

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority
Minutes of the February 26, 2024, Board Meeting
1104 E. Twiggs Street
Tampa, FL 33602

The Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority held a public meeting at 1:30 p.m. on February 26, 2024, at THEA Headquarters, 1104 E. Twiggs Street in Tampa Florida. The following were present:

ATTENDANCE

Board:

Vincent Cassidy, Chairman
Bennett Barrow, Vice Chairman
John Weatherford, Secretary

FDOT District Secretary David Gwynn
Mayor Jane Castor
Commissioner Donna Cepeda

Staff:

Greg Slater
Amy Lettelleir
Jeff Seward
Bob Frey
Brian Pickard
Keisha Boyd
Shari Callahan
Tim Garrett
Charlene Varian

Lisa Pessina
Shannon Bush
Toni Nhlapo
Brian Ramirez
Gary Holland
Anna Quinones
Frederick Pekala
Judith Villegas
Szabina Szenassy

Others:

Christina Matthews, WSP
Jennifer Clifford, WSP
Auden Kaehler, WSP
Brent Wilder, PFM
Rich Tilley, CDM Smith
Snehal Ambare, CDM Smith
Hope Scarpinato, PFM
Tom Delaney, Atkins
Steve Ferrell, HDR
Matthew Sansbury, RBC
Rick Patterson, Raymond James
Len Becker, HNTB
Alex Bourne, RS&H
Tim Schock, Parsons
Stefanie McQueen, HDR
Randy Miner, GPI

Bill Howell, Lochner
Joseph Stanton, NMRS
Marty Millburg, Ardaman
David Hubbard, Wey Engineering
John Generalli, Wells Fargo
Henry Queen, TBBJ
Sarah Lesch, Playbook
Christina Matthews, WSP
Hector Martinez, MITRE
Brad Lang, Infotect
Josue Mazariegos, Infotect
Steve Williams, Infotect

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Cassidy called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input/Public Presentations

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

Approval of the Minutes from the January 22, 2024, Board Meeting

Video Wall Upgrade Project - \$941,605.15

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve the consent items. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items

Planning & Innovation, John Weatherford, Committee Chair – Bob Frey, Director

Approval of Whiting Street Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study Staff Recommended Preferred Alternative

Mr. Frey provided an update on the consensus-modified preferred alternative for the Whiting Street PD&E Study that resulted from the City's request to revisit the preferred alternative. THEA has worked with the city and consultants. Based on those meetings, input, and analysis, staff recommends consensus-modified alternative 2 as the preferred alternative. Mr. Frey discussed the changes, components, and benefits of consensus-modified preferred alternative 2.

Chairman Cassidy asked if the exit ramp would have its own lane on Florida Avenue. Mr. Frey replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Frey requested the Board to approve consensus-modified alternative 2 and direct staff to complete the Whiting Street PD&E Study.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

Chairman Cassidy asked the Mayor if she had any comments. Mayor Castor thanked the Board for allowing a more in-depth look at how this impacts the entire area. She pointed out that reconfiguring the exit ramps not only saves land but more importantly looks at the future of our traffic flow and congestion. The city is growing rapidly and congestion is a problem. She thanked everyone for considering the overarching plan for movement in the city.

Chairman Cassidy agreed and thanked Mr. Frey and his team. He asked for confirmation that Whiting Street would go all the way through to Channelside Drive. Mr. Frey noted it will go to Meridian Avenue and then there will be an offset to the existing Whiting Street that goes to Channelside Drive. The Chairman clarified that motorists could get off of Whiting and then get into Ybor by crossing through and getting onto Channelside Drive. Mr. Frey concurred.

Mr. Slater added that some of the changes we have made, including eliminating all the free right turns and using that protected bike lane, resulted in a much better solution.

The motion passed unanimously.

