



**HERNANDO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD (TDLCB)**

Thursday, February 13, 2025

MINUTES

The Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) held a regular quarterly meeting on February 13, 2025, at 1:45 p.m. at the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida. The meeting was advertised in the Hernando Sun newspaper, on the Hernando/Citrus MPO website, and on the Hernando County website. The agenda was available on the Hernando/Citrus MPO website.

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Gretchen Samter, Vice Chair, Person with a Disability
- Michelle Sikavitsas, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
- Sam Kinard, Representative from the Public Educational Community
- Kevin Bargerstock, Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or Blind Services
- Robert Werts, Alternate, Veterans Service Representative
- Gerry Whitted, Citizen Advocate – Transit User as Primary Means
- Melissa Arceneaux, Citizen Advocate
- Darlene Lollie, Public Transit System (TheBus)
- Casey Ladd, Florida Department of Elder Affairs
- Riley Larsen, Florida Department of Health Care Administration
- Jose Infante, Regional Workforce Development Board
- Jeannette Estes, State of Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities

MEMBERS ABSENT

- John Allocco, Chair, Hernando County Board of County Commissioner
- Shanika Figueroa Rodriguez, Local Representative for Children at Risk
- Elizabeth Alacci, Florida Department of Children and Family Services

OTHERS PRESENT

- Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
- Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
- Jeff Cottrell, You Thrive, Community Transportation Coordinator
- Dave Newell, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
- Maria DeJesus, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
- Miranda Burke, Workforce Specialist, CareerSource Pasco/Hernando

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

[It is noted for the record that TDLCB member, Gerry Whitted, excused himself temporarily from the meeting.]

- Vice Chair Samter called the meeting to order at 1:59 p.m., immediately following the Annual Public Workshop.
- The Board, staff, and attendees introduced themselves.

[It is noted for the record that TDLCB members, Gerry Whitted, returned to the meeting.]

- A quorum was declared, and the affidavit of publication was read into the record.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Werts to approve the agenda, as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whitted and the motion passed 12-0.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR 2025

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to elect Ms. Samter as the TDLCB Vice Chair for 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arceneaux and the motion passed 12-0.

ELECTION OF GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2025

After Board discussion the following TDLCB Board members were nominated as the Grievance Committee for 2025:

1. Melissa Arceneaux, Chair
2. Gretchen Samter, Vice Chair
3. Darlene Lollie, member
4. Jeannette Estes, alternate member

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to approve the nominated TDLCB Grievance Committee members and positions for 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Werts and the motion passed 12-0.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 14, 2024, TDLCB REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to approve the November 14, 2024, Minutes of the TDLCB's Regular Public Meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arceneaux and the motion passed 12-0.

ACTION ITEM

Annual Review and Approval of the TDLCB Grievance Procedures

Ms. Elwin reviewed the annual update of the LCB Grievance Procedures incorporating the process to report adverse incidents involving Persons with Disabilities. The Board discussed the time limit to report an Adverse Service Incident and requested to amend "*submitted within two business days of the occurrence*" to "*submitted within three-to-five business days of the occurrence*" and to add *Any adverse service complaint submitted at any time will be processed.*

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Bargerstock to approve the TDLCB Grievance Procedures as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whitted and the motion passed 12-0.

REPORTS

Quarterly Report for October 1 through December 31, 2024, by the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), You Thrive Florida

Jeff Cottrell, the Director of Transportation at You Thrive Florida, reported that improved route planning and better communication with medical and dialysis facilities resulted in more trips being provided last quarter compared to the previous quarter. He noted that medical insurance companies are reducing or eliminating benefits for medical transportation, which may lead to an increase in medical trip requests to You Thrive Florida. Medical trip requests take precedence over recreational trips, so an increase in medical requests could affect the availability of recreational trips. In response to Ms. Arceneaux's inquiry, Mr. Cottrell stated that there are currently no plans to offer Saturday trips for dialysis patients.

