LAKE COUNTY
FLORIDA

Lake County Transportation Alternative Task Force Committee
Minutes of January 28, 2008
(Revised – per request for more detail at 3/3/08 meeting)

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Commissioner Welton G. Cadwell, District 5

Proper Noticing: Commissioner Cadwell asked if meeting was properly advertised and noted by T.J. Fish it had been.

Introductions: Introductions of committee members were made. Commissioner Welton G. Cadwell introduced Commissioner Elaine Renick, Commissioner Debbie Stivender and Commissioner Jennifer Hill (who was present before the meeting started).

Sunshine Law: Sandy Minkoff, County Attorney, advised the committee of the Sunshine Law, noting the following:

- Members of committee are prohibited from talking amongst each other regarding items that may go before the committee for a vote (i.e. County expenditures, etc.) outside of the advertised meeting.
- At each meeting, Chairman must ask if meeting has been properly advertised and may ask for copy of advertisement. If you want to have a sub-committee between one or more of committee members, make sure meeting has been advertised. Criminal penalties and fines can be severe if laws are not adhered to.
- Meetings are teleconferences, letters, emails, etc. Any communication between members.

Public Records: Sandy Minkoff, County Attorney, advised the committee of the Public Records Law, noting the following:

- The Public is entitled to see any public records made or received within public business in the State. Records include paper, photos, emails, tape recordings, etc. It is mandatory that these records are kept in accordance to law and destroyed or thrown away only within the guidelines of the state. If you receive any original document or email forward to County liaison, and then you can delete your copy (everything you receive from staff is a copy). Do not send emails from your home computers. Criminal Penalties and fines can be severe if laws are not adhered to. The Public Works Department will be keeping records of these meetings.

Election of Chairman And Vice-Chairman: Commissioner Welton G. Cadwell entertained the notion for election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

- Bud Beucher made nomination of Bennett Walling for Chairman and was seconded by Fred Johnson; unanimously carried.
- Bennett Walling made nomination of Bud Beucher for Vice-Chairman and seconded by Fred Johnson; unanimously carried.

Review of Package: Cindy Hall, County Manager, T.J. Fish, Executive Director of Lake-Sumter MPO, and Jim Stivender, Jr., Director of Public Works Department reviewed the prepared package.

- **Resolution** – County Commissioners decided to do analysis of Transportation funding within the County; committee created to advise County Commissioners and MPO of their suggestions. MPO is regional form of Government. Elected officials who sit on MPO are elected to specific jurisdictional offices. When representing either County or Cities, a designee is appointed to represent that County or City on MPO. MPO was created in 2003 and began meeting in February 2004. MPO was developed due to 'urbanized areas' forming and to tie State and Federal visions with DOT and other local agencies. The MPO consists of Lake-Sumter Counties and cities within. All five (5) Lake County Commissioners sit on MPO as official voting members. Other MPO members include one (1) designee from every municipality, one (1) Commissioner from Sumter County, Mayor of Wildwood, and representatives from Florida Central Railroad. MPO's primary responsibility is their '2025' plan; '2035' plan is being kicked off this year.

    - **Question by Ronald Jacobs (Lake County Industrial Development Authority) -** Explain relationship between MPO and DOT as it impacts availability or assignments of funding for projects: Before DOT extends any money for transportation in Lake County, the MPO has already done planning to determine needs to go through analysis of looking at funding (DOT funds what is or is not cost feasible). Ultimately, project that is really wanted is placed on unfunded priority list and made top priority. Currently, top priority is US 441 and SR 50.

- **Long Range Transportation Plan -** Executive Summary prepared by MPO and Bob Wallace, Consultant for Tindale Oliver and Associates. TJ Fish explained that this plan is a legal binding document (two-years of work adopted in 2005). As soon as it was adopted, it was out of date due to change in revenues, cost estimates, etc.)

- **5-Yr. Transportation Improvement Program** – Submittal by MPO (based on DOT revenues) and submittal by County (adopted in as part of MPO) for committed projects. Concurrency law involved.

