

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority  
Minutes of the January 12, 2026, 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 January 12, 2026, at THEA Headquarters, 1104 E. Twiggs Street in Tampa Florida. The following were present:

**BOARD:**

Vincent Cassidy, Chairman  
Bennett Barrow, Vice Chairman  
Cody Powell, Member  
L.K. Nandam, Member  
Commissioner Chris Boles, Member  
Mayor Jane Castor, Member

**STAFF:**

Greg Slater	Brian McElroy
Amy Lettelleir	Judith Villegas
Tim Garrett	Chaketa Mister
Jeff Seward	Anna Quinones
Lisa Pessina	Sabina Szenassy
Greg Deese	Rachel Lord
Raul Rosario	Frederick Pekala
Keisha Boyd	Felipe Velasco
Shari Callahan	Emma Antolinez
Charlene Varian	Brian Ramirez
Gary Holland	Krishna Rentala

**OTHERS:**

Ivan Rodriguez, Quest	Frank Leto, JP Morgan
Mary Brooks, Quest	Kevin Carey, American StructurePoint
Jon Godsmark, Ernst and Young	Jonathan Tursky, TransCore
Stephanie Claytor, Quest	Christina Matthews, WSP
Morgan Reed, EXP	Scarlett Sharpe, WSP
Tony Caruso, EXP	Darren Morse, SPP
David Hubbard, EXP	Len Becker, HNTB
Patrick Goodwin, RG&Co	Doug Draper, BofA
Sam Lazzara, RG&Co	Alex Bourne, RS&H
Andrew Schwarz, KCI	Rick Patterson, Raymond James
Lori Buck, Quest	Bill Howell, Lochner
Laura Crouch, Playbook/SSCP	Dylan Albergo, TLP
Sally Dee, Playbook	Shani Bryant, Vistra
Sarah Lesch, Playbook	Jack Phillips, Vistra
Maddi Baptiste, Playbook	

## **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 input.

## **Consent Agenda**

### **Approval of the Minutes of the December 1, 2025, Board Meeting**

### **Approval of Board Member Travel – TEAMFL in Orlando - \$1,200**

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

## **Discussion/Action Items**

### **Operations & Engineering – Bennett Barrow, Committee Chair – Greg Deese, P.E., Director**

Mr. Deese began by sharing the South Selmon Capacity Project task request tracker to show the Board the items that have already been approved, what is being requested today, and items that will come to the Board in the future.

### **South Selmon Capacity Project (SSCP) ASAP Study Phase (Round 2)**

Mr. Deese presented a request to authorize funding of the South Selmon Capacity Project (SSCP) Accelerated Scope Augmentation Phase (ASAP) to determine the viability and cost of potential scope additions and modifications from proposals and for collaborative enhancements.

He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with Archer Western for Round 2 ASAP items in an amount not to exceed \$375,126 from the capital budget.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **South Selmon Capacity Project (SSCP) Independent Cost Estimating (ICE) Services**

Mr. Deese moved on to the South Selmon Capacity Project Independent Cost Estimating Services request, which is to support the analysis of pricing proposed by the design-build team for the Accelerated Scope Augmentation Phase innovations. This task order will provide ICE services to verify the validity of the costs associated with each item.

He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with Burns & McDonnell to provide ICE services for the ASAP portion of the South Selmon Capacity project, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 from the capital budget.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **South Selmon Capacity Project (SSCP) Dispute Review Board**

Mr. Deese presented an item requesting approval for the compensation for the SSCP Dispute Review Board, and independent group, for ongoing services in monitoring the project and maintaining readiness to assist with the resolution of disputes or claims between the SSCP Contractor and THEA during construction.

Mr. Deese requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to compensate the South Selmon Capacity's Dispute Review Board, in the amount of \$144,000 from the capital budget.

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

Mayor Castor asked if it might be more prudent to wait until a dispute arises. Mr. Deese explained that the Dispute Review Board would meet regularly throughout the project so if a dispute arises, they are already familiar with the details.

Mr. Slater added that this is just for costs associated with keeping everyone up to speed. Mr. Nandam noted that, in his experience, Dispute Review Boards have been very effective with the larger projects.

