



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY – PUNTA GORDA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING, DECEMBER 18, 2017
MURDOCK ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, ROOM #119
PORT CHARLOTTE FL 33948

MEMBERS PRESENT

Commissioner Christopher Constance, Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Vice Chair
Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch, Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Chair
Commissioner Joseph Tiseo, Charlotte County Commissioner
Commissioner James W. Herston, Charlotte County Airport Authority
Council Member Lynne Matthews, Punta Gorda City Council

ADVISORY

L.K. Nandam, FDOT District One Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Gary Harrell, MPO Director
Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Planner III
Wendy Scott, MPO Planner II
Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT

Lawrence Massey, FDOT
D’Juan Harris, FDOT
John Burrage, CAC Chair
Mitchell Austin, TAC Chair/City of Punta Gorda
K. Stephen Carter, BPAC Chair
Janette Knowlton, Charlotte County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)
Gary Nelson, Kitson and Partners
Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering, Inc
Jennifer Straw, Jacobs Engineering, Inc
Rick Braun, Citizen
Peter Gerhardt, Charlotte County BZA/Charlotte County P&Z
Reverend Dr. Brian Armen – Faith Lutheran Church, Rotonda West
Rick Kolar, Charlotte County Transit Division

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

MPO Chair Stephen R. Deutsch called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The roll call was taken, and all members were present.

2. Invocation

Reverend Dr. Brian Armen (Faith Lutheran Church, Rotonda West) gave the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MPO Chair Deutsch announced that Charlotte County Commissioner Ken Doherty has agreed to continue to serve as Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board Chair filling the locally elected governmental official position (in accordance with Rule 41-2, Florida Administrative Code).

4. 15 Year Service Recognition – Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordinator

Bekie Leslie was recognized for her fifteen years of service to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO. Gary Harrell gave some remarks on her MPO career. Ms. Leslie received a certificate and posed for a photograph with MPO Board Members and MPO Director Harrell.

Chair Deutsch welcomed two new MPO Board Members: Punta Gorda City Council Member Lynne Matthews and Charlotte County Commissioner Joseph Tiseo.

5. Addition and/or Deletion to the Agenda

Commissioner Constance requested an update to the MPO Board Meeting agenda page to reflect the recent appointment of Commissioner Joseph Tiseo who replaced Commissioner Ken Doherty.

Commissioner Constance requested adding Agenda Item #10-F (related to Agenda Item #10-C), regarding a multi-County issue on CR 74 to raise and widen the roadway at the same time that work at the intersection of CR74 and SR 31 occurs.

Commissioner Constance made a Motion to approve the addition of Agenda Item #10-F regarding CR 74 to the current meeting agenda and carry it forward under the FDOT Report portion of the MPO Board Agenda at subsequent meetings. Commissioner Herston seconded the Motion and the Motion carried unanimously.

6. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

7. Election of 2018 Officers

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch turned over the meeting to Janette Knowlton, County Attorney (MPO Legal Services) to conduct the election of 2018 Officers.

Commissioner Herston nominated Commissioner Deutsch to serve as the MPO Board Chair. Council Member Matthews seconded the nomination. Commissioner Constance moved to close the nominations. There were no objections, and Commissioner Deutsch was declared MPO Board Chair by a unanimous vote.

Commissioner Deutsch nominated Commissioner Herston to serve as the MPO Board Vice Chair. Council Member Matthews seconded the nomination. There being no additional nominations, Commissioner Herston was declared MPO Board Vice Chair by a unanimous vote.

Commissioner Deutsch nominated Commissioner Herston to serve as the MPOAC Representative. Commissioner Constance seconded the nomination. There being no additional nominations, Commissioner Herston was declared MPOAC Representative by a unanimous vote.

Commissioner Deutsch nominated Commissioner Tiseo to serve as the MPOAC Alternate. Council Member Matthews seconded the nomination. There being no additional nominations, Commissioner Tiseo was declared MPOAC Alternate Representative by a unanimous vote.

