

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD FOR THE TRANSPORTATION
DISADVANTAGED**

Martin County Board of County Commission Chambers
2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, FL 34996

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(772) 221-1498

**Monday, May 12, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.
MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Carmine Dipaolo, Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM
2. **ROLL CALL** – Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant, called roll.

Members in Attendance:

Mayor Carmine Dipaolo – Chair, Village of Indiantown
Robert McPartlan, Vice Chair, Department of Children and Family
Phyl Weaver, Representative for Persons over 60
Dalia Dillon, Department of Elder Affairs
Ashman Beecher, Martin County Transit
Angelica Castillo Da Silva, Local Medical Community
Milory Senat, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Michael Drost, Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs
Zachary Hoge, Florida Division of Vocational Rehab
Michele Miller, Representative for the Florida Association for Community Action -
Economically Disadvantaged
Dale Shepperson, Career Source Research Coast

Excused Members:

Gayle McArdle, Representative for Persons with Disabilities
Ismir Ripley, FDOT Representative
Monique Robbins, Representative for Children at Risk
Dr. Elizabeth Jekanowski, Representative for Public Education Community District
School Board

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator
Lucine Martens, Planner
Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner
Margie Tamblyn, Senior Planner
Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Chris Stevenson, Senior Resource Association (SRA)
Karen Deigl, Senior Resource Association (SRA)

Melody Hearn, Family Care Council Area 15

A quorum was present for the meeting.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Phyl Weaver to approve the agenda as presented and seconded by Dalia Dillon. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- Regular Meeting Minutes – March 31, 2025

A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 31, 2025, was made by Robert McPartlan and seconded by Phyl Weaver. The motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Melody Hearn, Chair for the local Family Care Council, Area 15, which includes Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee, and Indian River County commented that she is also mother/advocate for her son and all individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Ms. Hearn explained that she is very upset that the crisis everyone maybe in if there is no funding for the TD programs which includes the Treasure Coast (TC) Advantage Ride program. She explained that her son takes the TC Advantage Ride from his home in St Lucie County and rides to Indian River County for an Adult Daycare Training (ADT) program. Agencies have proven with data that this transportation is critical for those with intellectual/developmental disabilities to access services such as ADTs in their community. During a recent CTD meeting Ms. Hearn emphasized that the Treasure Coast area is void of essential services for individuals as opposed to Palm Beach County vast opportunities to access essential services.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

A. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Ms. Martens introduced Chris Stephenson, who presented the quarterly report on the TD program in Martin County. The report covered data from July 1, 2024, through the end of April 2025. Mr. Stephenson emphasized that this fiscal year will be the highest ridership ever for the TD Program in Martin County. This fiscal year SRA has approved 410 individuals in Martin County for the TD program. Mr. Stephenson thanked Mayor Dipaolo and the Village of Indiantown for the continued local support for the MC Indiantown Shuttle program, which will continue for the next fiscal year. SRA will coordinate with the Village of Indiantown to obtain a Service Development Grant to fund the MC Indiantown Shuttle next fiscal year and with that, funding will be secured through 2027. Mr. Stephenson explained that the Treasure Coast (TC) Advantage Ride program is the most popular demand response program on the Treasure Coast.

Mr. Ash Beecher asked for clarification on a spike in medical trips for Martin Community Coach (MCC) in the months of March - April 2025. Mr. Stephenson explained that the month of April 2025 had more weekdays, and this report is capturing the increased dialysis trips in the month of April 2025.

A motion to approve the Quarterly Performance Report was made by Robert McPartlan and seconded by Ashman Beecher. The motion passed unanimously.

B. COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) RECOMMENDATION

Ms. Martens explained that the current CTC is Senior Resource Association (SRA) and every five years the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA) which is the Martin MPO is tasked with selecting a CTC for the next five years. The Martin MPO works with the Martin County Purchasing department to coordinate a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. During the RFP process there was a selection committee meeting on April 11th, 2025. Two organizations submitted proposals for the role of CTC: ITL and Senior Resource Association (SRA). The selection committee determined that the most responsive bidder was SRA. Ms. Martens explained that it is the duty of the LCB-TD to endorse the committee's selection and made a staff recommendation for a motion to approve SRA as Martin County's next CTC.

A motion to recommend the selected CTC, Senior Resource Association (SRA) to the CTD was made by Ashman Beecher and seconded by Dalia Dillon. The motion passed unanimously.

C. TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) PROGRAM FY25/26 ALLOCATIONS FOR MARTIN COUNTY

Ms. Martens explained that because we don't have current closure of the current State legislative session, there are draft allocation figures for both the Trip & Equipment Grant and the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant. Ms. Martens explained that the Trip & Equipment Grant allocation of \$255,725 (as of 3/6/2025) has gone down since last year and is based on a CTD formula and we are looking forward in the future fiscal year to adjust how we look at our Trip Rates and this will be discussed by SRA more thoroughly in a presentation later in this agenda. Also, there is a draft TD Planning Grant allocation of \$26,488 (as of 3/6/2025).