Chairman Cassidy asked if there was a reciprocal amount pledged by the contractor. Mr. Deese explained that for the meetings, the project owner bears the cost. If there is a hearing, the cost is split 50/50.

*The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Permitting Support**

Mr. Deese discussed the need for support with processing third party permits and developing an internal workflow. He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with HNTB in the amount of \$124,994 to provide permit support through June 30, 2026, from the capital budget.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Post-tensioned Bridge Support**

Mr. Deese presented a task to develop long-term bridge health improvements and permanent structural monitoring strategies for THEA's segmental post-tensioned bridges.

He requested the Board to approve additional funds for the existing task order with HNTB in the amount of \$349,987 from the capital budget, for additional post-tensioned bridge subject matter expertise services through June 30, 2026.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Reversible Express Lane (REL) Gate System Replacement - Structural Evaluation**

Mr. Deese presented the final item for the Operations and Engineering department. This task includes the evaluation of all sign structures associated with the reversible express lanes (REL), in addition to procurement support during the REL Gate System Replacement procurement.

He requested the Board to authorize the Executive Director to execute a task order with HNTB in the amount of \$229,984 from the capital budget to complete structural evaluation, modify the scope and RFP documents, and provide technical advisory services through June 30, 2026.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Legal – Vince Cassidy, Chair – Amy Lettelleir, Chief Legal Officer**

#### **Selection of Communications, Marketing, and Public Engagement Consultant**

Ms. Lettelleir presented an item to select the communications, marketing, and public engagement consultants to support the Authorities initiatives. THEA had seven firms apply and five firms were shortlisted. The evaluation committee is recommending the two highest-ranked firms – Playbook and Quest.

The requested action is for the Board to approve the evaluation committee’s rankings and to authorize and direct staff to negotiate and execute contracts with the two highest-ranked firms, Playbook and Quest. Contracts are subject to review and approval by THEA’s Chief Legal Officer.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **Approval of the Evaluation Committee’s Rankings and Selection for the East Toll Plaza Remediation**

Ms. Lettelleir brought forth an item to select a contractor to provide all the permits, labor, equipment, materials, tools, transportation, supplies, insurance, incidentals, mobilization, and demobilization necessary for the East Toll Plaza Remediation Project.

The requested action is for the Board to accept the evaluation committee’s recommendation to select Ulloa Management Group for the East Toll Plaza Remediation Project and to direct staff to negotiate a contract with Ulloa Management Group in the amount of \$217,598 from the capital budget. Contract subject to review and approval by THEA’s Chief Legal Officer.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

## **Approval of Roadside Toll Collection System (RTCS) Shortlist**

Ms. Lettelleir reviewed the Evaluation Committee's recommended shortlist for the Roadside Toll Collection System Project.

She requested the Board to approve the Evaluation Committee's recommended shortlist for the Roadside Toll Collection System Project and authorize and direct staff to move forward with the procurement process with the shortlisted firms – Kapsch, TransCore, Neology, Conduent, and Indra.

*Chairman Cassidy requested a motion. Mr. Barrow moved approval, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion carried unanimously.*

## **Staff Reports**

### **Toll Technology & Customer Experience – Gary Holland, Toll Systems Manager**

Mr. Holland presented the November toll statistics. Total transactions for November reached 6,318,150, which is down from November of 2024. Average weekly transactions were down 3.1% overall compared to November of 2024.

Chairman Cassidy asked if tolls were still suspended in November 2024. Mr. Holland responded in the negative, noting we were in recovery mode at that time. We also had one extra weekday in November 2024 compared to 2025.

Mr. Slater mentioned that he looked at the data and in November/December of 2023, we had 6.2M transactions – we are at 6.3M in 2025. In 2024 we had 6.6M transaction, which can be attributed to the post-hurricane traffic we experienced. We are not down; rather we are back to normal and 2024 was a statistical anomaly.

The Chairman asked about the extra weekday. Mr. Garrett responded that an average weekday yields about 250,000-260,000 transactions.

Mr. Holland continued with the SunPass transactions vs. Toll-By-Plate transactions for November, which were 66% and 34%, respectively.