8. Chairs' Reports:

A. MPO Board Chair's Report

Chair Deutsch announced that Joshua Moye had found new employment and would no longer serve as Legal Counsel to the MPO Board. Chair Deutsch thanked Ms. Janette Knowlton for temporarily serving in the position.

Chair Deutsch emphasized the important ongoing issues upon which the MPO coordinates with FDOT staff (such as River Road, SR 31/CR 74 and Burnt Store Road).

B. Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair's Report

John Burrage CAC Chair noted that both County and City staff were present at the most recent CAC Meeting. CAC Members thanked FDOT staff for the recent work completed at the southbound I-75 exit/Kings Highway merge lane. He stated that the CAC Members had recommended MPO Board approval of the motions contained in Agenda Items #13 and #14. He also gave Seasons Greetings to all. MPO Board Members remarked upon the CAC's discussion of a letter to the editor in the November 8, 2017 edition of the *Charlotte Sun* from John Heekin regarding the intersection of SR 31 & CR 74. Chair Deutsch noted that a Charlotte County response would be appropriate.

C. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair's Reports

TAC Chair Austin reported the results of the TAC Election of Officers for 2018. Mr. Austin was reelected as TAC Chair, and Venkat Vattikuti was reelected as TAC Vice Chair. Mr. Austin reviewed the specific details of the TAC Members' recommendations for MPO Board approvals of the motions contained in Agenda Items #13 and #14.

D. Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Chair's Report

BPAC Chair Carter stated that the BPAC Members had recommended MPO Board approval of the motions contained in Agenda Items #13 and #14. At the BPAC Meeting, a discussion occurred regarding the need for more signage for Aqui Esta in the City of Punta Gorda. A letter on the subject for the BPAC Chair's signature to City Manager Howard Kunik was under development. Commissioner Tiseo remarked about the new bicycle key way on US 41. He mentioned a safety concern wherever the key way splits the turn lanes and bicyclists have the right of way and follow the same rules as automobiles. He stated that the area was just striped several weeks ago. Stephen Carter noted that although well marked, these turn lane areas can be somewhat precarious. Ultimately, education and awareness are needed for everyone.

9. Local Government Reports:

The City report was given first.

B. City of Punta Gorda

Council Member Matthews provided a packet of materials regarding the following City of Punta Gorda activities:

- Gilchrist Park renovations
- Post-Hurricane Irma seawall repair program in Punta Gorda Isles and Burnt Store Isles
- Arrival of a new City of Punta Gorda Police Chief on January 2, 2018
- Ongoing hiring efforts to fill the City Communications Manager position and work on the City's branding and marketing program

A. Charlotte County Airport Authority (after B)

Commissioner Herston provided a packet of materials regarding the following Airport Authority activities:

- Total Passengers FY 2012 through 2018
- Operations Reported by the Control Tower for September – November 2017
- Hanger Information and List of Allegiant Cities Served
- Fuel Purchases (influenced by Hurricane Irma)
- CEO's Report – Development Update (including the progress of the 5-Year Airport Master Plan)

Chair Deutsch described his recent travels through the Punta Gorda Airport, characterizing his experience as two very comfortable economy flights only 15 minutes away from home.

C. Charlotte County

Commissioner Tiseo reported on Charlotte County's Roadway projects covering:

- Burnt Store Road Phase 2 (Notre Dame to North of Zemel Road)
- Midway Blvd (Sharpe Street to Kings Highway)
- Olean Blvd (US 41 to Easy Street)
- Piper Road (Henry Street to US 17), including coordination of utilities with the City of Punta Gorda
- Placida Road Multi-Use Path and Utilities Improvement (Rotonda Blvd W. to Boca Grande Causeway)

10. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

D'Juan Harris addressed the following items under the FDOT Report:

A. I-75 Possible New Interchange North of Kings Hwy Interchange

FDOT Central Office is evaluating how to streamline the Interchange Justification Report (IJR) to better coordinate the planning and Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) process. There will be a report given by FDOT staff member Lawrence Massey on the new IJR process at the Joint MPO Board Meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board on January 22, 2018 in Venice, Florida.