This item for information only.

D. FY25/26 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) TRIP RATE MODEL

Karen Deigl, CEO of SRA summarized how the Trip & Equipment Grant works. Ms. Deigl went on to describe how the 2021 Trip & Equipment Grant Formula funding increases was supposed to be proportional to the increased number of trips. Unfortunately, the

networks of CTCs and Florida Public Transportation Association members have come to the realization that this is not the case. The 2021 Trip & Equipment (T & E) Grant Formula is not working, it is broken. She went on describe a potential solution going forward that she described to the LCB-TD. At the special call meeting on June 23, 2025, the LCB-TD will review the proposed solution and approve or not approve the proposed rate model. Mr. Stephenson explained that for the last four years the Trip & Equipment Grant funding has decreased every year even though ridership is at the highest level that it has ever been. Ms. Deigl explained that 82% of the Florida CTCs are having the same problem with decreased T & E grant funding. As a result, Mr. Stephenson explained SRA over the last few years has sought additional funding from other grant funding such as the Innovative Service Development (ISD) Grant. Also, Martin County BOCC and the Village of Indiantown have contributed more local funding in the form of overmatch to the T & E grant. The key point is that MCC ridership has grown only because of the grants such as the ISD grant and not through decreased T & E grant funding. Ms. Deigl explained that only the trips that can be used in the formula are MCC trips paid for with the T & E Grant funding (inclusive of the 10% minimum match by Martin County).

Mr. Stephenson went on to explain that SRA has a strategy to charge more trips to the T & E grant, which involves various scenarios pending the state legislative session outcomes. Note other CTCs in the state have used similar strategies to report more trips to the T & E grant which includes charging a higher percentage of the trip cost to the locals. In scenario 2 presented, 33% of the trip cost is charged to Martin County.

Mr. Stephenson talked about the Innovative Service Development (ISD) Grant, SRA has received this grant since FY 22/23. The state currently does not know how much money will be appropriated for the FY 25/26 ISD Grant. SRA is applying for the max amount of \$750,000 again this year for the upcoming FY 25/26. Note as SRA has a current ISD program, their application will be prioritized.

For the Advantage Ride program, Mr. Stephenson explained that SRA received the maximum amount for a multi-county program in FY 22/23 and FY 23/24 of 1.5 million. Last fiscal year they received less money. Again, it is a big question mark as to how much will be appropriated, then allocated and awarded for the FY 25/26 starting July 1, 2025. This is fifth year of SRA applying for this ISD Grant and their program application will not be prioritized in the list of ISD grant applicants.

Mr. Stephenson explained that because of the Advantage Ride Program uncertainty of future funding, SRA is being proactive and preparing for the worst. SRA will be discussing in May 2025 the messaging they can dispense to the Advantage Ride passengers/unduplicated clients to prepare them if there is the potential of reduced TD funding. Starting July 1, 2025, the TD Program has the potential to look very different on the Treasure Coast because of the uncertainty around our funding. Ms. Deigl explained we will not know about the allocated funding until sometime in June 2025. Ms. Deigl feels it would be necessary for her team to reach out and communicate to the TD clients if funding is reduced. SRA shared two draft letters with the LCB-TD. For the Martin Community Coach (MCC) letter, the letter details if SRA does not receive the same amount of funding, trip limits would have to be implemented. This will be discussed with the LCB-TD further

at the June 23, 2025, meeting. Mr. Stephenson explained that back in 2020, there were trip limits implemented. He explained that for the Advantage Ride Program the draft letter prepared, addresses dissolving the program altogether. Ms. Deigl explained that her team has been communicating at the state level to advocate for the CTD to give authorization of increased TD funding. The letter to the TD Advantage Ride Program riders will go out soon. At the end of the presentation, Chair Dipaolo expressed gratitude to the SRA for the hard work they do.

This item for information only.

E. 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTION PLAN

Ricardo Vazquez presented an overview of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is one of the MPO's core products which sets the tone and blue- print for the development of transportation network improvements for the next twenty to twenty-five years. Mr. Vazquez briefly went over the project overview, goals and objectives and walked through various components of the public involvement for the project. The ten-task process will include crafting a Needs Plan, Financial Plan and a 20-year Cost Feasible Plan. There will be an Open House in the Summer of 2025.

This item for information only.

7. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

8. NOTES

No notes.


9. NEXT MEETING

- May 23, 2025, at 10:00 AM

10. ADJOURN 10:45 A.M.

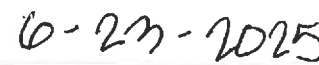
Prepared by:


Lucine Martens, Planner


Date

Approved by:


Mayor Carmine Dipaolo, Chair


Date

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons with questions or concerns about nondiscrimination, or who require special accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act or language translation services (free of charge) should contact Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner (Title VI/Non-discrimination Contact) at (772) 223-7983 or rvazquez@martin.fl.us. Hearing impaired individuals are requested to telephone the Florida Relay System at #711.