- **State of County Roads** – Five (5) year program presented to Board of County Commissioners every August. Information is taken from various Cities and put together, addressing every funding source we have (including Impact Fees since 1985, which is principal funding source collected by County and Cities). Board of County Commissioners adopts annually and projects out revenues for five (5) years. Slow down in economy has caused drastic changes in projection lines. Board of County Commissioners are advised what roads are being worked on within next few years (some future years will only show right-of-way and design and not entire construction; does not bounce back to dollars projected to come in).

    - **Question by Duane Booth (BESH) –** Can State force County to take over a road? Jim Stivender advised that the State had transferred roads to County in 1978, 1983 and 1987, but cannot anymore due to protest in 1993, which went to legislation requiring a mutual agreement between state and local government and local government to local government. Example: MPO has gone through the process to designate beyond County roads. Regionally, County roads operate not only as a County collector, but regional connection. Most roads on list use to be State roads, but was handed over to County (such as CR 561, CR 44 – Eustis to Leesburg, and CR 33 – Mascotte to Leesburg; however, State kept portion of 33 from Groveland to Lakeland as State road.

Mutual Exchanges: Jim Stivender advised the following: 1. CR 44B (Mount Dora – Lowe's) not SR 44, so therefore eligible for DOT funds and not County funds. 2. SR 44 (Eustis) – now County road Orange Avenue. Jurisdiction does matter, knowing if State or County road. If State road (is it Federal or US Highway). Note: CR 44B will need improvements first.

- **Question by Bennett Walling (Walling Engineering)** – Do we need to worry about funding for CR 44B? Jim Stivender advised this will be discussed later; State and local Counties have helped fund improvements on State highways because it was critical to transportation in that area. Previous discussion that Orange County has placed $1 Million in Orange County and Seminole County has done the same.

Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) – Special DOT program. TJ Fish advised three (3) years ago, growth management in legislation was created. If you come up with a local match of 50%, State will give money for regional project. Lake County has raised $12.5 Million, which has been designated for CR 466 – Lady Lake; this money has also been awarded for SR 50, but not officially handed over for Hancock Road to US 27 (Clermont area). This program is an example of how rules have changed and how DOT expects local funds in order to do certain State road projects.

- **MPO's Unfunded Priorities** – Prepared by MPO.
  - **Funded**: US 441 (what is being built now). Next year, US 441/SR 21 corridor – Leesburg will be constructed. This will be the only construction in the next five (5) years.
  - **Funded**: SR 50 (Turnpike to Hancock Rd. – Clermont). The segment of Hancock Rd. to US 27 has been focus of much discussion which could be funded in coming weeks.
  - **Unfunded:** US 27 / SR 50 Interchange – Clermont. Designed and money available for right-of-way to be purchased, but not funded within the next five (5) years. Top priorities for unfunded is US 441 to Fruitland Park and US 27 / SR 50 Interchange.
- **Revenue Information** – Adopted or available as local option. Local options for County Gas Taxes – 5 cents has been left 'on table' – not adopted locally.
- **Statistics Request** (requested from Bud Beucher) – Various statistics and data will be provided at next meeting by Cindy Hall, County Manager.
  - Bennett Walling (Walling Engineering) requested that a pie chart of budget be made available from 2002 to present; this too will be provided by Cindy Hall at our next meeting.
  - **Question by Fred Johnson** - What day of week was planned for meetings. Cindy Hall advised that County had picked the 4th Monday of every month, but this could be changed. Due to conflict with Howey-in-the-Hills Town Council meetings being held the 4th Monday of every month; new dates for Task Force meeting will be discussed later in the agenda.

Discussion of Purpose

Of Task Force: Cindy Hall, County Manager, and T.J. Fish, Executive Director of Lake-Sumter MPO, reviewed purpose of the task force, and expectations of the committee by the Board of County Commissioners.

