

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority
Minutes of the January 22, 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 January 22, 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, Member
Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda, Member

Staff:

Greg Slater	Brian Ramirez
Amy Lettelleir	Julie Aure
Jeff Seward	Gary Holland
Bob Frey	Anna Quinones
Brian Pickard	Tiana Hill
Keisha Boyd	Frederick Pekala
Shari Callahan	Felipe Velasco
Tim Garrett	Elizabeth Gray
Charlene Varian	Judith Villegas
Chaketa Mister	Szabina Szenassy
Lisa Pessina	Emma Antolinez
Shannon Bush	
Toni Nhlapo	

Others:

Michael Garau, Kimley-Horn	Kevin Hoeflich, HNTB
John Generali, Wells Fargo	Sally Dee, Playbook
Snehal Ambare, CDM Smith	Joseph Aguila, Infotect
Helen Barton, CDM Smith	Christina Matthews, WSP
Alex Bourne, RS&H	Hector Martinez, MITRE
Hope Scarpinato, PFM	LaBaron Lewis, Infotect
Julie Davis, Rivero Gordimer	Rachel Hilleny, Playbook
Sam Lazzara, Rivero Gordimer	LaBaron Lewis, Infotect
Elise Leach, Rivero Gordimer	Tim Schock, Parsons
Jonathan Stein, Rivero Gordimer	Bill Howell, Lochner
Ethan Drew, Ardaman	Joseph Stanton, NMRS
Jim Drapp, HNTB	Rick Patterson, Raymond James

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 December 11, 2023, Board Meeting

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items

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

Vulnerable Road User Project – Task Work Order - Commsignia and Yunex - \$205,005

Mr. Frey reported that in November 2023, THEA demonstrated a Vulnerable Road User (VRU) application aimed at improving bicycle and e-scooter safety using a Commsignia “OBU Lite” device.

Due to the success of the demonstration, a small deployment of a Vulnerable Road User safety application is being proposed. This pilot project will test ten V2X Onboard Units optimized for micro-mobility (OBU Lite) and other V2X equipment at two intersections along Meridian Avenue. Existing THEA infrastructure (RSUs) will generate and broadcast Basic Safety Messages (BSM) to equipped bicycles, scooters, and cars to alert drivers and riders of potential danger.

Mr. Frey requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute task orders with Commsignia and Yunex for \$135,505 and \$69,500 respectively, to deploy and test the Vulnerable Road User CV2X Safety Project.

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

The Chairman asked about other cities that may have used this technology. Mr. Frey noted that the OBU we are using is a prototype and THEA is on the cutting edge as this technology is not yet on the market.

Mr. Barrow asked if both the bicycle and the vehicle receive warning signals. Mr. Frey responded in the affirmative, noting that both the vehicle and the bike have devices mounted.

Mr. Gwynn asked at what point the warning would go off. Mr. Fry explained that it is when a collision is imminent.

There was a brief discussion about the technology and how it works with the cellphone app. The Chairman asked if the vehicles that would participate were those on which the equipment was previously installed. Mr. Frey explained that a certain number of vehicles will go out to test, and once it's determined to be safe, we'll recruit participants like we did with the CV Pilot.

The motion passed unanimously.

East Selmon Preferred Alternative

Mr. Frey gave an update on the East Selmon PD&E and the staff-recommended preferred alternative. The East Selmon PD&E Study limits are from I-4 to I-75 near Brandon. He reviewed current congestion, projected congestion, and crash history, as well as the three alternatives:

Alternative 1 - No Build

Alternative 2 (Recommended Preferred) - Add Lanes to Outside with Braided Ramps to I-75

Alternative 3 - Add Lanes to Outside without Braided Ramps to I-75

The benefits of Alternative 2 include improved capacity, improved ramps, and improved safety.

Mr. Frey requested the Board to accept *Alternative Two* as the Preferred Alternative and direct staff to move forward with its refinement, coordinating with the FDOT, Hillsborough County, and other Agencies, and public comment and bring it back to the Board for final approval.

