

**MINUTES OF THE GLADES-HENDRY JOINT LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
JOINT TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED LOCAL COORDINATING
BOARD**

Staff services provided by Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council -- TD Planning Program
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**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 7, 2011; 10:30 a.m.
Hendry County Administrative Offices
165 South Lee Street
LaBelle, Florida**

A Representative of:	Voting Member	Agency	Alternate Member	Agency
The MPO shall appoint one elected official to serve as the official Chairperson for all Coordinating Board meetings.	Commissioner Karson Turner (PRESENT)	Hendry County Board of County Commissioners	Commissioner Donna Storter (PRESENT)	Glades County Board of County Commissioners
A. A local representative of the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT)	Julia B. Davis (PRESENT)	Florida Department of Transportation	Richard Shine (ABSENT)	Florida Department of Transportation
B. A local representative of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)	Vacant		Vacant	
C. A local representative of the Public Education Community which could include, but not be limited to, a representative of the District School Board, School Board Transportation Office, or Headstart Program in areas where the School District is responsible	Scott Bass (Glades County) (ABSENT)	Glades County School System	Gary Breakfield (Hendry County) (PRESENT)	Hendry County School System
D. In areas where they exist, a local representative of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services or the Division of Blind Services, representing the Department of Education	Victoria Aguilar (PRESENT)		Barbara Ridings (ABSENT)	
E. A person recommended by the local Veterans Service Office, representing Veterans of the county	Jim Herrington (ABSENT - EXCUSED)		Millard Wagon (ABSENT)	

F. A person recognized by the Florida Association for Community Action representing the economically disadvantaged	(Vacant)	Glades County Social Services	(Vacant)	
G. A person representing the Elderly in the county	Michael LaDuca (ABSENT)	Hope Connections	Mary Curtis (ABSENT)	Hope Connections
H. A person with a disability representing the disabled in the county	Muriel Green (ABSENT)		Tony Howard (ABSENT)	
I-1. [One of Two] Citizen Advocates in the County	Gordon Bryant (PRESENT)		(VACANT)	
I-2. [One of two] Citizen Advocates this one must be a person who uses the transportation service(s) of the system as their primary means of transportation.	(VACANT)		(VACANT)	
J. A local representative for children at risk	Judith Paskvan (ABSENT-Excused)	Hendry County Health Department	Sherry Shupp (PRESENT)	RCMA
K. In areas where they exist, the Chairperson or designee of the local Mass Transit or Public Transit System=s Board, except in cases where they are also the Community Transportation Coordinator.	N/A		N/A	
L. A local representative of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs	Angela Wood (PRESENT)	Florida Dept. of Elder Affairs	Sue Clarke (ABSENT)	Florida Dept. of Elder Affairs
M. An experienced representative of the local private for profit transportation industry. In areas where such representative is not available, a local private non-profit representative will be appointed, except where said representative is also the Community Transportation Coordinator	(VACANT)		(VACANT)	
N. A local representative of the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration	Joe Martinez (ABSENT)	Agency for Health Care Administration	Karen Brooks (ABSENT)	Agency for Health Care Administration
O. A representative of the Regional Workforce Development Board established in Chapter 445, Florida Statutes.	(VACANT)		(VACANT)	

<p>P. A representative of the local medical community, which may include, but not be limited to, kidney dialysis centers, long term care facilities, hospitals, local health department or other home and community based services, etc.</p>	<p>Mary Bartoshuk (PRESENT)</p>		<p>(VACANT)</p>	
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Other People Attending:

Gary Bryant	Good Wheels, Inc.
Deborah Kooi	SWFRPC
Brian Raimondo	SWFRPC
Debi Stephens	Good Wheels, Inc.

Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order and Introductions

Vice-Chairman Storter called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. Introductions were made.

Agenda Item #2 – Public Comments on Items on the Agenda

None.

Agenda Item #3 – Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

Agenda Item #4 – Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 4, 2011

MOTION BY MR. BREAKFIELD AND SECONDED BY MR. GORDON BRYANT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2011. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #5 – Review of By-Laws

Mr. Raimondo presented this item. He reminded the board that the CTD will be in Naples on October 27th and 28th.

Discussion ensued on the ombudsman reports. Mr. Gary Bryant said that future reports will get much thicker.

Mr. Raimondo stated that the attendance charts will be brought to the LCB at least once or twice a year.

MOTION BY MS. DAVIS AND SECONDED BY MR. GORDON BRYANT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2011. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #6 – Florida Coordinated Transportation Program Issues & Distribution Items

Mr. Raimondo presented this item. Discussion ensued on the member attendance spreadsheet. After discussion, Planning Agency staff was directed to contact those members who have missed three consecutive meetings and to remind them of the bylaws.

