in the Quarterly Report would improve understanding going forward.

Alan Skavroneck made a motion to approve the 2016/2017 Annual Operating Report (AOR). Suzanne Roberts seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. Quarterly Report

Rick Kolar stated that during the April through June 2017 reporting period, ridership was lower by approximately 10 %. He noted that the reduced ridership was due in part to normal seasonal fluctuations. Mr. Kolar reported that there has also been a corresponding drop in rides provided by the "coordinated providers", with some of this ridership loss due to the Cooper Street Recreation Center currently undergoing renovation. Ridership also decreased substantially in ride services provided by the Vet Van. Suggestions to determine this reduction in ridership include contacting adjoining counties to see if this trend is regional. Mr. Kolar stated he would investigate this issue and report his findings at the next LCB meeting.

Mr. Kolar noted that trips provided by Charlotte County Transit (i.e. in addition to TD trips) shows measurable increases with trips for employment, education/training, and medical purposes showing measurable gains. He noted that unmet trips were up slightly in the quarter, as many buses are filled to capacity with rider work commutes on early morning bus runs. This has led to an increase in complaints under the "no timeslot available" heading.

Mr. Kolar then discussed a handout prepared for meeting attendees entitled "Call Analysis" covering the period from May 1 through August 25, 2017. Mr. Kolar stated that this analysis focused on three (3) main challenges experienced by riders scheduling

trips. These challenges he noted were (1) reduce incoming callers hold times for scheduling; (2) reduce incoming callers on “hold time” for Callback and (3) educate callers on use of the system.

Through a series of bar graphs, Mr. Kolar emphasized that over 90% of all incoming scheduling calls are handled in less than 10 minutes, and that the 4 full-time and 2 part-time schedulers are adequate to handle all calls received.

He noted that between 1500 and 2000 calls are received per week with less than 20% (range of 200 to 400) of these calls requiring a callback to the rider to schedule their trip. Call-backs average approximately 5 minutes or less to schedule a trip, with the average wait time to receive a callback varying from 11 to 27 minutes. He noted that customer service staff members attempt to remain on task with all callers to schedule their trips as efficiently and effectively as possible. He noted that occasionally, human nature issues related to callers forgetting their appointment times, location addresses or return times will occur. In these events, clients are asked to obtain the required time and location of proposed trips, with another callback sometimes required to complete scheduling of the trip. Other issues that occur include callers who simply “hang up” their call, call to schedule a trip multiple times or callers who attempt a quicker response by using phone reservation options not related to their trip scheduling request.

Members expressed an appreciation for the effort Mr. Kolar and his staff have done to schedule, reschedule and handle unforeseen or difficult requests. The data provided reflected a paratransit system balancing the needs of its riders with the resources in place.

8. Citizen Input

There was no Citizen Input.

9. Staff Comments

Wendy Scott welcomed Gwen Aubrey as the new Elderly Interest Representative.

Wendy Scott discussed the annual TD Workshop and Training Conference held in Orlando from August 29-31, 2017. She mentioned that the focus of the event included: (1) the increased use of new technologies in transit operations and (2) the emphasis on program accountability, since audits will continue to play a larger role.

Ms. Scott noted that Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) has suspended the Englewood Beach service (Route 26) from August 19 to December 16, 2017 (when service will resume). Mr. Kolar noted that SCAT’s other cross-county route is currently in service.

Ms. Scott noted that the revised Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) funding formula allocation has resulted in a substantial increase for Charlotte County. Ms. Scott also acknowledged the efforts by the members of Healthy Charlotte County’s Access to Healthcare Subcommittee in increasing public awareness of transit programs in the County. An increase of 20.7% in medical trips has been documented in annual TD reporting from FY 2014/2015 to FY 2015/2016.

Gene Klara described that many public transit agencies including Austin, Texas, Nashville, Tennessee, and Pinellas and Broward Counties in Florida are considering or already using the on-demand transportation services of Uber and Lyft. He noted that

Broward County officials are using a plan to enable paratransit riders to use Uber and Lyft in addition to its Transportation Options Paratransit Service (TOPS). In Pinellas County, ridesharing services provide “TD Late Night” services from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The proposal considers that riders using disability equipment (i.e. wheelchairs and larger scooters) may not be able to use this ridesharing service. He noted that there are safety and security issues associated with them, including driver background checks, driver geographic knowledge and auto insurance liability issues. He noted that the Florida Legislature in its 2018 session may review and enact legislation addressing some of these concerns.

Bob Herrington noted that he will be retiring as Director of the MPO effective October 2, 2017. He described how his career reflected involvement in various transit programs in Southwest Florida. He asked that LCB members continue to serve and improve the lives of individuals that are transportation disadvantaged and thanked the LCB members for all their efforts.

10. Member Comments

Debi Stephens noted that Transit Grant Workshops for the 5310 (disabled), 5311 (rural) and the 5339 (Bus and bus-related equipment) grants will be held on October 11 in Bartow and October 12 in Ft. Myers. She noted that the prior year grants have been approved for authorization and disbursement.

Mike Mansfield and Suzanne Roberts summed up the past week’s area impact after Hurricane Irma’s landfall on September 10, noting that our community was very fortunate to receive only minor roadway and home damage. They commented that there were areas in Southwest Florida that have experienced significantly more damage and fully support efforts by Charlotte County to aid those communities.

Cindy Montgomery stated that there will be a “Job Fair” on Friday (September 22, 2017) at the Career Source of Southwest Florida offices (3745 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte).

Joseph Sabatino informed members that an initiative, the Parish Relief Assistance Center (PRAC), will be holding a one day training session for anyone interested in serving as a volunteer during emergency and disaster events. He noted that training would be conducted by professionals affiliated with Texas A&M University. He asked for ideas from members to increase community awareness at this upcoming training session. Suggestions by members included preparing press releases for inclusion in local newspapers, contacting the Charlotte County Communications staff, and holding informational meetings with United Way staff, the Charlotte Community Foundation and the Charlotte County Human Services Department.

Chair Ken Doherty reiterated how fortunate it was that our community only experienced minor damage from the impact of Hurricane Irma. He noted that he has observed many individuals showing strong compassionate, empathy and patience as our community and state begin to recover and rebuild both physically and emotionally.

11. Adjournment

Chair Doherty stated that the next LCB Meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2017 and adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

DRAFT