B. US 41 Northbound at Murdock Circle Left Turn Lanes Extension-Update

This project is scheduled to be let in early 2018, and the completion date should be mid to late Spring 2018.

C. SR 31 at CR 74 Intersection-Safety Project Regarding Recent Fatalities

Secretary Nandam stated that a presentation will be given at the Joint MPO Board Meeting with Lee County or the next regular MPO Board Meeting regarding the subject of the SR 31 at CR 74 intersection. The design phase is programmed in FY 2021, with further construction, of perhaps a roundabout as a final solution, to be accomplished in later years. The installation of a temporary signal will occur next year. Chair Deutsch remarked regarding the large number of heavy vehicles traversing the intersection.

Secretary Nandam recognized his concern as valid, and suggested that the MPO Board make the project a priority.

F. (New) Agenda Item Relating to Raising and Widening CR 74 at the same time as CR 74 & SR 31 Intersection Improvements Occur (see Agenda Item # 10-C)

At the start of the meeting, Commissioner Constance had requested the addition of Agenda Item #10-F (related to Agenda Item #10-C), regarding a multi-County issue on CR 74 to raise and widen the roadway at the same time as when work at the intersection of CR74 and SR 31 will occur. He noted that he was pleased with ongoing Charlotte County and FDOT efforts to improved traffic safety in the area.

D. US 17 at Nesbit St. Intersection Re-Design

FDOT staff reported that officials in the City of Punta Gorda are not in support of removing the no turn on red sign at the location. Following discussions with Commissioner Constance, Secretary Nandam stated that he would personally visit the location following the meeting.

E. I-75 Purple Heart County Signage

FDOT denied the request for Purple Heart County Signage along I-75. However, signage elsewhere in the County was being given consideration. Chair Deutsch, as Veterans Committee liaison, had shared this information with the Purple Heart group the previous Saturday.

Secretary Nandam reported that Lawrence Massey was currently filling the position of FDOT Southwest Area Office (SWAO) Interim Director in Fort Myers.

Commissioner Constance gave accolades to FDOT for work done at the southbound I-75 exit ramp at Kings Highway. He also commented on the issue of a potential right turn lane from Southbound Nesbit Street onto Westbound Marion Avenue (US 17). He noted that failure to allow a right turn on red at the location slows exiting from Laishley Park. He observed that forthcoming restrictions to the drive behind the Justice Center will worsen the situation by preventing an additional exit point in the area. Council Member Matthews stated that she would relay his concerns to the City Council Members at their next meeting.

Council Member Matthews asked FDOT staff about the deferral of the Carmalita Street design improvements from the Project List. Council Member Matthews stated that Council Member Prafke had been in a serious accident at that location. FDOT staff noted that the deferral was due to a needed budget balancing of the FDOT Work Program. However, there is a safety analysis underway given an uptick in vehicle crashes that may impact the project. A discussion followed regarding two development projects to be built at that location: (1) one at the triangle shaped lot south of Sacred Heart Church for a bank building, and (2) another on the east side where a strip plaza was proposed which will require a code change. Chair Deutsch stated that FDOT needed to be kept apprised on these two proposals. Mr. Harrell noted that the project will be up for a PD&E Study in FY 2019 which will foster further discussion for improvements to the intersection.

11. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: October 23, 2017 Meeting**
- B. Citizen’s Advisory Committee Appointment**
- C. Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee Appointment**
- D. Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) Reappointment**

Commissioner Herston made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Lynne Matthews seconded the Motion and the Motion carried unanimously.

12. PUBLIC MEETING: FY 2017/2018 – FY 2021/2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Gary Harrell, MPO Director, reported that the MPO staff received a request from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to amend the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO’s FY 2017/2018 – FY 2021/2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The amendment is to add Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310-42 Assistance Project.

Chair Deutsch opened the Public Meeting. No one wished to speak.

Commissioner Constance made a Motion to close the Public Meeting. Commissioner Tiseo seconded the Motion, and it carried unanimously.