Chairman Cassidy asked if there is a plan to reduce the percentage of Toll-By-Plate transactions. Mr. Holland responded in the affirmative. Chairman Cassidy asked what the target is. Mr. Slater noted that THEA is going direct mailing to all our frequent toll-by-plate customers explaining the savings they could realize by using a transponder. This has resulted in almost 1,000 new accounts. We will continue to push in that direction, but we also have to meet customers where they are. He noted this is an industry issue and Miami is dealing with a similar trend.

Mr. Garrett mentioned there is another initiative underway. The communications team has reached out to Florida Turnpike Enterprises (FTE) which has a free transponder program and THEA is piggybacking on that. Also, FTE's commercial account support team is working with our communications team, sharing their methods for converting commercial accounts over to transponders and we will be reaching out to those customers as well.

The Chairman requested a plan be presented at a future meeting. Mr. Slater noted that if we are going to move from 34% to 25%, that is thousands and thousands of customers that will need to be converted. We will be happy to give a presentation on the plan for moving that needle.

Mr. Powell asked if we know what percentage of Toll-by-Plate customers are from Florida versus other states. Mr. Slater noted that we found most Toll-by-Plate customers are from Florida and pointed out that we have one million more unique customers today than we did in 2019.

Mayor Castor asked how rental cars are handled. Mr. Slater noted a couple of different programs. If you have a SunPass you can add your rental car to it, but rental car companies do still charge at a higher rate. Mr. Garrett noted that statistically, compared to the other agencies, our rental car transactions are lower.

Finally, Mr. Holland then presented the December statistics. Total transactions totaled 6,642,446 and average weekday transactions were down 1.2% overall compared to December of 2024. SunPass transactions vs. Toll-By-Plate transactions remain at 66% and 34%, respectively.

### **Communications & Community Relations – Keisha Boyd, Director**

Ms. Boyd presented an update on THEA Communications. She announced that Mr. Slater was on Tampa Bay Business Journal's *25 People to Watch* list, and that he was recently appointed to the Tampa Downtown Partnership. Ms. Lettelleir was presented with the WTS Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award.

Ms. Boyd highlighted the various speaking events at which Mr. Slater spoke, such as the Future of Florida F3 Forum, ICMA Annual Conference, and FAV Summit. Some of the community engagement events in which THEA participated include the Tampa Bay EDC Annual Meeting; CUTR Annual Meeting and Awards; and the Tampa Chamber Annual Meeting. She also highlighted the new public art installation in partnership with the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts – Frames on Franklin.

Finally, Ms. Boyd provided the publicity metrics for October 7 – December 31, which included 53 media hits – 18.9% TV and 88.1% online news; 49,211,152 audience – .8% TV and 99.2% online news; and \$1,583.857 publicity value – 11.4% TV and 88.6% online news.

## **Executive Reports**

**Executive Director – Greg Slater, Executive Director**

### **Real Estate Update**

Mr. Slater introduced Jon Godsmark with Ernst and Young to present an update on THEA's real estate efforts and walk through the process we will use to evaluate potential uses and partnerships.

Before Mr. Godsmark began, Chairman Cassidy provided some context for the new Board members noting that the Board is interested in ensuring the agency maximizes the property while at the same time contributing to the community – looking well into the future. He pointed to Mr. Barrow’s idea to pursue a connection to Ybor. Mr. Barrow concurred and noted that the north/south property along Meridian could help achieve that.

Mr. Godsmark provided a project evaluation approach and secure the Boards input. The program is focused on two sites. The primary is the Meridian parcel. The second is the existing THEA office site. He discussed the current state of the Meridian parcel.

Mr. Godsmark reviewed THEA’s goals and gave an overview of the Meridian parcel – a 1.41-acre lot of raw land located on the west side of S. Meridian Avenue at the junction of E. Whiting Street and N. Brush Street. He showed a graphic of a plan for reconfiguring this parcel and its surrounding area.

Next, Mr. Godsmark discussed potential transaction structures; ground lease, fee simple sale, and alternative transaction structures, as well as development use cases to provide flexibility to developers as to what they view as the greatest need in this area; commercial/general office space, general retail, hotel, and multifamily residential.