- Cindy Hall advised that County staff is here to support this committee. We will prepare agendas, packages, all information, etc., and work closely with committee to find out what is requested for the meetings. Last summer a number of meetings were held by the Board of County Commissioners to discuss Transportation Impact Fees. Prior to that, a study had been conducted to review the level of Impact Fees against all new construction taking place. The result was a new schedule of Impact Fees that went through the Impact Fee Committee and different types of staff and citizen input, to look at rates suggested from the study. Study showed a good increase to be recommended, due to costs sky-rocketing so high and it being difficult for County to keep up with construction that is needed. The Impact Fee Study came back and rates were increased substantially than originally adopted. Concern within the community was that this placed a great burden on those purchasing homes (by home prices increasing); concern for businesses and commercial industry was attraction of industry in County to the area. Majority of concern was that new construction not to bear all cost of transportation improvements; therefore the Board of County Commissioners established this committee to review these areas.

Discussion of Purpose
Of Task Force (continued):

- Look at all types of funding and make recommendations to Board of County Commissioners on how to solve transportation needs.
- Review funding options available.
- Work with local organizations (MPO, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) and test recommendations to build consensus by the public.
- Make report to Board of County Commissioners with strengths and weaknesses of different funding options that are recommended.
- Make recommendation to Board of County Commissioners with most sensible funding options.
- In preparation (on a staff level), we have provided information about transportation programs as they currently stand. We have provided what we are able to do and not able to do, what we are not able to do (but should do), revenues we do not collect and revenues available and do not collect. By giving you as much information as possible, you will have knowledge base when ready to discuss options.
    - **Question by Ronald Jacobs (Lake County Industrial Development Authority)** - If the committee brings a report to the Commissioners, that report is not someone's single opinion or even opinion of 7-8 people, but reflects the specific needs of committee (quantified). Are there any funds available to the committee or through MPO/County that might be used to develop quantified information? Bob Wallace, Consultant with Tindale Oliver and Associates is commissioned by MPO to look over different revenue ideas, also. We have consultant on board to do some work and bring back to the committee in March, with some of his ideas. Any follow-up ideas can be quantified by Tindale Oliver on behalf of the Task Force.
    - **Question by Ronald Jacobs (Lake County Industrial Development Authority) –** Is consultant on a fee basis or project basis? Consultant is retained by contract with one price which has meeting times built in. This contract was approved by MPO last week.

- TJ Fish reported that Impact Fees have been targeted for sometime to carry all burden for new construction. Since these fees have not been touched since 2001 (and adopted lower than recommended at that time), we should have seen this coming.
    - **Question by Bennett Walling (Walling Engineering)** – Requesting documentation on last ten (10) years from County on budget income --- where has the money gone? Cindy Hall advised that we proceed with the presentations, since some of the information requested can be answered.
    - **Question by Ronald Jacobs (Lake County Industrial Development Authority)** – Do we really understand who is voting? Who is answering questions about those not happy with Impact Fees? Who is impacted and who is responding to increase in Gas Taxes? What percentage of population base do they represent? Mr. Jacobs advised that we need to understand who is answering questions, and who they represent and only then can we have answers that are meaningful. TJ Fish advised that nothing had been put out to vote on this issue.
    - **Comment by Bennett Walling** - Advised that he thought we were not here to discuss Impact Fees, but to discuss other funding methods to supplement any Impact Fees or to substitute in lieu of Impact Fees. Requesting to see where money went (last 5-years) and possibly see if some can be moved around and placed in transportation.

Presentation Overview of County Expenditures: Jim Stivender, Jr., Director of Public Works, and T.J. Fish, Executive Director of Lake-Sumter MPO, gave an overview of the County Expenditures.

Maintenance – Gas Tax, Impact Fees, etc. will be discussed further at next meeting.

- 1,236 miles of paved roads in Lake County, and approx. 300 miles is former state secondary roads inherited by the County from the State.
- Mowing and Tree Trimming done contractually and in-house. Pot holes done in-house.
- Maintain 25,000 traffic signs of all types and inventory each of them in last five years.
- 290 signals maintained are state and county roads (State of Florida does not maintain any signals in Lake County).
- Resurfaced 6.52 miles in 2006; now using Seal Coating (thin seal for Subdivision roads, which extends life). Seal-coated 12 miles of roadway in 2006.
- 56% of all County roads are in need of some type of major maintenance improvements.
- Paved roads after approx. 15 years begin to decay rapidly.
- Resurfacing is a large challenge, with approx. 3 Million Dollars budgeted for this year.
- Challenges – land value much higher; Intersections tied to developments; funding sources has some type of restriction (which will be discussed further at next meeting).