Rick Kolar, Charlotte County Transit Division, discussed the state of the County Transit fleet. He noted that 9 vehicles had been replaced in the last fiscal year, with an additional 9 due for replacement soon. The County Transit fleet currently consists of 39 vehicles. Commissioner Deutsch requested that Mr. Kolar prepare a briefing for the Board of County Commissioners on the County’s transit fleet. Commissioner Constance stressed that since the hybrid vehicles were not performing well, the County should not purchase any more of them going forward.

Commissioner Tiseo made a Motion to amend the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO’s TIP for FY 2017/2018 – FY 2021/2022 adding: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310-42 Assistance Project. Commissioner Herston seconded the Motion. The motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

13. FDOT Safety Performance Targets

Gary Harrell, MPO Director, indicated that the MPOs are required to adopt Safety Performance Measure Targets by February 27, 2018 to meet new Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements. FHWA has established five national Safety Measures which all state Departments of Transportation and MPOs nationwide must address. Unlike other performance measures applicable only to the National Highway System (NHS), the safety performance measures apply to all public roads. The safety performance measures are:

1. Number of Fatalities
2. Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
3. Number of Serious Injuries

4. Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT
5. Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries

Guidance regarding implementation of adopted targets was provided by FHWA to the MPO staff in October 2017. FDOT recently released safety performance measure targets. FDOT has identified “Vision Zero” targets (goal of no fatalities or injuries) for all five of the safety performance measures. Florida has become the only state in the nation to do so. In addition, FDOT has provided interim targets that set a specific number for each of the targets based on monthly data from 2005 through 2016. Each of the MPOs have until February 27, 2018 to accept the FDOT targets or develop individual MPO targets.

Additionally, by May 27, 2018 MPOs must include a narrative description of the safety performance target(s) in their TIPs to address the performance targets and the anticipated effects the projects will have collectively on meeting these targets. Further, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will also need to include narratives on the performance measures, either by the next major update or when/if the current LRTP gets amended after May 2018.

Commissioner Constance made a Motion to adopt FDOT’s safety targets for all five national safety measures. Commissioner Herston seconded the Motion and the Motion carried unanimously.

14. FY 2023/2024 Shared – Use Non-Motorized (SUN) Trails Network Priorities

Gary Harrell, MPO Director, stated that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is soliciting on behalf of the Office of Greenways and Trails System (OGT) new potential projects for funding the SUN Trail program for inclusion in the Tentative Five Year Work Program development cycle for FY 2023/2024. The deadline for submission of these applications is December 15, 2017. Projects must be on the MPO’s Project Priority list.

Mr. Harrell noted that all advisory committees had reviewed the proposed list of new potential SUN Trail projects. He stated that the MPO Staff and Jacobs Engineering Inc, upon reviewing the existing network, had identified several candidate projects that are eligible for funding.

1. Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor – On SR 776 from Myakka State Forest to US 41 (Not currently adopted on the MPO’s Project Priority list)
2. Charlotte County Spine Trail 2 Corridor – On US 41 (East side) from Peace River Bridge to SR 776 (Currently partially programmed with RTAP funds)
3. West Coast Trail – Charlotte County Corridor – On CR 775 from Gasparilla Rd to SR 776 (Not on SUN Trail network but part of OGT)

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended for Charlotte County to concentrate on one SUN Trail grant submission: Project Number 1. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) considered two projects: Numbers 1 & 2 with project Number 1 being the stronger

candidate. The Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) recommended Project Number 1 for the SUN Trail grant submission and adding Project Number 3 to the SUN Trail network. All committees recommended adding Project Number 1 to the MPO's Regional Transportation Alternatives Project (RTAP) Priority list.

Commissioner Herston inquired about a conflicting statement on the Agenda Items page for #1 Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor stating "to US 41" instead of "to Murdock Circle" in Attachment 2 (under TAP Projects-Regional Projects #3). Staff verified that the language should be "to US 41" and the MPO Board agreed to the technical correction to the Transportation Alternatives Program (RTAP) Projects-Regional Projects List.