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

The Chairman asked for clarification on whether the lanes would be added on grade. Mr. Frey replied in the affirmative, noting it is all within the right-of-way.

The Chairman also asked if in the studies we can determine when the vehicles involved in crashes were manufactured. He was particularly interested in any correlation between vehicles with large screens, which are potentially distracting, and crashes. Mr. Frey will work with the traffic engineer to try and get that information. Mr. Slater added that rear-end crashes are typically congestion related. Once you relieve the congestion you eliminate the problem.

The motion passed unanimously.

Emerging Tech Shortlist

Mr. Frey presented the Evaluation Committee's recommended list of firms to interview relative to the procurement of professional services to provide support to THEA staff for the

analysis, design, and deployment of emerging technology to create a functional advantage in operations, safety, and efficiency.

The purpose is to procure professional services to provide support to THEA staff for the analysis, design, and deployment of emerging technology to create a functional advantage in operations, safety, and efficiency. The firms selected will be assigned projects based on expertise for specific emerging technology projects as determined by THEA staff.

Mr. Frey requested Board approval for staff to interview the following nine firms and develop a shortlist for Board approval.

Firm
Arcadis U.S., Inc.
CDM Smith, Inc.
Deloitte Consulting
Ernst & Young Infrastructure Advisors, Inc.
HNTB Corporation
Metric Engineering, Inc.
Michael Baker International, Inc.
Southwest Research Institute
The MITRE Corporation

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Information Technology and Security – Shari Callahan, Director

Video Wall Upgrade Project

Ms. Callahan presented the Evaluation Committee’s rankings for the technology upgrade and enhanced the performance of the TMC Video Wall. The benefits of the upgrade include a more reliable system, more flexibility, and multi-functional displays.

She requested the Board:

- a. Approve the recommendation of the evaluation committee.

Firm	Ranking
AVI-SPL LLC	84.67
Parsons Transportation Group, Inc.	83.89

- b. Authorize and direct staff to negotiate and execute a contract with the number one ranked firm. If negotiations are unsuccessful, staff will negotiate with the number two ranked 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.

Mr. Weatherford asked what the estimated cost is. Mr. Slater noted that once the contract is approved we will bring back a task order with the cost estimate.

The motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance – Commissioner Cepeda, Committee Chair – Jeff Seward, Director

Acceptance of FY23 Financial Statements/Audit Presentation – Rivero, Gordimer and Company

Mr. Seward gave the Board an overview of last year's achievements and what's ahead in 2024. He noted that we closed the Fiscal Year 2023 OM&A budget with toll collection revenue exceeding budget estimates, despite the Statewide toll suspension from Hurricane Idalia, and expenditures were under budget. This has allowed us to create a new Strategic Capital Programming Fund for three large upcoming capital projects – South Selmon Capacity, RTCS, and OBOS allowing us flexibility when it comes time to fund these projects.

He reported on the Debt Service and Bond Ratings. We are maintaining our A+ and A2 ratings with S&P and Moody's and we will end FY2023 with a DSR ratio of 2.54, well above the Revenue Sufficiency Test. He noted that we estimate this trend of higher DSR for FY 2024 as well.

THEA has added a new financial team staff member, made changes in our processes to transition away from paper, and introduced a Purchasing Card program, which is expected to yield an estimated first-year rebate of \$50K. Mr. Seward also pointed out that, in working with our IT Director, an additional layer of cyber-security training, specifically for THEA's financial staff, has been implemented. We are also working toward an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System to replace our current procure-to-pay processes, as well as moving our timekeeping and payroll processes to a third-party vendor.

Mr. Seward also reported that THEA will be finalizing our regulatory reporting to the bond market and the State of Florida CFO and Auditor General. We will begin our annual revenue sufficiency and toll indexing work in preparation for the development of the FY2025 OM&A budget and Work Program.

