

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority  
Minutes of the December 11, 2023, Board Meeting  
1104 E. Twiggs Street  
Tampa, FL 33602

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The Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority held a public meeting at 1:30 p.m. on December 11, 2023, 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, Member  
Mayor Jane Castor, Member  
Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda, Member

**Staff:**

Greg Slater	Shannon Bush
Amy Lettelleir	Toni Nhlapo
Jeff Seward	Brian Ramirez
Bob Frey	Frederick Pekala
Brian Pickard	Julie Aure
Keisha Boyd	Szabina Szenassy
Shari Callahan	Lisa Pessina
Tim Garrett, HNTB	Anna Quinones
Charlene Varian	
Chaketa Mister	

**Others:**

Sally Dee, Playbook	Snehal Ambare, CDM Smith
Rick Patterson, Raymond James	John Palsa, Parsons
David Hubbard, Wey Engineering	Russ Wilkins, Middlesex
Jansel Sexto, HDR	Jason Watts, HNTB
Visha Szumouski, Kiewit	Jonathan Tursky, TransCore
William Junkin, BCC Engineering	Alex Bourne, RS&H
Matthew Sansbury, RBC	Joey Roselli, American Structurepoint
Michelle Schofner, Atkins	Chris Jadick, WSP
Len Becker, HNTB	Christina Matthews, WSP
Grant Chungo, Playbook	Sarah Lesch, Playbook

## **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

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

### **I. Public Input/Public Presentations**

There were no public comments.

Mr. Slater presented Representative Daniel Alvarez, former THEA Board member, with a U.S. flag encased in a wooden and glass box, as a token of THEA's appreciation for his years of service to the agency.

### **II. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Approval of the Minutes from the October 30, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting**

#### **B. Approval of Potential Board Member Travel – TEAMFL - \$750**

#### **C. Approval of Ongoing Task Work Orders for FY2024**

1. Clean and Stain REL Project Support, HNTB, \$150,000
2. Annual Work Program Development Support, HNTB, \$102,455
3. Urban Area Safety Evaluations and Concept Alternatives, WSP/WEY - Concept Designs, Safety Evaluation, and NACTO Standards, \$109,000
4. Grant Application Services, WSP, \$67,126
5. V2X Grant Application Services, WSP, \$72,200
6. RSU Travel Time, Traffic Count, and Speed Functionality, Yunex - \$100,000

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

*The motion passed unanimously.*

### **III. Discussion/Action Items**

#### **A. Planning & Innovation, John Weatherford, Committee – Bob Frey, Director**

##### **1. Completion of Revisions to Whiting PD&E Preferred Alternative, Lochner**

Mr. Frey provided an update on the completion of the revisions to the Whiting PD&E noting that, with the new preferred alternative, THEA will need an extension of the PD&E contract with H.W. Lochner, as well as an additional \$285,635 from the capital budget. The remaining work includes completion of the revisions to the preferred alternative, additional public involvement, updating the Project Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and supporting reports, and ongoing coordination culminating in a Board presentation.

The requested action is for Board approval to execute a task order for H.W. Lochner to perform the remaining tasks to complete the Whiting PD&E Study with a revised preferred alternative in the amount not to exceed \$285,635.

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

The Chairman asked Mayor Castor if she agreed with where we are on the PD&E. She responded in the affirmative.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

## **2. US 301 Design Traffic Analysis, WSP**

Mr. Frey presented an update on the US 301 design traffic analysis, noting that before beginning the NEPA-level PD&E, THEA is completing preliminary work to assist in determining project needs. As part of this preliminary work, it is necessary to collect data and determine existing and future traffic, operational changes, and safety associated with US 301. This will include traffic operational analysis, traffic forecasting, historical and predictive safety evaluation, conceptual design, planning level cost estimation, and coordination support efforts.

The requested action is for Board approval to execute a task order with WSP for the US 301 Design Traffic Analysis in the amount not to exceed \$418,624 from the capital budget.

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

Chairman Cassidy asked about the timeline of the output for this task. Mr. Frey noted that Planning will bring the results back to the Board in six months.

Mr. Weatherford asked if we know what the potential savings would be for doing a project like this.

Mr. Frey explained that THEA is only looking at the project's viability at this point.