Moving on the evaluation process, he provided a technical evaluation proposal whereby proposals are evaluated from a purely qualitative perspective to help mitigate the permutation risks and allow THEA to prioritize evaluation criteria that are most important. Finally, Mr. Godsmark shared an example of what scoring might look like using average adjectival ratings across each of the technical requirements. He noted that the average adjectival ratings and the net present value calculations are assessed holistically between teams to determine the best value proposer based on THEA’s financial and technical priorities.

Chairman Cassidy noted THEA needs to give some clarity to potential proposers on THEA’s ability to entertain a transaction that might allow THEA to remain involved with the property for a longer period of time that doesn’t violate what we are allowed to do by law but does give a potential partner a runway to do something exciting. Mr. Godsmark agreed. Ms. Lettelleir pointed out that there will be an extended question and answer period for this procurement and involve counsel to be able to provide definitive answers. Mr. Slater added that we want to create an environment where potential proposers have the information they need to determine if what they are considering to propose is something THEA can do before they invest in moving forward with a proposal. We will have an industry forum and an extended period for questions and answers. It gives us the ability to influence what goes on the property and to find a good partner long-term. We want to ensure the property is used in the best interest of the City and the community and this will give us the flexibility to do that.

Chairman Cassidy asked the new Board members to consider and share your opinions on best use.

Mr. Nandam provided his input that THEA is part of the community, and our efforts should be focused on getting involved and being present for the long term.

Mr. Powell asked if the Board had previously held a workshop. Chairman Cassidy noted that the Board did hold a workshop and has discussed holding another. He pointed to the Port Authority in New York and how it owns and operates more than just the port. They own buildings, they generate alternative sources of revenue. We have an opportunity to do something similar and make a huge positive impact on our community.

Ms. Lettelleir added that today's meeting is an opportunity for the Board to share their thoughts and give staff direction before the RFP is issued and she encouraged that discussion. She added that there is an opportunity to have a workshop if that is board's desire.

Mr. Boles noted that, in terms of community projects, he sees an opportunity to pursue some P3s, which may present some obstacles on the front end, but allows us to be thinking long term.

### **Director's Report**

Mr. Slater made the following announcements:

- The Governor appointed a new Transportation Commissioner – Thomas Nash. That makes three of the eight commissioners for the state from the Tampa Bay region.
- We finalized an agreement with the Gasparilla Music Festival, who will be using the Meridian property for the festival.
- We had another successful Brandon ½ marathon on the system – we closed portions of Brandon Parkway and the REL for a few hours.
- He will be traveling to Tallahassee to meet with some of our legislators just to check in.

Next, Mr. Slater highlighted some of the things the Board will be seeing in 2026.

- Budget Development and Capital Improvement Program
  - Planning & Innovation has developed a detailed performance-based planning program that is guiding the development of a ten-year plus investment program focused on long-term needs and implementation.
  - Finance is developing a collaborative, fiscally constrained six-year CIP where every investment is connected back to a data-driven need.
  - The annual report has shifted to align with our fiscal year and our budget. As we present the FY27 budget this year, you will see a report that illustrates everything that we accomplished with the FY26 budget.
  - Beginning in July, each board member will have in their board packet a one-pager of key performance metrics, allowing you to track month-to-month/year-over-year on what we are doing and how we are progressing.

Finally, Mr. Slater shared some meaningful staff milestones. Chaketa Mister celebrated her 20-year anniversary, Sally Fisher and Joe Ferrera celebrated 15-year anniversaries.

Mr. Slater thanked all of Team THEA and the Board – none of what is do is possible without all of you.

Chief Legal Officer – *Amy Lettelleir, Esq.* – No report

Chairman – *Vincent Cassidy*

**1. Upcoming Meetings**

- Board Workshop – February 9, 2026, *Cancelled*
- Board Meeting – February 23, 2026

**Old Business**

No old business.

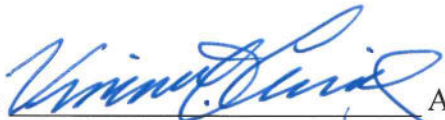
**New Business**

No new business.

**Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
Chairman: Vincent J. Cassidy

ATTEST:

  
Vice Chairman: Bennett Barrow

**DATED THIS 23RD DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026.**