

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority  
Minutes of the May 5, 2025, Board Workshop  
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 May 5, 2025, at THEA Headquarters, 1104 E. Twiggs Street in Tampa Florida. The following were present:

**BOARD:**

Vincent Cassidy, Chairman  
Bennett Barrow, Vice Chairman  
Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda, Member

**STAFF:**

Greg Slater	Chaketa Mister
Amy Lettelleir	Pedro Leon
Tim Garrett	Emma Antolinez
Jeff Seward	Lisa Pessina
Raul Rosario	Brian Ramirez
Bob Frey	Brian McElroy
Keisha Boyd	Elizabeth Gray
Shari Callahan	Judith Villegas
Charlene Varian	Anna Quinones

**OTHERS:**

Christina Matthews, WSP	John Generalli, Wells Fargo
Nicole Dufva, WSP	Hope Scarpinato, PFM

Chairman Cassidy called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm.

Mr. Slater provided an overview of what the board can expect from the workshop, noting a focus on the next six years and laying the foundation for the following six. He added that we have a lot of monumental projects we want to complete, but also the work around our real estate investment as well as US 301, which will be the first time you will see US 301 in the 6-year work program.

Mr. Slater continued, pointing out that at the end of this 6-year program we will see:

- The complete construction of the South Selmon Capacity Project – FY2026 – FY2030
- Completion of Whiting – FY'28 – FY'31
- East Selmon Phase 1 completed – FY'33 – FY'35
- ITS System Deployment – FY'25 – FY'29
- Brand new Operational Back Office (OBOS) – FY'26 – FY'27
- New Roadside Toll Collection System (RTCS) – FY'26 – FY'28

- Investments in our 12<sup>th</sup> Street Park – FY’26 – FY’30
- Investments in Meridian Health Trail – FY’26 – FY’27
- Beginning of US 301 PD&E – FY’26 – FY’29
- Development of THEA Real Estate assets

On the operating side, you will see more analysis tools, more return on investment, more focus on a program that impacts the community and our customers as we are building intelligence into the system. The operating budget will continue to be lean and everything in it vertically integrated and aligned with our strategic blueprint. This operating budget has the lowest year-over-year growth in sixteen years. We have a robust capital program of \$141M and an elevated state of good repair. With that, you will see a capital budget that focuses on growth, community investment, and foundational data programs. We are also focused on risk, with a strategic approach with investments in areas such as cyber security.

Mr. Slater introduced Mr. Frey to present the Draft FY’26 Work Program.

Mr. Frey began his presentation with a summary of the work program, noting a FY’26 Work Program Budget of \$745, which includes \$46M for Preservation and \$665M for Enhancements. He moved on to more detail about both the Preservation Program and the Enhancement Program, highlighting major projects for each category.

#### **Preservation Program**

Extend Fiber to DMS and CMS Signs  
Clean and Stain REL Structures  
Sign Replacement (Jeff St-Brandon Pkwy)  
Steel Bridge Painting  
Resurfacing Meridian Avenue  
Resurfacing Brandon Parkway

#### **New Major Projects:**

Drainage Ditch 22<sup>nd</sup> St – Falkenburg Rd  
REL Gate System Replacement

#### **Major Programmatic Expense Projects**

Facilities  
Transportation Safety Innovations  
Asset Management Development  
Post Tensioned Bridge Asset Management

#### **Enhancement Program**

Wrong-way Driving Countermeasures  
Selmon East/US 301 Ramp Widening  
OBOS  
RTCS  
Independent Toll Audit System  
THEA Headquarters Safety Project  
ITS Infrastructure – East & West Selmon  
US 301 PD&E  
12<sup>th</sup> Street Park  
Whiting Street Improvements  
Greenway Improvements  
Selmon East

#### **New Major Projects:**

East Mainline Toll Gantry  
Meridian Avenue Refresh  
Brorein Pedestrian Safety Improvements  
DOE Grant – SECURE V2X  
ATMS  
TMC  
Bay to Bay Park  
Adamo Park Remediation



Chairman Cassidy asked about the drop in the budget numbers for 2030 and 2031. Mr. Slater explained that the agency has shifted from a cyclical approach to a predictive approach, which is a steadier approach.

The Chairman made note that there is not much activity with the US 301 project over the next six years. Mr. Slater advised that THEA is undertaking the PD&E process, which is a two-year process. A year and a half from now, we could possibly shift some resources into the project. Until the PD&E is complete, we do not know what construction is going to look like.

The Chairman asked for clarification as to whether there is a cost estimate for US 301 beyond the PD&E phase. Mr. Slater explained that programming the engineering and construction before completing the PD&E would diminish the planning process. THEA is following the Federal process in its planning to take advantage of some of the Federal financing tools, such as low interest infrastructure loans. In the Federal process everything has to be in play, including the no-build alternative. He pointed out that if you program the build before you finish planning, it becomes a challenge in the Federal process. He added that this is a six-year program, which floats year to year and next year's six-year program will be different from this year's program. Chairman Cassidy commented that the US 301 project should begin within six years. Mr. Slater explained that the Board will have to decide as to what level of investment it wants to make in East Selmon beforehand, unless US 301 can show its independent utility. Independent utility would allow us to do two things, first move away from being a single-asset facility, and second, not be limited financially by the needs of the existing facility. The Chairman made note of the potential budget increase if the entirety of the US 301 project was included in the work program. Mr. Slater clarified that as the project progresses, updated estimates will be reflected in future work programs.

