

**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

www.martinmpo.com

(772) 221-1498

Monday, June 3, 2024, at 10:00 A.M.

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB-TD) meeting of June 3, 2024, was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Susan Gibbs-Thomas, Chair.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members in Attendance:

Susan Gibbs-Thomas, Chair, Indiantown Council Member
Robert McPartlan, Vice Chair, Department of Children & Families Services
Brindell Serrano, Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs
Joe Azevedo, Martin County Career Center
Zachary Hoge, Florida Division of Vocational Rehab
Gayle McArdle, Representative for Persons with Disabilities
Modeline Acreus, Florida Department of Transportation Representative
Dalia Dillon, Department of Elder Affairs
Phyl Weaver, Representative for Persons over 60
Ashman Beecher, Martin County Transit
Mary Jo Pirone, Citizen's Advocate/Rider Rep
Milory Senat, Agency for Persons with Disabilities

Excused Members:

Monique Robbins, Representative for Children At-Risk
Dr. Elizabeth Jekanowski, Rep. for Public Education Community District School Board
Michelle Miller, Representative for the Economically Disadvantaged (FACA)

Members Not in Attendance:

Brenda Matheny, Local Medical Community

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator
Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner
Lucine Martens, Planner

Others in Attendance:

Chris Stephenson, Senior Resource Association
Dana Elharintaragen, Stand Up for Independence (SUFI)

Melody Hearn, Family Care Council Area15
Laverne Williams, rider of the MCC and Marty

A quorum was present for the meeting.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Phyl Weaver to approve the Agenda as presented. A second was provided by Mary Jo Pirone. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- Regular Meeting Minutes – March 4, 2024

A motion was made by Gayle McArdle to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2024. A second was provided by Robert McPartlan, the motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Melody Hearn representing the Family Care Council Area15 explained that TD transportation in Martin County and throughout the Treasure Coast enables those with disabilities access to the community. This transportation gives those with disabilities access to trainings, employment, daily activities that engage them in an inclusive community. She appreciates all the funding that supports the TD transportation program and that this service makes a world of difference.

Laverne Williams, a rider of the MCC and Marty, explained she is a resident of Martin County, who utilizes the transportation service, this service allows her to get out and be sociable, helps her grow, expand, heal, communicate and meet great people like her fellow riders. She thanked the committee for all they do to coordinate for the continuation of this important transportation service. She thanked public works for repairing the sidewalks and roadways for the regular Marty transit system. She explained she transfers between both services.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

A. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Chris Stephenson of the Senior Resource Association (SRA) presented the Quarterly Performance Report. He presented to the members, the CTC Performance Report for the period covering July 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024. He reported that there have been more TD trips this fiscal year than ever before in Martin County with a projected 28,000 trips by the end of the fiscal year. Each month they have spent the one hundred percent of the available Trip and Equipment (T&E) Grant dollars and one hundred percent of the Innovative Service Development (ISD) Grant dollars. They have also used one hundred percent of the additional monies that the Village of Indiantown, the City of Stuart, and the Martin County overmatch provided. Applications for MCC have increased 36% compared to this time last year.

Mr. Stephenson explained that for the FY 24/25 SRA is no longer eligible to apply for the ISD grant for the current project structure; providing for dialysis trips in Martin County. SRA has written a new grant application for a ISD grant for a new service using an app where TD riders can book trips using a smart phone on the day of the trip. SRA has already developed the app and implemented a pilot program in Martin County, and it has been very successful, and he feels it will be successful next fiscal year. The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) will be deciding today during their business meeting at 1:00 pm how much funding will be put towards this ISD project for Martin County. He noted that for the last year there have been unlimited trips for TD riders. If the funding is less than last fiscal year, the TD trips will be respectfully reduced, and they will facilitate riders getting alternate transportation arrangements.

Mr. Stephenson explained that the Indiantown Shuttle ridership is up 25% from last year. This service for Indiantown residents runs from Indiantown to Stuart on Saturdays and now on Sundays as of May 2024. It is funded with a FDOT Service Development Grant and a FDOT 5310 Grant. The Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Okeechobee County Advantage Ride Program has provided 38,000 trips this fiscal year. Since its inception in 2020, when this program started, they have done over 166,000 trips for individuals with development disabilities. At the CTD meeting today, they will also be deciding how much funding will be put towards the Advantage Ride Program. Mr. Stephenson noted that the current Martin County ISD Grant Program and the current Advantage Ride Program are by far the most successful in the whole state of Florida. Last fiscal year the state gave SRA 2 million dollars of the 4 million dollars of the allocated funding for the ISD Grant program. Mr. Stephenson was available to answer questions.

Zachary Hoge inquired if Chris Stephenson could share with the committee how much SRA requested for the (4) County Advantage Ride program for fiscal year 24/25. Mr. Stephenson explained that they applied for the 1.5 million dollars. The best- case scenario they will get the 1.5 million, worst case scenario they will get 1.35 million.

A motion was made by Milory Senat to approve the Quarterly Performance Report. A second was provided by Mary Jo Pirone, the motion passed unanimously.