Emerging Tech

Mr. Frey updated the Board on the Emerging Tech procurement, noting that the evaluation committee had interviewed nine of the ten firms that submitted an RFP to provide professional support to THEA for the analysis, design, and deployment of emerging technology. He requested the board approve the evaluation committee's recommendation to accept the top five ranked firms: Southwest Research Institute, Deloitte Consulting, The MITRE Corporation, HNTB Digital Transformation Solutions, and CDM Smith, and to authorize and direct staff to negotiate and execute a contract with each firm. Contract execution is subject to final review and approval of THEA General Counsel.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

The motion passed unanimously.

Operations and Engineering – Brian Pickard, P.E., Director

THEA Headquarters Generator Replacement

Mr. Pickard presented an item to replace the generator at THEA Headquarters. The project includes all the labor, materials, equipment, and incidentals necessary to replace the existing generator that provides emergency power to THEA Headquarters, as well as the disposal of the existing generator and all attachments.

The requested board action is to approve the selection of the lowest bid from Accurate Power and Technology, Inc., in the amount of \$170,000.59 from the capital budget, and to authorize and direct staff to negotiate and execute a contract with the lowest bid firm. If negotiations are unsuccessful, staff shall negotiate with the next lowest bid firm. The contract is subject to final review and approval of THEA General Counsel.

Firm	Bid Amount
Accurate Power and Technology, Inc.	\$170,000.59
CJ's Sales and Service of Ocala, Inc.	\$234,453.00
Santa Fe Power Solutions, Inc.	\$202,627.05
Zabatt Engine Services, Inc.	\$213,058.38

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

Chairman Cassidy asked if the equipment was the same for all four vendors who submitted bids. Brian responded in the affirmative.

Mayor Castor asked about the age of the current generator. Mr. Pickard noted it was installed in 2007.

The motion passed unanimously.

Construction, Engineering, and Inspection (CEI) for the Office Modifications and Video Wall Replacement Projects – KCI Technologies, Inc. - \$147,999

Mr. Pickard presented a procurement for the services of a CEI consultant to perform field engineering and testing for the Video Wall Design-Build and Office Modification projects. He pointed out that negotiations were previously conducted with KCI for task-driven contracts for minor design and CEI projects (August 26, 2019, Board meeting).

He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with KCI for \$147,999, from the capital budget, to provide CEI services for the Video Wall Design-Build and Office Modification projects.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

The motion passed unanimously.

Change Order to contract with C.W. Roberts Contracting, Inc. - \$215,494

Mr. Pickard presented an item to reimburse C.W. Roberts for the design and construction of the mill and overlay of the eastbound 78th Street off-ramp. Potholes have recently formed, and the entire ramp needs to be upgraded. He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to sign a change order to C.W. Roberts Contracting in the amount of \$215,494, to come from the capital budget, for milling and paving the eastbound 78th Street off-ramp.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

Chairman Cassidy asked for clarification on the change order. Mr. Pickard noted that this is an ongoing, active project. Mr. Slater clarified that the ramp project was added to an existing resurfacing project with C.W. Roberts.

The motion passed unanimously.

East Selmon Resurfacing from 78th Street East to Falkenburg Road

Mr. Pickard presented a related item to procure a designer and a contractor to construct resurfacing improvements from 78th Street East to Falkenburg Road on the eastern portion of the Selmon Expressway to remove and replace pavement that is showing signs of cracking and delamination.

He requested the Board to delegate authority to approve the selection of the designer and the contractor through the procurement of the work to the Executive Director and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with the selected designer and contractor to design and construct the resurfacing improvements from 78th Street East to Falkenburg Road on the Selmon Expressway. Contract execution is subject to final review and approval of THEA General Counsel.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

The motion passed unanimously.