- **Comment / Question** – Bud Beucher advised that he understands the concept of looking at revenues, but he has had to cut expenses drastically (especially during September 11th when 30% of his business eroded in 1-day). He advised there is no luxury of saying that we need to find new funding sources. He is here because he volunteered, but has not heard anyone and we need to talk about (or we are not doing taxpayers in our County justice), to ask ourselves "Why in 1984 could we, but in 2007 we can not?" There are a lot of good things we can do, but some days we have to delay good things or do without them. As we go through this discussion, let's not just look at shortfalls, but may be find a way we can do without. If you do with, the people who pay the tax bill will do without. He stated he would like to have this as part of our discussions, inclusive of budget priorities, cutting costs, etc.) He is here to help, but will be very conservative financially; he is all for revenues and making things better, but doing it prudently as we can.

- **Comment** – Ronald Jacobs advised that we are at a place now that the sources of funds (people in Lake County) are in trouble in terms of them not being able to provide; the other problem is the increase cost of materials. He advised that he agreed that part is budget and ability to look and re-prioritize some projects (we may not get a lot more money, but we need to be very prudent with the money we have). He asked Mr. Beucher is this was what he was saying and Mr. Beucher agreed it was. Cindy Hall suggested that if this committee were to decide not to have more revenue, which certainly would be their prerogative to do that. Bud Beucher asked what she meant and Ms. Hall stated that she was hearing not to suggest additional revenues, but to re-prioritize ones that we have. Bud Beucher advised that was not the impression she got from him, he did not mean that, but that there has to be a combination of things and has not heard conversation of budget constraints and doing with less. Bud Beucher advised that he did not mean that there should be no increase in revenues.

Safety and Minor Enhancements – Include addition of paved shoulders (multi-use lanes), intersection improvements, paving clay roads, and installation of traffic signals.

- First Paved Shoulder installed in 1991.
- Funding Sources – Infrastructure Sales Tax and Road Impact Fees.
- Challenges – construction costs have escalated at a rate that revenue cannot keep up.

Additional Capacity – Include those with addition of travel lanes and construction of new roads.

- Funding Sources – Road Impact Fees and FDOT matching funds ($8 Million currently identified)
- $49 Million in impact fees split between six (6) benefit districts; monies collected in district, stays in that district.
- Spreadsheets and District Maps will be available at next meeting.
- Challenges – costs up while revenues down – affecting additional capacity projects such as CR 466A, CR 470, CR 48, CR 455 Extension, Hartwood Marsh Road and Hooks Street Extension.

Matching of State Funds –

- State monies running shorter – gas tax is decreasing in revenues
- MPO and Public Works working together to obtain funding. MPO took over Concurrency in January for Lake and Sumter Counties.
- Collection of Impact Fees was never meant to be only source of funding.
- Revenues will be discussed more heavily at next meeting.

Discussion:

Schedule of Meetings –

- Suggested to change meetings to first Monday of each month. No meeting will be held in February. Next meeting will be held on Monday, March 3, 2008 at 4:00pm. Location of meeting will be checked for availability.

Future Presentations –

- **Mass Transit Update** – dedicated funding source needed - will discuss further at next meeting.
- **Current Funding Sources**
  - Local, State, Federal, Fees/Tolls – will discuss further at next meeting.
  - Florida is a federal donor state – will discuss further at next meeting.
- **TOA Study – Bob Wallace, Consultant of Tindale Oliver and Associates**
  - Prepared current Long Range Transportation Plan; been through cost increases, level of funding, and efficiency of operations and balance program together.
  - Help MPO kickoff development of existing and alternative revenue sources within County and State. Will be looking at MSTUs, local option gas taxes, sales tax, etc.
  - In March 2008, will present options to committee and give broad picture of costs, entire capital system, operating costs, etc.

The next Lake County Transportation Alternative Task Force Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2008 @ 4:00 p.m. at the Lake County Administration Building – 2nd Floor, Training Room 233.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bennett Walling at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Cheryl Sutherland

Cheryl Sutherland, Recording Secretary
Public Works Department