B. FY23/24 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) EVALUATION

Lucine Martens, Planner gave a brief overview of the FY23/24 Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Evaluation. Each year, pursuant to Chapter 427, Florida Statutes and Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Rule 41-2, Florida Administrative Code, the LCB-TD assists in the evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). Ms. Martens thanked all who volunteered to do ride-along surveys and phone call surveys. Throughout the evaluation process, riders emphasized how grateful and happy they were to have access to this important transportation service. It is their lifeline and they do not know what they would do if they lost their service. The CTC Evaluation Report package is complete, and it will be forwarded to the CTD. Gayle McArdle commented that transportation is a lifeline for people like herself, they cannot get to places without this transportation service. Access

to transportation is mentally, emotionally supportive, otherwise one becomes homebound, so it is critical to get the funding. She continued to state that Martin Community Coach does an incredible job, the service is absolutely excellent. She has used transportation in Martin County since 2006 as she has been wheelchair bound since then.

A motion was made by Phyl Weaver to approve the FY23/24 Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Evaluation. A second was provided by Robert McPartlan, the motion passed unanimously.

C. TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) PROGRAM FY24/25 ALLOCATIONS FOR MARTIN COUNTY

Lucine Martens introduced the agenda item and informed the committee that this is an informational item. The Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) has provided the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff with the funding allocations for the FY23/24 Trip & Equipment Grant (\$280,704) and the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant (\$25,741) for Martin County all as of 4/5/2024. The Trip & Equipment Grant Agreement is between the CTD and the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). The TD Planning Grant Agreement is entered into annually between the MPO and the CTD. She was available to answer questions.

Susan Gibbs-Thomas asked how the FY 24/25 funding allocations compared to last year FY23/24. Mr. Stephenson explained that funding is slightly less than last year and that is because the TD Trust fund amount is less than last year. Also, he added that per the CTD project manager, had SRA not coordinated for so many trips last fiscal year, Martin County would have taken a bigger hit to the funding.

Laverne Williams asked since there is a reduction of funding, and the number of riders will be reduced, will that affect next year's funding. Mr. Stephenson stated that this is the nature of the funding where less money means less ridership and as consequence less funding for next year as the T&E Grant allocations are based on previous year performance that is plugged into a formula, and ridership is part of the formula. He reiterated that it is awesome that the Village of Indiantown, the City of Stuart, and the Martin County overmatch provided additional funding this year and that helped to bolster the ridership number. This increased ridership will go into next years formula for the following FY 25/26.

D. FY24/25 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) TRIP RATE MODEL

Lucine Martens gave a brief overview of the agenda item. Senior Resource Association (SRA), the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) must submit an updated Trip Rate Model to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) prior to the execution of the Trip and Equipment Grant Agreement. The Rate Model displays the FY

24/25 projected transportation rates (Ambulatory rate= \$39.49, Wheelchair rate= \$67.70). Ms. Martens explained that the ambulatory rate increased 38 cents and the wheelchair rate went up 65 cents. Also, that John Irvine, Project manager representing the CTD, has complemented SRA for being great stewards of taxpayers' money and keeping the rates in alignment with last year's rates.

Ms. McArdle inquired as to whether the trip rates are for a one-way trip or round trip. Mr. Stephenson clarified that the specified rates are for a one-way trip.

A motion was made by Phyl Weaver to approve the FY24/25 Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Trip Rate Model. A second was provided by Dalia Dillon, the motion passed unanimously.

E. TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED SERVICE PLAN (TDSP) MINOR UPDATE

Lucine Martens introduced the agenda item. The State of Florida requires that a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) be developed jointly between the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) and the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA), which is the Martin MPO, under the guidance and approval of the Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB-TD). The TDSP should be developed every 5 years. The DOPA must annually review and make any minor updates to the TDSP. The most significant change was the trip rates on page 47 of the TDSP document.

A motion was made by Phyl Weaver to approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) Minor Update. A second was provided by Mary Jo Pirone, the motion passed unanimously.

7. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert McPartlan requested that the Teams meeting information for CTD business meeting at 1:00 pm, June 3, 2024, be forwarded to him. Also, he asked if under the worst case scenario where Martin County does not receive funding for the proposed ISD Grant project, would there be any discussion amongst the Martin MPO about these certain issues. Beth Beltran explained that on June 18, 2024, SRA will be giving a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), and they will tell the story that this is what we are facing, how can you help us. At that point the BCC will make some decisions as to how they want to support this system in the future.

Ms. Williams also asked if Martin County does not get any additional funding for the citizens of Martin County, will SRA still accept new applications for the TD transportation (Martin Community Coach). She also asked what options will be available, if SRA finds out they don't have the ISD funding.

Mr. Stephenson did not want to speculate as to the outcomes of the CTD business meeting on June 3, 2024 (today), but he was reassuring that SRA is planning and will

communicate with the LCB-TD, riders, and coordinate for options appropriate to the proposed funding. Trip limitations may have to be implemented as in the past. Ms. Weaver also reminded everyone that in the past only 50% of trips were allowed to be for dialysis.

8. NOTES

9. NEXT MEETING

- Public Workshop and Regular Meeting; August 26, 2024, at 9:30 am (Commission Chambers, Administration Bldg.)

10. ADJOURN 10:38 A.M.

Prepared by:



Lucine Martens, Planner



Date

Approved by:



Susan Gibbs-Thomas, 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, Senior 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.