Mr. Frey added that US 301 will need to go back to the Board of County Commissioners.

There was a brief discussion about the South Selmon Capacity project, its cost estimate and risk mitigation. Mr. Barrow asked if we have revenue projections for South Selmon. Mr. Slater noted projections are marginal. There was also a brief discussion about the Whiting improvement project.

Finally, Mr. Frey reviewed the work program stats and what is new to this year's program.

Next, Mr. Seward presented an overview of the FY'26 budget development process, which was a zero-based approach. Each budgeted line item had to be defended, including how each item/service aligns to THEA's Strategic Blueprint.

He reviewed the FY'26 Revenue Projections. He pointed out projected toll revenue growth of 5.43%, and 9.97% increase in miscellaneous revenue, and a 25% increase in investment/interest earnings. We are confident we will meet this year's FY'25 revenue, despite hurricane impacts and the toll rebate expense.

Mr. Seward moved on to **Personnel Expenditures** highlighting a net expenditure increase of 7.22% over FY'25. This includes a 3% COLA for employees; a 16% reduction in health care premium, dental and vision; the elimination of one FTE and one intern, and the addition of ADP payroll and workforce planning.

He reviewed departmental budgets beginning with Toll Operations:

- **Toll Operations** will see a net expenditure decrease of 7.73% over FY'24. The key drivers include Florida Turnpike Enterprise expenditures; a reduction in toll consulting support and reduced image review expenses; an increase based on contractual increases for image review software and support; a decrease based on a reduction in spare parts; a decrease in interoperability and the Tax Collector project; and increases to support repairing HVAC units for tolling cabinets.
- **Operations & Maintenance** will see a net expenditure increase of 7.57 over FY'25 as follows: An increase in performance expectations, material, personnel, equipment and oversight costs for THEA's asset maintenance contractor; reductions in building maintenance expenses; an increase for new landscape contract which includes maintenance of the dog park and additional funds based on actual expenditures to maintain current landscaping; ITS and other expenses.

Chairman Cassidy asked about the maintenance of the dog park, noting it was his understanding that the City of Tampa agreed to maintain it. Mr. Slater explained that the maintenance the City agreed to does not meet THEA standards or the expectations of the community, so we included it in our budget, which is \$20-30K for weekly cleaning and quarterly enzyme treatments.

- **Information Technology & Security** will see a 40% increase. Key drivers include increases for telephone/communications to provide redundant internet connections for all critical communications.

Chairman Cassidy inquired about the primary provider. Ms. Callahan explained there are multiple providers to ensure that if one service goes out we will have continued coverage from another provider. We have a total of four providers. The Chairman asked how often the failovers are tested. Ms. Callahan noted testing is done annually. He asked if more frequent testing is under consideration to which Ms. Callahan replied in the affirmative. Mr. Slater added that our power failovers are done monthly.

Other drivers include disaster recovery management and cyber security management. The Chairman asked what the biggest risk is related to cyber security. Ms. Callahan noted it is ransomware. Mr. Slater added the more integrated the system, the greater the risk.



Mr. Seward continued with key drivers for IT – finance IT support; increased in-depth monitoring for all networks and disaster recovery center; network engineering; support for technical infrastructure; reductions in both software licensing and ITS maintenance; and reductions in IT equipment.

- **Planning and Innovation** will see a 24% increase. The Planning & Innovations OM&A budget will fluctuate each year based on organization's priorities and support of specific and key capital projects. There is a reduction of operating expenditures with the reclassification of expenses to capital, including GIS Program Support, grant pursuits, and Resiliency and Sustainability Studies; and additional expenses previously programmed as capital, including the developing and maintaining the Work Program, greenway and trails planning, micromobility counts, and the biennial economic impact analysis of the Selmon Expressway.
- **Communications** will increase by 8%. Key drivers to this increase are an increase in communication services to support the development of the annual report, maintenance of the THEA website and the addition of funding for the SunPass campaign; an increase for video development, and promotional items and support for the SunPass campaign; increase in memberships/sponsorships and the addition of ecological and STEM focused efforts; and a decrease in special events/miscellaneous.
- **General Counsel, Human Resources & Procurement/Contracts** expenditures remain flat.

The remaining two categories are:

- **Professional Services** with an 8% increase. Key drivers include an increase in Bridge, Property and Anti-Fraud insurance; increases in financial audit expenses, financial advisory services, and investment advisory services; and decreases in annual Traffic & Revenue analysis and contingency.
- **Administrative Expenditures** with a 9% increase.

Finally, Mr. Seward reviewed the key takeaways, which included:

- Toll revenue increased by 5.43%; total revenue increased 7.9%.
- Expenditures increased by 3.36% - the lowest year-over-year budget increase in 16 years.
- FY26 Capital Work Program is fully funded, including RTCS and OBOS projects, and FY26's South Selmon Capacity expenditures.
- Estimated Debt Service ratio of 2.51 at close of FY26.
- FY26 is the first year of THEA's annual repayment of FDOT debt; \$10.6M annually; total over 20 years of \$213,833,835.

The Chairman asked if THEA has looked at the potential implications of tariffs. Mr. Slater advised that we are monitoring closely.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

APPROVED:  ATTEST:   
Chairman: Vince Cassidy Vice Chairman: Bennett Barrow

DATED THIS 19TH DAY OF MAY 2025.