Commissioner Constance made a Motion to approve the following recommendations:

- 1. Add Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor – On SR 776 from Myakka State Forest to US 41 to the MPO's Regional Transportation Alternatives (RTAP) Project Priority list;*
- 2. Endorse the SUN Trails Grant Application for a feasibility study for the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor – On SR 776 from Myakka State Forest to US 41 for the FY 2023/2024 Tentative Five-Year Work Program; and*
- 3. Direct MPO Staff to work with the Office of Greenways and Trails System (OGT) to add the West Coast Trail –Charlotte County Corridor – On CR 775 from Gasparilla Rd to SR 776.*

Council Member Matthews seconded the Motion and the Motion carried unanimously.

15. Review and Approval of the Joint Resolution Regarding the SR 31 State Infrastructure Bank Loan Backstop

Gary Harrell, MPO Director, stated that the Babcock Ranch Independent Special District (ISD) is seeking a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) loan from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to advance the construction of SR 31 from SR 78 in Lee County to the Babcock Ranch main entrance in Charlotte County. The Babcock Ranch ISD collects transportation fees for the repayment of the SIB loan and is also committed to levy a special assessment to serve as the backstop to the loan payments if the collected transportation fees are not sufficient to cover the loan payments for any of the fiscal year's payments.

FDOT is requiring an additional backstop to the SIB loan as the Babcock Ranch ISD does not have a long governmental history. To finalize the loan, FDOT is looking for a Joint Resolution between the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Lee County MPO so that if the Babcock Ranch ISD fails and cannot meet the loan repayment requirements, their District Dedicated Revenue (DDR) funds (only usable on projects on the State Road system) may be used to meet the repayment requirements.

Gary Nelson, Kitson & Partners provided the following information regarding other sources of payment that would have to be exhausted before DDR funds were needed. The mechanisms that would proceed using the gas tax funds include:

1. Improvement is a regional need with or without Babcock, this gives Babcock a chance to move them forward at Babcock's expense.
2. Payments are just over \$2 million per year over 15 years, easily absorbed by the ISD
3. Principle source of payment are the transportation fees charged at \$2500/unit, with 5 years of collections before payments start
4. Conservative sales numbers generate enough in fees to cover the payments
5. ISD is the true back stop and will automatically assess property for any year's shortfall
6. If no fees were collected the assessment would be just over \$100 per acre on the tax roll as a special assessment
7. Gas tax funds would only be required if Kitson walks away from the project and lets 18,000 acres go for tax certificate sales

Gary Harrell reported that the Lee County MPO Board reviewed a draft Resolution at its November 17, 2017 Meeting and approved the final Resolution at its December 15, 2017 Meeting. The resolution approved by the Lee County MPO was included in the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Board agenda packet and had been reviewed by FDOT legal staff as well as Lee County and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPOs' Legal Staffs.

Since the County was cosigning, Commissioner Tiseo inquired about the source of the funding. Gary Harrell indicated that it would not come from the County General Fund, but rather the source was future FDOT District Dedicated Revenue (DDR) funds. Commissioner Constance asked what the two-county split would be. Mr. Harrell stated that he believed it would be determined based upon a percentage basis. Secretary Nandam said that FDOT had not decided yet on the proportional share. He noted that it may depend on length of roadway or population.

Commissioners Tiseo and Constance expressed concern of approving the SIB Loan backstop without knowing FDOT's breakdown of the project's proportional share by County.

Commissioner Constance made a Motion to approve the Joint Resolution providing an additional backstop for FDOT for the SR 31 State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) loan that the Babcock Ranch Independent Special District is using for the widening of SR 31. The Motion includes a breakdown of proportional share by County to be provided by FDOT.

Commissioner Herston seconded the Motion and the Motion carried unanimously.

16. Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan Update

Ned Baier and Jennifer Straw of Jacobs Engineering, Inc. provided an update on the progress of the ongoing Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan. As part of the process, various outreach efforts will be conducted during Winter/Spring 2018. The consultant will finalize gaps and needs, and then, calculate costs. A presentation is planned for the March 8, 2018 MPO Board Meeting.

