

MEETING MINUTES

**LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED of the
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
REGULAR MEETING
Collier County Government Center
Admin Building “F”, IT Training Room, 5th Floor
3299 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112
December 4, 2024 | 1:30 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Chair Pernas called the meeting to order at approximately 1:31 p.m.

Ms. Miceli called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

Members Present

Carmen Henry, Southwest Florida Regional Workforce Development Board, Vice-Chair
Tony Pernas, MPO Board member, Everglades City, LCB Chair
Stacy Booth, Florida Dept. of Transportation
Charles Lascari, Rep. of Disabled
Sarah Gualco, Area Agency on Aging SWFL-FL Dept. of Elder Affairs
Brett Nelson, Children at Risk (*arrived during item 5.A.*)
Pa Houa Lee-Yang, Florida Association for Community Action
Michael Stahler, Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (*arrived during item 5.A.*)
Patti Warren, Fla. Dept. of Edu./Div. of Vocational Rehab Services (*arrived during item 5.A.*)

Members Absent

John Lambcke, Collier Schools Transportation Director
Leah Watson, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Monica Lucas, Local Medical Community
Oscar Gomez, Veterans Services
Tabitha Larrauri, Fla. Dept. of Children and Family Services

MPO Staff

Dusty Hansen, Senior Planner
Suzanne Miceli, Operations Support Specialist II

Others Present

Brian Wells, Director, Collier County Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement
Elena Ortiz-Rosado, Marketing Manager, Collier Area Transit

Omar De Leon, Public Transit Manager, Collier Area Transit

B. Pledge of Allegiance

2. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Gualco moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Henry seconded. Passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of September 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Henry moved to approve the Meeting Minutes for September 4, 2024. Ms. Gualco seconded. Passed unanimously.

5. BOARD ACTION

A. Approve Annual Update to the Local Coordinating Board Grievance Policy/Procedures

Ms. Hansen said that the MPO's Planning Grant agreement with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) requires that the Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB) have a Grievance Policy/Procedures in place, which must be updated annually. She also mentioned that the Grievance Policy provides guidance for those who have unresolved complaints related to administration of the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program in Collier County, and that to date, no grievances had been filed.

Ms. Hansen said she made updates to bring the policy up to date with Florida law, including revisions to enhance clarity, revisions to definitions to more closely track the language contained in TD program definitions set forth in Section 427.011, Florida Statutes, and revisions to more closely track language related to TD program grievances set forth in 41-2.012(5)(c), Florida Administrative Code.

Ms. Hansen reviewed the annual update to the Local Coordinating Board Grievance Policy/Procedures (which can be viewed in the December 4, 2024 LCB Agenda).

Mr. Lascari said he was a regular user of CATConnect and asked what the chain of events are when someone calls to leave a complaint on the Collier Area Transit (CAT) complaint line and when is a complaint considered a grievance.

Mr. De Leon said the policy is that when someone calls or emails to leave a complaint, a CAT staff member documents the complaint and funnels it to the staff responsible for the area which relates to

the complaint. The responsible staff member reviews the complaint and reaches out to the customer to solve the issue. If the customer is not satisfied with the solution presented by staff, then a grievance can be filed.

Mr. Lascari asked if there is an issue is on the bus, is there camera footage for the staff to review?

Mr. De Leon said that there are cameras on the buses.

Mr. Lascari moved to approve the Annual Update to the Local Coordinating Board Grievance Policy/Procedures. Ms. Lee-Yang seconded. Passed unanimously.

B. Review and Approve the CTC's Final FY 2023-24 Annual Operating Report

Mr. De Leon said that CAT is required to submit an Annual Operating Report (AOR) to the CTD and mentioned that the Board received a presentation of the draft AOR at the September 2024 meeting and approved the draft before it was submitted to the CTD.

The CTD accepted the AOR without a request for revisions, and the final report was being presented. The AOR is a culmination of the fiscal year of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 and includes data regarding trips, categories of services, funding sources, et cetera.

Mr. De Leon reviewed the final AOR (which can be viewed in the December 4, 2024 LCB Agenda).

Ms. Henry moved to approve the CTC's Final FY 2023-24 Annual Operating Report. Mr. Stahler seconded. Passed unanimously.