Discussion ensued on obtaining a replacement for Jim Herrington.

Mr. Gordon Bryant asked about the representative for the Veterans in Hendry or Glades.

Mr. Raimondo said that staff will contact the various agencies and/or individuals and provide a report at the next meeting in December.

Ms. Kooi stated that there will be a new Workforce Development Board member, Tim Nevarez. He will be approved this month at the SWFRPC meeting on September 15th, along with Gary Breakfield from the Hendry County School Board.

Mr. Raimondo offered to hold a training session for those that would like to have one.

Agenda Item #7 – Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) News and Reports

Mr. Gary Bryant presented a report. There are a lot of changes ongoing in the TD program. Our TD program has a huge credibility issue, not only in Tallahassee, but in large parts of the state, there have been significant changes. Mr. David Darm, who works in the Budget Office of the Governor's Office, has been appointed to be Chairman of the TD Commission so that the Governor's Office can have more than direct control of our program. Two new Commissioners have been appointed by the Governor's Office to the CTD – one of those is a businessman from Venice and the other is the Executive Director of the Airport Authority in Sebring. Both were strong supporters of the Governor, and although they are accomplished businessmen in government service, we don't perceive that as an independent oversight of our program as well. The Executive Director has been changed.

There is a current Interim Executive Director, Karen Somerset. The Florida Association of Community Transportation Systems has asked the Commission to let us be a part of the process to select the new Executive director at this critical time. We have not received a response.

Medicaid funding is going down again significantly on September 1st. There has been a slight increase in TD non-sponsored increase in funding, but you will not notice any change in service because the increase is so slight. You will notice adverse effects and reductions in our Medicaid service. You can expect funding for Medicaid will be going down significantly. There will be increased passenger complaints. Good Wheels is in a survival mode now.

The following will be a result of the reductions:

1. Reduction in vehicles.
2. Reduction in purchase of repair parts and maintenance on vehicles not in use.
3. Reduction in telephone answering staff in the office.

Our passengers can expect not to have a telephone answered when they call, they can expect scheduling inconveniences, they can expect a lack of timely service, they can expect long wait times to go home, they can expect not to have destination choices and possible daily trip limits and scheduling inconveniences in 11/12 and 12/13. Starting in FY 2013, the procurement of HMOs to manage Medicaid transportation will occur. We lost our fight in the Legislature and the Governor's office to keep Medicaid transportation out of the Reform Bill. Transportation will be staying in reform. Representative Grimsley has informed us that the fight is lost; Representative Aubuchon has said the same thing. Senator Garrett Richter has indicated the fight is probably lost and was able to secure an appointment for us with the Governor's Office and representatives from the

Florida Association of Community Transportation Systems. The meeting with the Governor's staff did not go well. They are not interested in our program and would rather that we go away. They are not interested in any changes or any funding increases that would allow us to provide any better service. I think you can expect continued reductions in service throughout 2011 and into 2013 and 2013 procurement of HMOs to manage Medicaid transportation will commence. In 2014, HMOs will probably take over the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation.

The future of Good Wheels is very uncertain, not only in the short term, but also in the long term, particularly after Medicaid reform starts to take hold in 2013/2014. In the short term, we will continue to operate as we are as best we can with what funding we have. I mentioned to you that the Ombudsman report will probably get thicker. There is a community expectation of service, there has always been a funding gap as the economy begins to hit our program really hard and the citizens really hard. That expectation is going up and the funding level is going down. I don't see any way to avoid significant passenger complaints and unsatisfactory service to our community.

Beginning when the HMOs take over the Medicaid transportation, we will most likely attempt to contract with them to be their service providers. We don't know how that will go – that is a big question mark. If forced to, we may be required at some point in time over the next few months or years to turn the CTC service back over to the counties, Lee County to the west and Hendry-Glades county here and if the counties are not willing to accept that responsibility, then we may be forced to turn the CTC program back to the TD Commission for governance. When Medicaid reform takes hold, the system will definitely operate as a split system and the coordinated system as we know it now will be no longer. There are major changes ahead – the good news is we have some time to adjust and manage, but the future is not bright. Democracy is a wonderful thing – there is a Democratic state senator from another part of the state who is blasting the Governor for his reduction in human service programs in services to the disabled and the disadvantaged to the elderly and the young and there is planned Democratic opposition to the Governor's election during the next election. As long as this Governor is in office with the staff he has, our program is going to face hard times.

Discussion ensued on the process the transportation disadvantaged clients use to register complaints.