Reimburse Coca-Cola for the Design of Upgrades at the Expressway Eastbound Exit at US 301 – not to exceed \$552,800

Mr. Pickard's final item was for Board approval to reimburse Coca-Cola to complete the design of additional turning movement capacity and safety upgrades to the Expressway's US 301 eastbound exit. The work complements the added work Coca-Cola must do to comply with their agreement with FDOT for increased access to the production plant at the southwest corner of the Expressway and US 301. This will save THEA time and money and ensure that the construction blends seamlessly with the civil work done by Coca-Cola.

He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute an agreement with Coca-Cola Florida and a purchase order to reimburse for the design of capacity and safety improvements at the Expressway eastbound exit to US 301 for a not to exceed amount of \$552,800 from the capital budget.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Weatherford.

The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

A. Operations & Engineering – *Brian Pickard, P.E., Director*

Mr. Pickard provided an update on the East Selmon Paving Project. The present contract amount is \$7,887,297 and the percentage of contract earned is 6%. He added that the contract end date is June 2024, and they are at 38% contract time.

Next, he provided an update on the THEA Railroad Track Removal Project, noting that the present contract amount is \$2,710,650, with 71% of the contract earned. The projected contract end date is April 2024, and Kimmins is currently at 79% of the contract time. He showed photos of the progress, including the historical marker that was installed.

B. Planning & Innovation – *Bob Frey, Director*

Mr. Frey introduced Auden Kaehler from WSP to provide an update on the pre-feasibility analysis of public charging stations and charging technology. Mr. Kaehler

reviewed charging infrastructure and the factors that impact decisions, such as charger types, charge time factors, site layout, and configuration.

Chairman Cassidy asked if this example incorporates some of the alternative uses for underneath the expressway. Mr. Kaehler noted that this is a sample and that solar panels under the expressway would not necessarily generate a great deal of power, but it would be a similar layout for some of the other sites.

Mr. Weatherford asked Mr. Kaehler for his thoughts on the initial state of Tampa Bay relative to charging stations. Mr. Kaehler showed some of the parcels owned by THEA and existing charging stations. As far as adoption of EVs, there has been a plateau and a more conservative growth rate of EV penetration in the market.

Mr. Kaehler then discussed the evaluation criterion for site locations, which included physical site characteristics, market demand potential, funding potential, and competitive landscape.

He then showed a site evaluation matrix summary depicting 19 sites that met all of the basic requirements. Finally, Mr. Kaehler gave an overview of the financial model, including inputs and outputs, along with summary results. He noted the following key takeaways and next steps:

- Continue to monitor the EV market trends and adaptation rates
- Prepare a detailed evaluation of identified locations
- Consider site configuration and number of Level 2 or DCFC
- Consider project delivery options to reduce risk exposure
- Identify funding opportunities to offset upfront capital investment costs

Chairman Cassidy asked if we have any peers who have already undertaken this installation. Mr. Frey responded in the affirmative. The Chairman asked if THEA has looked into the economics of those existing initiatives. Mr. Frey explained that we have not yet, we have only looked at our system.

Chairman Cassidy inquired if the customers who use our roadway are asking for this.

Mr. Slater responded that they have not, adding that our main focus today is to make sure that as the percentage of those fleets starts to increase, we have those options for our customers.

Chairman Cassidy asked for clarification on the aforementioned Federal tax incentives. Mr. Kaehler explained that any vendor that we would hire through the procurement process would be eligible for those incentives.

Finally, the Chairman asked if we envisioned customers leaving the roadway to charge their vehicles and potentially being charged a toll twice. Mr. Slater responded in the negative, stating that there are some interesting use cases for things like our west and east toll plazas and those types of facilities. He also noted that THEA is currently working on putting a charger in the dog park and our side parking lot – creating

opportunities in areas where there is a lot of demand, which was in partnership with TECO.