C. Endorse the submittal of Federal Transit Administration Sections 5310, 5311 and 5339 grant applications and the associated projects to support Collier Area Transit

Mr. De Leon said the item was to endorse CAT's submittal to FDOT for transit funding opportunities from section 5310, 5311, and 5339 grants, which are available to apply for annually. He said the 5310 grant was for new paratransit buses, 5311 would be directed toward operational costs for rural routes, and that 5339 would be directed toward a replacement bus and four bus stop improvements along rural routes.

Mr. De Leon reviewed the details of the grants and grant submission process for each grant application (which can be viewed in the December 4, 2024 LCB Agenda.)

A group discussion followed, regarding the rural qualification category of two of the grants and how more areas within Collier County were changing categorization from rural to urban due to density increases with continued development, and that the Collier County Board of County Commissioners had approved the local match requirements of the grants.

Ms. Henry asked what happens to retired buses, and **Mr. De Leon** said retired buses go to auction,

and the proceeds go back into funding transit.

Mr. Lascari moved to endorse the submittal of Federal Transit Administration Sections 5310, 5311 and 5339 grant applications and the associated projects to support Collier Area Transit. Mr. Stahler seconded. Passed unanimously.

6. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

A. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Quarterly Report

Mr. De Leon reviewed the quarterly CTC report (which can be viewed in the December 4, 2024 Agenda), mentioning that key elements from the report are that CAT is averaging 10,000 trips per month, there are 350 new clients eligible for the service, and that there was an increase in passengers per hour.

Mr. De Leon said that new paratransit vehicles with ramps had been ordered and would be tested for efficiency.

Mr. Lascari asked how many new buses had been ordered for 2025 in total.

Mr. De Leon said seven new buses had been ordered for 2025 and mentioned that CAT's agreement with their transportation operator contractor was ending, and that the status of an agreement extension with that contractor was under review.

B. MPO Quarterly Progress Report

Ms. Hansen reviewed the MPO Quarterly Progress Report, which is submitted to the CTD as a requirement of the MPO's Planning Grant. Some key elements of the report are the preparation and facilitation of the September 4, 2024 LCB meeting, the submission of an Actual Expenditures Report of Collier County's TD funding for the prior fiscal year, an amendment to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan was approved by LCB at the September 4 meeting, and Collier MPO's attendance at the 2024 FPTA/CTD Annual Conference + EXPO in West Palm Beach.

(The detailed report can be viewed in the December 4, 2024 LCB Agenda.)

C. FDOT Report

Ms. Booth said the grant application deadline for 5310, 5311 and 5339 would be December 13, 2024, and that FDOT would be doing a risk assessment on all applications on December 16, 2024. Easter Seals and CAT had 5310 applications grants in review. Central Office has been working on programming 5310 for urban areas. FDOT staff would be sending Collier contracts for review. CAT had also had a 5311 contract anticipated to be executed in January 2025, and a 5339 for a replacement vehicle anticipated to be executed in December 2024. Triennial reviews were in progress for Sunrise Community of Southwest Florida and Easter Seals Naples, and draft reports would be submitted at the end of December. **Ms. Booth** said FDOT has a limited amount of transit funds, but that staff does everything possible to figure out how

to provide transit agencies with funding.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2025 Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation – Opportunities for LCB Members to Participate

Ms. Hansen said a requirement of the TD Planning Grant, is that the MPO spearhead an annual evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). The Evaluation examines the CTC's compliance with provisions of Florida law, CTD standards, and local standards set forth in the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan.

MPO Staff was planning to kick-off the 2025 CTC Evaluation in early 2025 and participation is a large part of the process. **Ms. Hansen** encouraged LCB members to participate in the process, which would include opportunities for ride-alongs on CATConnect paratransit vehicles, performing on-site observations of the system, and interacting with CATConnect passengers and caretakers.

8. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

A. Proposed 2025 Collier MPO Meeting Schedule

This item was distributed. **Ms. Hansen** pointed out that the LCB meetings for 2025 are scheduled for March 5, May 7, September 3 and December 3.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Lascari thanked **Ms. Hansen** for reviewing December 4, 2024 LCB agenda packet with him prior to the meeting.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 5, 2025, at 1:30 p.m., Annual Public Workshop, Regular Meeting to immediately follow, Collier County Government Center, County Administration Bldg. F, IT Training Room, 5th Floor, 3299 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, FL 34112.

11. ADJOURNMENT

*No further business being conducted, **Chair Pernas** adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.*