



FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Workshop

Date: August 21, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: FDOT Burns Auditorium, Tallahassee

Welcome and Call to Order

Chairman Howse called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

In Attendance

Chairman Ron Howse, Vice-Chairman David Genson, Commissioners John Browning, Julius Davis, Alex Lastra, and Rusty Roberts.

FTC Transit Authorities Performance Metrics Update and Discussion, Ron Howse, Chairman, Ralph Yoder, Executive Director

- Chairman Howse provided a brief review of the history for the transit review.
- Executive Director Yoder recognized Brenda Young from the Safety Office for the Target Zero bags provided to the Commission.
- Executive Director Yoder described the latest Central Office security updates including the change in Wi-Fi guest access and building access.
- Executive Director Yoder provided a timeline of the Transit Performance Metrics process to date including meetings with Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and the transit agencies as well as FDOT transit staff.
- Executive Director Yoder explained the key areas of importance to the transit agencies.
 - Safety, Service, Cost, Reliability
- Discussion was held by the Commissioners including the following topics:
 - The draft report shared with Commissioners on July 31, 2024.
 - Transit Ridership
 - Ratio of revenue vs operating expenses
 - Cost to transport riders
 - Seat occupancy capacity/rates
 - Marketing expenses and return on investment
 - Advertisement revenue received and allocation of those revenues
 - Restrictions on bus wrapping included in HB 1301 (2024)
 - Cost per mile (operational)
 - Cost of operating the buses
 - Currently, there are three transit authorities that report to the FTC. How many transit authorities are there in the state?
 - Number of transit agencies in the state is approximately 83.

Florida Transportation Commission
Minutes of Workshop, August 21, 2024

- How are transit agencies structured, related to board governance and how are they funded: federal, state, or local?
- What happens if an agency falls below the established threshold for each metric?
 - What role does the FTC play with regards to transparency and accountability?
 - Are there repercussions for not meeting the metrics?
 - Are there levels of importance of the metrics?
- Privatization options
- MetroRail in Miami is now a hub of activity at every stop.
- Miami/Dade has purposely increased density along the MetroRail route.
- Executive Director Yoder suggested the next phase might be to have a workshop with the agencies.
- Additional discussion by the Commissioners including the following topics:
 - Reliability and ridership are both important
 - Need to set the goals from a larger standpoint
 - Find who is doing it right and help those who aren't, to do it right.
 - Learn the goals and objectives of the agencies
 - Report should include provisional services in their communities, services for handicapped citizens, special needs of their community, geographic representation of their service area including maintenance yards, headquarters, demographics, population, density, etc.
 - Report should be from every transit agency
 - Tiers might be important in terms of the main services
 - SunRail
 - Original plan was for the counties/cities to take over after 7 years. Next year is the turnover date. Who will operate it moving forward?
 - Should SunRail be categorized as a transit authority?
- During last session the legislature expressed an interest in the transit agencies' administrative costs. Executive Director Yoder stated that based on HB 1301 (2024) the Department is required to determine the annual state average of general administrative cost.
 - Chairman Howse requested a presentation related to this effort at our next meeting.
 - Would it be possible for us to include metrics related to administrative costs in our annual analysis and report?
- Ongoing discussion by the Commissioners including:
 - What challenges are transit agencies having, especially with employee retention, workforce development, etc.?
 - What are the goals and objectives of each agency related to services offered to the communities?
 - In addition to their core business, are there ancillary services that are offered?
 - What is the functionality of diesel, natural gas, and electric buses?
 - What works best in Florida?
 - Expense to operate the three systems including maintenance and longevity

Florida Transportation Commission
Minutes of Workshop, August 21, 2024

- What legislative actions related to transit during the 2024 Legislative Session have been taken even if they were proposed and didn't pass.
- While safety is always first, reliability needs to be way up there.
- Chairman Howse requested a slide of current transit metrics.
- Chairman Howse declared the Commission may need to hire a consultant or OPS staff due to the expansion of the scope of work.
- Chairman Howse stated the Commission just gave the staff a huge task. While a lot is accessible, it will require extensive time. He suggested Executive Director Yoder send Commissioners the information as it is obtained, and the Commission should discuss this on our monthly calls. He encouraged staff to ask for help if needed and stated FDOT can either assign someone to the FTC or hire consultants.
- Executive Director Yoder reiterated his understanding is the need to plan for a workshop with the agencies at some point.

Executive Director Update Ralph Yoder, Executive Director

- Chairman Howse stated the SunRail discussion should be presented at the November meeting. Include the original plan, when it is scheduled to be completed and current status.

Public Comment

The Chairman opened the meeting to public comment.

- Dr. Chris Francis, consultant (formerly with FDOT) expressed his thoughts that this discussion by the Commission was a game changer. This meeting may lay the foundation for the future. Performance based. Equal opportunity for the agencies.
- Chairman Howse asked if there was anything he would recommend the Commission monitor.
 - Micro-mobility, TNCs (UBER, LYFT, etc.).
 - Changing demographics
 - Benefits of technology
 - Realtime traveler information
 - Smart phone apps

Adjourn

With no other business to address, Chairman Howse adjourned the meeting at 2:24 pm.