Mr. Slater added that the county is updating its community plans in the southern part of Hillsborough County to make them consistent with the extension of the expressway. We do not want to delay - we want to go ahead and move forward with the traffic analysis, see what the options are, and bring those back to the Board. That way, once the plans are updated, we will be ready to go.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

## **B. Operations & Engineering, Bennett Barrow, Committee Chair – Brian Pickard, P.E., Director**

### **1. Inspection Services – Selmon West Extension, Ferroviaal Services Infrastructure, NKA Webber Infrastructure Management**

Mr. Pickard presented a task order for Ferroviaal Services Infrastructure, NKA Webber Infrastructure Management, to inspect the tendons on the Selmon West Extension. He explained that this is a follow-up to the work that was done in 2022.

The requested action is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with Ferroviaal Services Infrastructure, NKA Webber Infrastructure Management, to inspect the tendons on the Selmon West Extension for \$145,833 from the operations and maintenance budget.

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

*The motion passed unanimously.*

**2. Change Order to Contract No. 0-02520 with The Middlesex Corporation for Designing and Building the East Selmon Slip Ramps**

Mr. Pickard presented a request to reimburse Middlesex for extra work, which includes material escalation costs, Hurricane Idalia response, contract adjustments for fuel and bituminous spread rate and material quality, extra work related to gate and sign control, extra drainage work, and a credit for reduction of work.

The requested action is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a purchase order with The Middlesex Corporation for \$784,675 from the capital budget, for material escalation costs, Hurricane Idalia response, contract adjustments for fuel and bituminous spread rate, and material quality, extra work related to gate and sign control, extra drainage work, and a credit for reduction of work not covered in the scope of the original RFP.

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

Mr. Slater pointed out that the original contract bid amount was \$23,988,000 and we are going to end at \$26,000,000 – about \$1M of that is from the anticipated pipework that we knew was going to come in after the bid and was not included in the original bid. The \$700,000 - \$800,000 additional was for material escalation – we honor the agreement that the FDOT Chief Engineer makes with the industry. That leaves us with \$200,000 to \$300,000 of unanticipated costs. That is a well-delivered project.

Mr. Barrow asked what the top material escalation costs were. Mr. Pickard noted it was mostly steel, beams, and drainage materials.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

**3. I-4 FRAME Construction, Engineering, and Inspection (CEI) Consor**

Next, Mr. Pickard presented a request to procure the services of a CEI consultant to perform field engineering and testing for the contract work called for in the I-4 Frame Project being designed by KCI. Consor Engineering was selected previously (August 26, 2019, Board meeting) for task-driven contracts for minor design and CEI projects.

The requested action is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a purchase order with Consor Engineering for \$497,807 to provide CEI services for the I-4 Frame.

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

*The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **4. GEC (HNTB) Assistance in Evaluating Risk Items from South Selmon Capacity Procurement**

Mr. Pickard then presented an item to utilize the GEC (HNTB) and their sub-consultants to assist THEA staff in identifying the capacity of foundations, bridge decks, pile lengths, noise wall options, and utility coordination before the next phase of the South Selmon Capacity procurement. This will significantly reduce the risk the upcoming project contractor will incorporate into their price.

The requested action is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with HNTB to provide GEC support during FY24 to evaluate and reduce risk items for the upcoming South Selmon Capacity Project from Himes Avenue to the Hillsborough River in an amount not to exceed \$1,092,620 from the capital budget.

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

The Chairman commented that it was his understanding that the dollars being spent on this project, the multitude we expect to save is considerable. Mr. Slater concurred, noting that gives them much more of a known quantity when they are bidding. He asked Mr. Pickard what he estimated the return to be on this. Mr. Picard estimated a 5:1 return (reduction in contract costs).

***The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **5. Assistance in Evaluating Risk Items from South Selmon Capacity Procurement – Consor Engineering**

Finally, Mr. Pickard presented a request to utilize Consor Engineering and their sub-consultants to assist THEA staff in identifying pavement condition, cross slope corrections required, drainage modeling, and advanced stormwater permitting requirements and mitigation in preparation for the next phase of the South Selmon Capacity procurement. This, too, will significantly reduce the risk that the upcoming South Selmon Capacity Project contractor will incorporate into their price. Consor Engineering was previously selected during the August 26, 2019, Board meeting, for task-driven contracts for minor design and CEI projects.

The requested action is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with Consor Engineering to provide support during FY24 in evaluating and reducing risk items for the upcoming South Selmon Capacity Project from Himes Avenue to the Hillsborough River in an amount not to exceed \$496,722 from the capital budget.