FEATURE PRESENTATIONS

1. Jeannette Estes, Regional Operations Manager at Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), gave a feature presentation on the services provided by APD, how to apply for services, navigating the APD website (www.apdcares.org), and who potentially qualifies for APD services. She relayed that an individual has to have one or more statutorily defined developmental disabilities: Spina bifida, intellectual disability, Downs syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, severe forms of autism, Prader-Willi syndrome, and Phelan-McDermid syndrome.
2. Jose Infante, the Local Veterans' Employment Representative, and Miranda Burke, a Workforce Specialist from CareerSource Pasco/Hernando, provided an overview of the programs and resources available for job seekers and employers. CareerSource helps with resume writing and development programs to help individuals acquire new skills. They also provide targeted support for veterans and workers with disabilities, as well as services for local businesses seeking candidates. Mr. Infante

highlighted the need for a bus stop at the newly relocated Brooksville office on Spring Hill Drive. In response, Ms. Lollie noted that bus service would be extended along Spring Hill Drive, between California Street and US 41. The CareerSource office is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the fixed-route transit system, and she encouraged eligible residents who are unable to access service due to a disability, to apply for and use the *Demand Response* paratransit service.

Darlene Lollie, Hernando County Transit Administrator, and Casey Ladd, Florida Department of Elder Affairs, will provide the Feature Presentations for the May 8, 2025, meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Andras Serpozo, the Hernando County Transit Operations Coordinator, distributed a handout titled "Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged FAQs." This document was created to clarify the differences between TheBus, the ADA-mandated paratransit services, and the services offered by You Thrive Florida, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). The Board expressed gratitude to Hernando County Transit for providing this information and for their efforts in compiling it.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Ms. Arceneaux thanked Ms. Estes for her feature presentation and the services provided by the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD). Having this information available online is life changing for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Arceneaux also acknowledged TheBus drivers for the care and respect that has been provided to her sister.
- Ms. Lollie shared that two bus routes will be added mid-March; a micro-transit service that will operate within a 5-mile radius from the downtown center in Brooksville and a fixed-route service on SR50 between Broad Street and US 301 (Ridge Manor). Two additional routes are scheduled to begin service the end of September 2025: US 41 south to County Line Road and the Mermaid route on Shoal Line Boulevard.
- Ms. Samter requested an update on the progress of a request made during the last TDLCB meeting regarding the reestablishment of an on-demand, after-hours, and cross-county trip service for the transportation disadvantaged in Hernando County. The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) has officially launched TD Tampa Bay, a regional transportation service for the disadvantaged, in partnership with Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties. Ms. Elwin reported that the TD Tampa Bay service is funded through a grant from the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged. She will also investigate whether Hernando County qualifies for a similar grant to provide these services.

MPO STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. Elwin provided the following updates:

- Mr. Esposito is attending the February 13, 2025, Gulf Streets Safe Summit Dignitary Panel in Tampa, Florida. Commissioner Bays (Citrus) and Todd Crosby, Assistant County Engineer for Hernando County, also are attending as panelists.
- Mr. Esposito hosted a telephone call with State Senator Nick DiCeglie and Commissioner Bays on February 3, 2025, to advocate for rural arterial funds for Hernando and Citrus Counties.
- Mr. Esposito hosted a Microsoft Teams meeting with FDOT, Pasco County, and Hernando County staff members on January 27, 2025, to discuss County Line Road. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has agreed to include funding for the design portion between Mariner Boulevard/Shady Hills Road to the Suncoast Parkway in the FY2025 Work Program. The construction phase will be programmed in FY2033 with FDOT incurring one-half of the cost and Hernando and Pasco counties sharing the other half. The next follow-up Microsoft Teams meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2025.
- Ms. Elwin noted that the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) is working on the Regional 2050 LRTP. County Line Road was recently added to the Regional Priorities List and Mr. Esposito is going to ask to have SR200 (Citrus) added later this summer.
- Mr. Esposito participated in a second radio interview (WWJB) [on January 15, 2025] to help educate and inform the public on how funding occurs for improvements on local county roads.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) is scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2025, beginning at 1:30 p.m., at the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida. The meeting agenda and back-up materials are available online at: www.hernandocounty.us/hernandocitrusmpo.

Vice Chair Samter adjourned the meeting at 3:48 p.m.