C. Budget & Finance – *Jeff Seward, Director*

Mr. Seward provided THEA's financial information for July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023. For the period reported, toll revenue was at 47.7%, which does not take into account the additional \$2.2M that we did not collect due to Hurricane Idalia, adding that if you were to add that \$2.2M back in, we are right around 49.8%. Mr. Seward noted that expenditures are right around 50.0%. He pointed out that last year we moved some activities from the capital budget to the operating budget and, in doing so, we knew that those would end up being higher than what we budgeted, but we would true it up as we move into the budget discussions for FY 2025. This is why you see the percent of total budget expended. This is not a surprise and is a direct result of moving those activities over to the operating budget. The remainder of our General & Administrative Expenses are on target and investment income is at 63.0%.

D. Toll Operations – *Tim Garrett, Interim Director, Toll Operations*

Mr. Garrett gave a presentation on the life of a toll transaction, from the roadside to our Operational Back Office. He began with THEA's roadside system where transponders are read or license plate images are captured and a transaction is created. The transponder transactions could go to local toll agencies in Florida, and video transactions could be recognized immediately through Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software, or staff conduct a manual image review of the license plate images.

THEA's host/Operational Back Office (OBOS) keeps track of all transactions. It receives transactions from the roadside system, sends transactions to get processed, and receives information on the status of each transaction. The OBOS also provides transactional reporting and business intelligence for THEA Tolls.

Mr. Garrett further explained that all license plate transactions and all E-ZPass transponders are processed by CFX first. Florida Turnpike's Centralized Customer Service System (CCSS) processes all Florida, Georgia, and Central Hub transponders; all remaining license plates after CFX processing; completes Registered Owner of Vehicle (ROV) identification for license plates and sends out up to 2 Toll-By-Plate invoices.

Finally, THEA's contracted collection agency pursues the debt after unpaid tolls are returned from the CCSS. Customers with a Florida license plate who owe more than \$3.50 will have a hold placed on their vehicle's registration – a customer cannot re-register the vehicle until they pay the tolls that are due.

Mayor Castor asked how THEA gets updated information when someone changes their license plate. Mr. Garrett explained if they change the plate number they can get away from the process, so it is one of the few loopholes that are there.

Mr. Slater noted the importance of this presentation is that some of these workflows are being simplified now that we are replacing the system.

E. Strategy, Communications & Community Engagement– *Keisha Boyd, Director*

Ms. Boyd provided updates on THEA in the Media and THEA in the Community. There were fifteen15 media hits last month including ABC Action News, Osprey Observer, and Syndicated News.

In the community, we were out and about in the city. She served as a judge for the Urban Excellence Awards, several staff participated in the American Heath Association Circle of Red event, the Heart & Soul weekend, the Bocce Ball tournament at the Cuban club, the annual USF Bridge Builder competition, and Greg was a presenter at the Air Refueling Wing Awards ceremony.

Executive Reports

Executive Director – *Greg Slater, Executive Director*

Contract Extensions and Expirations – Mr. Slater reported the contract with Atkins Global for Miscellaneous Toll Operations Support Services is up for its first one-year renewal.

Director’s Report – Mr. Slater reported that THEA has been working with the city on safety improvements at the Morgan Street off-ramp after a series of crashes associated with people making the prohibited left turn towards Amalie Arena.

Kimmins is currently repaving the Greenway along Meridian where the railroad tracks used to be, but we will also begin a restriping effort in the next couple of months to enhance the wayfinding along the greenway.

Finally, Mr. Slater updated the Board on the discussions associated with the merging of the Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco TPOs. Based on discussions, the Port and the Airport are being considered the top regional members while THEA is currently being considered part of the Hillsborough allocation. He will continue to update the board as talks progress.

General Counsel – *Amy Lettelleir*

No Report.

Chairman – *Vincent Cassidy*


Upcoming Meetings


- Board Workshop – March 11, 2024
- Board Meeting – March 25, 2024

Old Business – None.

New Business – None.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:25.

APPROVED: 
Chairman: Vincent Cassidy

ATTEST: 
Vice Chairman: Bennett Barrow

DATED THIS 22nd DAY OF APRIL 2024.