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

***The motion passed unanimously.***

## IV. Staff Reports

### A. Planning & Innovation – *Bob Frey, Director*

Mr. Frey reported on the initial impacts of the East Selmon Slip Ramp project, noting that the preliminary traffic count data shows approximately 875 vehicles entering per hour on inbound on ramp 3 and approximately 450 at outbound ramp 2 during peak a.m. hours. This translates to about 300 fewer vehicles exiting the REL during peak hours.

Mr. Frey then reported on the average speeds and congestion between US 301 and 78<sup>th</sup> street, noting that the average speed on local lanes has improved, as well as improved user capacity on the REL.

Chairman Cassidy asked if we are getting any backup traffic on the slip lanes. Mr. Frey reported that the ramps are helping at the I-4 connector area where vehicles are entering the Expressway. The real impact of the length of the queue at Twiggs is we are noticing an improvement in the right-turn backups as they appear to be better, but we have not yet done an analysis to verify

Mr. Slater added that before the slip ramps were installed, we saw congestion at 301/Faulkenburg Road from vehicles trying to get on the REL. Now, they can get on the REL and bypass the congestion. He noted that the most significant piece is the right turn at the end of the REL in Downtown Tampa at Twiggs still backs up, but not as much as it did before the slip ramps, and it seems to dissipate much faster. The data shows 300 vehicles coming downtown – so that is 300 fewer cars that are not navigating downtown and are staying on the Expressway just in that morning peak hour.

Mayor Castor asked if the staff had any updates on the MacDill AFB passes. Mr. Slater explained that THEA is interested in replicating the State's program, which is more beneficial to both MacDill and THEA and we are working on getting something in place.

Chairman Cassidy asked if MacDill is at capacity and if everyone has returned to in-person duty. Mayor Castor reported that they are fully activated. Mr. Slater added that the patterns are changing with hybrid work arrangements.

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

Ms. Boyd gave an update on THEA in the media, noting twenty-five media mentions with a reach of 1,403,229. Most of these were due to the opening of the slip ramps. She added that THEA's slip ramp video had more than 24,000 views and a reach of 110,000.

Finally, she reported that THEA is wrapping up its 60-year celebration and will continue to be involved and engaged in the community.

Chairman Cassidy asked when the Marketing and Communications Board Workshop will be held. Mr. Slater noted that planning is in progress.

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

Mr. Pickard reported that the railroad track removal project is underway. The present contract amount with Kimmins is \$2,710,650 and so far, they have earned 25% of the contract. Project completion remains April 2024. Utilized contract time is at 36%.

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

Mr. Garrett reported toll operations statistics for November. The weekly average transactions for November were 1,254,937, noting that the year-to-year increase is nominally 7%. He then showed the increases in the average weekday transactions across the various plazas. He pointed out that in November, the greatest increase was at the REL, likely due to the opening of the slip ramps. Mr. Garrett noted that overall, there was a year-over-year weekday transaction volume increase of 7.6%.

Finally, Mr. Garrett reviewed the toll operations activities for November, which show 6,274,685 total transactions were processed, with 69% being transponder transactions and 31% Toll-by-Plate.

**E. IT & Security – Shari Callahan, Director**

Ms. Callahan provided an update on the employee cyber security training program THEA has implemented over the past twelve months. First, we did a review to determine THEA users' existing knowledge. We conducted some training and testing, and the response was amazing. We collected enough data to design a program to meet our users' needs. We used different aspects of several different programs to empower our users and change the culture. Along with the training we have added features to outlook, such as the PAB button, which allows users to report phishing emails with the click of a button. IT reviews and if it is phishing or spam, the email is destroyed. If it is an actual email, it is returned to the user. We have also enhanced spam protection and encryption and follow up on all of this with tests and quizzes.

Ms. Callahan reported that five hundred phishing emails were reported in a 30-day period. She reviewed the Security Culture Survey Scores, pointing out that we started out around 30-40 and we are now up to 70-80.

Mr. Weatherford commented that with the PAB flagging and the blocking of these emails, the numbers should get smaller. Ms. Callahan pointed out that it should, but that the scammers just change the IP or the email address.

## V. Executive Reports

### A. Executive Director – *Greg Slater, Executive Director*

#### 1. Contract Renewals and Expirations

Mr. Slater reported on nine contracts, four are up for renewal and consist of contracts with Aptim Environmental & Infrastructure; Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.; and Atkins Global. Another five are expiring, which include A-Stellar Property Maintenance & Landscaping; Evolve; Ferrovial Services Infrastructure; Handex; and Public Trust Advisors. See attached.

Mr. Cassidy mentioned that the contract dates do not reflect that THEA may have been working with a firm/contractor for twenty years. He suggested adding “original” contract date so the Board could see how long we have been doing business with them.