Finally, Mr. Seward thanked his staff and the auditors for their hard work and dedication and turned the meeting over to the auditors to report the results of the FY2023 financial audit.

Mr. Sam Lazzara introduced Ms. Julie Davis, Mr. John Stein, and Ms. Elise Leach and gave a brief summary of the process.

Mr. Stein noted that there were no disagreements with management during the audit and the audit provides assurances that THEA's financial statements are free of material misstatement. He also reported that THEA is in compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, and no material weaknesses were noted.

Ms. Davis presented a high-level summary of the financial statements. She reviewed total assets, liabilities, deferred inflows and outflows, and net position. She also provided a summary of the income statement.

Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to accept the audit. Mr. Weatherford moved approval, seconded by Mr. Barrow.

Mr. Weatherford asked about the increase in investment income. Ms. Davis noted that the increase is due to the higher interest rates paid on U.S. Treasury bonds, etc.

The Chairman expressed his gratitude to the team for their work.

The motion passed unanimously.

General Counsel – Amy Lettelleir, Esquire

Legal Services

Ms. Lettelleir presented an item to provide specialty legal services to the Authority on an as-needed basis, including, but not limited to, local government, cyber security, procurement, labor and employment, real estate, construction law, and litigation.

She requested the Board to authorize and direct staff to enter into contracts with the following five firms. Contract execution is subject to final review and approval of THEA General Counsel.

Firm
Bryant Miller Olive
Gray Robinson
Mcfarlane Ferguson & McMullen
Nelson Mullins
Taylor English

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

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

Mr. Pickard presented information on the US 301 eastbound exit ramp, pointing out that he will have a related item on the February Board agenda. He gave a brief history, noting that Coca-Cola has constructed a large-scale facility at this interchange. They've worked with Access Management and FDOT to identify a new access point off US 301 to their facility. FDOT required the developer to install a new right lane on southbound US 301, from the Selmon exit point to Causeway Boulevard. They have also asked THEA to consider upgrading the exit ramp at that interchange.

The goal of the project is to improve operations and safety at the eastbound Selmon exit ramp, in conjunction with FDOT and Coca-Cola. THEA will provide a right-lane free-flow exit ramp to US 301 to improve the flow of exiting vehicles. THEA will also compensate Coca-Cola for a portion of the design and construction of the project.

Finally, he discussed the eastbound exit ramp improvements, including:

- Exit Ramp Widens from a Single Lane to Three Lanes
- Left Lane-Signal Controlled Left to NB US 301
- Center Lane Signal Controlled Right to SB US 301
- Provides Safer Access to Left Turn Lanes on US 301
- Right Lane Free-flow to SB US 301
- FDOT Required Developer to Extend New Right Lane on
on SB US 301 from Selmon Expressway to Causeway Blvd.
- Proposed Design Fee - \$552,800
- Estimated Construction Fee - \$3,500,000

Chairman Cassidy asked if the growth of Coca-Cola, the jobs, and the activity in and out of that location are driving the changes on US 301 and the Expressway to support that activity.

Mr. Pickard noted that is part of the problem, but there are also some safety concerns.

Mr. Slater added that FDOT required a certain amount of mitigation from Coca-Cola based on its impact. What THEA is proposing is that we address some of our existing issues, that are separate but in the same area, at the same time.

Chairman Cassidy asked if we would be doing something here regardless of Coca-Cola.

Mr. Pickard responded in the affirmative, noting that we would have done it with the Selmon East project, but we're getting a head start on it here.

Chairman Cassidy asked if THEA is reimbursing Coca-Cola. Brian explained that THEA is using Coca-Cola's designer and contractor to do this work.

The Chairman asked for clarification on whether THEA is paying for their work. Mr. Pickard confirmed that THEA is not paying Coca-Cola for their development work – it is 100% on THEA right-of-way.