Commissioner Constance commented on the need to complete the Flamingo/Edgewater Corridor to provide an alternative to bicyclists and pedestrians to avoid US 41 traffic. He stressed that this could make a possible next sales tax initiative project. He noted that the local bicycle economy is an important one, and retirees want safe bicycling opportunities. He

stated that he is glad the Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan is being done, and expected it to be a great future tool.

16. Public Comments

Rick Braun noted that the number one US killer is cardiovascular disease, but it can often be overcome with exercise and nonsmoking. He characterized bicycling as a wonderful local movement to heighten quality of life. Mr. Braun has had the opportunity to cycle with people from all over the world here. He wanted to point out that South and West Charlotte County has many bicycle enthusiasts. However, he stated that the Mid-County region is an area where bicycling clubs are more heavily prevalent. He stressed that citizens' input is important, and he is very involved in cycling groups. He would like to have a presentation available for these groups.

17. Staff Comments

Janette Knowlton expressed her pleasure at being at the meeting.

Gary Harrell provided MPO Board Members with a summary of recent staff activities. He added one staff activity not on the list was on Dec 15, The Local Mitigation Strategy Working group. He then gave a "look ahead" for the MPO Board meetings. The next being the January 22, 2018 Joint Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO/Sarasota-Manatee MPO Meeting at the Venice Community Center and the February 16, 2018 Joint Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO/Lee MPO Meeting at the Lee County Administration East Facility. He noted the revised MPO Meeting Schedule reflects changes to previous locations.

Gary Harrell stated MPO Staff will hold a Certification Meeting with FDOT Liaison D'Juan Harris January 9, 2018. He further stated Project Priorities from City and County staffs were due to FDOT February 1, 2018.

Gary Harrell stated normally the December MPO meeting had short agendas, unlike the recent one. He stated the agenda was long partly because Hurricane Irma disrupted meetings and schedules. He credited the MPO Staff for their hard work over the past three months.

Chair Deutsch asked that the members continue to be kept abreast of future legislative updates through the MPOAC.

18. Members Comments

Commissioner Constance thanked the FDOT Staff over the improved efforts in the past year of getting things done quickly and efficiently. He appreciated the comments from Rick Braun on the bicycle issues facing the County and encouraged him to attend BPAC meetings.

Commissioner James Herston wished Merry Christmas to all and a prosperous New Year. He appreciated Chair Deutsch's guidance over the past year and thanked FDOT for their help. He then welcomed Council Member Lynne Matthews and Commissioner Joe Tiseo to the MPO.

Council Member Lynne Matthews, on behalf of the City of Punta Gorda wishes a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. She stated she was happy to be on the MPO Board.

Commissioner Tiseo commented that the Kings Hwy project removing the bump-out demonstrated government did not move slowly, nor did the change cost anymore. The change orders available were made at no additional cost. Secretary Nandam used the available contract, heard us, saw the solution and pulled the trigger quickly to make it happen.

Chair Deutsch echoed the previous comments stating the MPO is looking out for all and is a team effort for items that benefit all of Charlotte County. He sees a change in level of concern and cooperation with FDOT lately working toward better safer and more efficient transportation. He then congratulated Bekie, Gary and his staff wishing all a Merry, Happy and Blessed Christmas.

Secretary Nandam mentioned that Sarasota-Manatee MPO River Road Project recently received a \$7 Million boost or \$3.5 Million in TRIP funding plus the match. The section is River Road from US 41 to I-75. He stated this is a significant step in the process and was a result of the last joint meeting that made River Road a top TRIP priority. Chair Deutsch recalled that about six-seven years previously at the Joint Meeting with the Lee County MPO Burnt Store Road was made the Number One TRIP priority because of its significance to Cape Coral and Lee County. The same offer was made for River Road with the Sarasota-Manatee MPO although they did not even have the project on their list at the time. He stated this MPO Board can feel good about the recent TRIP funding for the Sarasota-Manatee MPO as the road way is important for the new baseball park and other activity.

19. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:18 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is Joint Charlotte County-Punta Gorda/Sarasota-Manatee MPO Meeting, Monday, January 22, 2018 – 10:30 a.m., at Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Avenue S, Room F, Venice, FL.