Mr. Slater pointed out that many of these contracts are with companies that THEA has been doing business with for decades, but they have won two or three different procurements along the way. The 3+1+1 allows us to rebid every five years.

Ms. Lettelleir added that the contract length – 3+1+1 is the maximum contract length.

#### 2. Director’s Report

Mr. Slater reported that at the end of November, THEA staff came together for a six-hour Success Management Workshop to develop a plan to meet our goals relative to the South Selmon Capacity Project. We want to:

1. Get answers to all the analysis for all the foundational questions before putting something out on the street.
2. Move forward with a more flexible solicitation.

This should give us a better structure for today’s market with our budgetary limitations.

Mr. Slater did a quick review of 2023 highlighting the Strategic Blueprint. THEA has a new ITS Master Plan, new Greenway Master Plan, Work Program, and Budget, all of which align with the Strategic Blueprint.

He noted that THEA was one of a small group of special districts across the state that ended the year with 100% compliance with the Florida Transportation Commission’s performance measures. We will close out the year at 2.47 in debt service; our video backlog is down to 5.2 days; congested transactions are at 3.3%; growth areas for next year are around reducing the video toll coverage; and our roadside MRP is around 88%.



Chairman Cassidy asked about the 31% video transactions and whether we could identify what percent of those are vehicles with transponders with technology in the windshield that prevents the transaction from going through.

Mr. Garrett explained that Turnpike maintains a list of vehicles with problematic windshields. With that said, we have recently investigated an instance with a team member who has a transponder but was receiving image-based tolls. We looked at both that particular toll site as well as his vehicle. The transponder was swapped out and it improved, but this is one of the measures we are going to use when we are looking at our SunPass rate. We are also going to look at targeted markets to continuous toll-by-plate customers. They can pay a lot less in tolls if they have a transponder.

Mr. Cassidy noted that as car manufacturing technology evolves it could make collecting a little bit more difficult. Mr. Garrett agreed and discussed options, adding that this is something we will be looking into.

**B. General Counsel – Amy Lettelleir**

No report.

**C. Chairman – Vincent Cassidy**

1. Upcoming Meetings

- Committees of the Whole – January 8, 2024 - *Cancelled*
- Board Meeting – January 22, 2024

**VI. Old Business**

No old business.

**VII. New Business**

No new business.

**VIII. Adjournment**

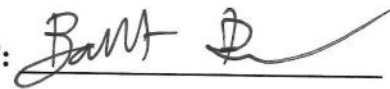
The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

APPROVED:



Chairman: Vincent Cassidy

ATTEST:



Vice Chairman: Bennett Barrow

DATED THIS 22<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF January 2024.

**Contract Renewal & Expiration Report  
(>\$30,000)**

Project Manager	Firm	Description of Services	Contract Effective Date	Contract Expiration Date	Term of Contract (Years)	Bid / Renew / End
Brian	A-Stellar Property Maintenance & Landscaping, Inc.	Maintenance and Landscaping Services	7/1/2017	6/30/2024		Expires
Brian	Aptim Environmental & Infrastructure, LLC	Environmental Advisory Services	5/7/2019	5/6/2024	3-yr, 2 Optional 1-yr Renewals	Renew (2nd one-year renewal ~ 5/7/24 - 5/7/25)
Amy	Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	Insurance Broker Services	6/4/2021	6/3/2024	3-yr, 2 Optional 1-yr Renewals	Renew (1st one-year renewal ~ 6/4/24 - 6/3/25)
Bob	Atkins Global	Misc. Trail, Parks & Community Enhancement Services	5/20/2021	5/20/2024	3-yr, 2 Optional 1-yr Renewals	Renew (1st one-year renewal ~ 5/20/24 - 5/20/25)
Amy	Bryant Miller Olive P.A	Disclosure Counsel	5/5/2020	5/4/2024	3-yr, 2 Optional 1-yr Renewals	Renew (1st one-year renewal ~ 5/5/24 - 5/4/25)
Bob	Evolve	Misc. Emerging Technology Services	6/27/2019	6/26/2024		Expires
Brian	Ferrovia Services Infrastructure, Inc. NKA Webber Infrastructure Management, Inc.	Asset Management Services	7/1/2017	6/30/2024		Expires
Brian	Handex	Environmental Advisory Services	5/19/2019	5/19/2024		Expires
Jeff	Public Trust Advisors	Investment Advisory Services	5/19/2019	5/1/2024		Expires