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

Mr. Garrett reviewed Toll Traffic Statistics for December 2023, starting with the weekly transactions. The year-to-year comparison shows a slight increase of 100K transactions. The greatest increase was on the REL. Transactions for SunPass and Toll by Plate are standard at 69% (transponder) and 31% (toll-by-plate). March is our peak month and we expect to break another record.

Mr. Weatherford asked about K-Tag and if it is new. Mr. Garrett noted that we went live with K-Tag a couple of months ago and we are adding others.

C. Information Technology & Security – *Shari Callahan, Director*

Ms. Callahan provided an update on the Business Continuity Plan currently under development. It is an over-arching framework and is crisis/emergency management driven. We are currently in the department focus phase, which includes a review of the business functions of each department; application priority assessments; identifying acceptable downtime; reviewing the plan; and creating and incorporating detail into THEA's agency-wide plan.

All of this will feed into the disaster recovery plans to ensure we have a full and robust plan. Ms. Callahan hopes to have a plan in place in a couple of months that can be tested before hurricane season.

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

Ms. Boyd reviewed the 2023 publicity stats:

THEA had over 348 media mentions last year for more than \$1.6M in publicity value, reaching more than 125M people. Social media impressions were at almost 1M and our videos had more than 51K views. Ms. Boyd briefly referenced the culture calendar handout.

In the Community – THEA partnered with Hillsborough County Homeless and Community Services Department and provided bikes to two large families; we participated in the MLK Gala and Parade; supported the Brandon half-marathon and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Indian Advisory Council Awards.

Chairman Cassidy asked about the reference to the Super Bowl on the culture calendar. Ms. Boyd explained our social media content related to the Super Bowl but making it local.

Executive Reports

Executive Director – *Greg Slater, Executive Director*

Director's Report – Mr. Slater announced that details for the re-solicitation of the South Selmon Capacity Project are being finalized and we will be sharing some details with the industry next month.

He also announced that THEA is working with city officials to prepare for Gasparilla, once it is settled our asset management team will do a sweep for trash and debris.

There will be a Board workshop in March to discuss the initial reports from our real estate team as well as discuss the Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan.

Mr. Slater also shared some details about his visit to DC to participate in TRB, noting he participated in three different sessions. One was about designing the transportation agency of the future; one was a meeting of the *Transportation Vulnerability and Resilience Expert Task Force*.

Next week we will be visiting the North Texas Tolling Authority to learn from their experience replacing their toll system, for which they won an award from IBTTA.

He also reported that he is now the Chairman of the TEAMFL.

Mr. Slater announced that both Judith and Emma have returned from maternity leave, and THEA will soon be advertising a position for an ITS Manager.

Finally, he extended his thanks to the Audit team.

Next. Mr. Slater reported on upcoming Contract Renewals and Expirations. There are five contracts, two are expiring – Alliance Air and Pennoni for Miscellaneous Planning - and three are one-year renewals – Consor Engineering (2nd), HNTB/GEC (1st), and KCI Technologies (1st).

General Counsel – Amy Lettelleir

No Report

Chairman – Vincent Cassidy

Upcoming Meetings

- Committees of the Whole – February 12, 2024 - *Cancelled*
- Board Meeting – February 26, 2024

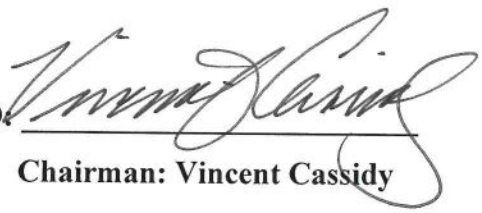
Old Business - None

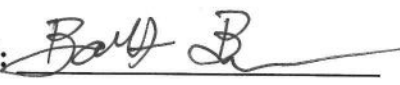
New Business – *The Chairman proposed a motion to engage an organization to conduct a compensation study on the Board's two direct*

Mr. Weatherford seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:29.

APPROVED: 
Chairman: Vincent Cassidy

ATTEST: 
Vice Chairman: Bennett Barrow

DATED THIS 26th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2024.