Mr. Gary Bryant stated that these clients leave a message at Good Wheels and staff then calls the individual.

Commissioner Storter-Long asked if their message at Good Wheels could be changed to contact the Ombudsman office to let them know that they cannot get service.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that Good Wheels would rather that they leave a message and then staff would call them back at the end of the day or the next day. In each vehicle, the Ombudsman number is posted.

Discussion ensued on the possibilities of retiring vehicles or losing staff.

Mr. Gary Bryant stated that the phone number is posted in the vehicles so that individuals could contact the Ombudsman office at any time. My personal sense is that is not going to make any difference. I think the Governor's office is the only place to make an immediate impact. We have been unsuccessful there. The House of Representatives under Representative Grimsley's leadership had transportation funding and with the Medicaid reform bill going forward without transportation in until Thursday before the session closed on Friday. The Governor's office walked the halls of the House and said "let us tell you how you are going to vote". The center of gravity at the moment is in the Governor's Office. The Senate and the House will follow his lead. The Senate and the House would save our program if the Governor's Office allowed it. It does not look like he is going to allow it. At this point in time, the Governor and his staff is running the state. He is

dictating the way legislation is written, he is dictating the way Senators and legislators vote. They at this point are not willing to stage an insurgency to stop it.

Ms. Davis asked if Glades County would receive any benefit from the redistribution package since Medicaid funding was increased.

Mr. Gary Bryant stated that the redistribution package has not taken effect yet and we don't know what the redistribution is going to be. They are currently considering four options to redistribute Medicaid funding sometime in 2012 and it appears to be moving extremely slow, so I don't expect anything early in 2012. It will probably be July 1st or later. They are considering four options and with two of those options of redistributing funding we get significant Medicaid increases. In one option, we get hardly any increase at all and in one option, we suffer a loss. We don't know how that is going to occur and it will probably not have any effect on the near short term.

Ms. Davis stated that her other question was about vehicle maintenance and if Good Wheels would still be in compliance with Chapter 1490.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that the vehicles on the road will be, but that there would not be as many vehicles on the road as Good Wheels would like.

Ms. Aguilar stated that in February she had spoken with one of the staff members at Good Wheels trying to find out getting Vocational Rehab as Good Wheels had come on as a vendor for us. We were trying to see if we work a way for our clients that are already with us to receive transportation from you. As a vendor, our organization pays you the fee and we were told that we would have to pay per mile. When we crunch the numbers, it was just way too much when the local taxicab would charge \$45 per round trip from Hendry to Lee and back. She asked if there was a way to revisit this matter and work out some sort of fee scale for our individuals with disabilities to use you in that way as it would be more money flowing into your company.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that this could certainly be re-discussed, but that he knew the rates would not be any cheaper. There won't be any reductions in cost. Local taxi industries are not required to meet the same service standards in driver training, safety or driver selection. There is a cost that is incurred by our system that is required by the State of Florida to perform at a different level than the taxi service. We will never be able to meet their rates. They will never provide the same type of service that we do.

Commissioner Storter-Long asked if the HMOs would be required to keep the same safety standards.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that our next effort in the upcoming legislation is going to be to try to have the legislation in Tallahassee tweaked to require that the HMOs provide the same standard of service. The HMOs will certainly oppose that and we are not optimistic about being able to defeat the HMO lobbying in the Governor's Office of the legislature.

Ms. Bartoshuk asked if Good Wheels transported veterans as in Hendry and Glades, there are vans that do transport veterans. She asked if the veterans were referred to our vans, would that lighten your load to carry more people.

Mr. Gary Bryant stated that in Hendry and Glades counties, Good Wheels did not transport veterans. We transport people sponsored by some of the state human service agencies and also transport some people that aren't sponsored by the human service agencies that qualify under our non-sponsored program. Some of them happen to be veterans. The Veterans Administration does not have a funding stream to provide for

transportation in our coordinated system. The people that we transport are either sponsored by one of the human service agencies or they are non-sponsored.

Commissioner Turner arrived at 11:14 a.m.

Ms. Bartoshuk said that her husband drives a van which goes to Bay Pines, Palm Beach and if the VA refers them to a doctor, they can take them there, but you have to go through the VA.

Discussion ensued on the history of the veterans' agency representative on the local coordinating board.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that the reports show operational trips completed and passenger complaint slides are included in the agenda packet. Our AOR for FY 10/11 has been completed and submitted. We are waiting on comments, complaints and feedback from the TD Commission. Once this is finalized at the next LCB meeting, Good Wheels would like the LCB to review the AOR and have the Chairman sign it. The AOR will be supplied to Planning Agency staff to send out in the next meeting packet.

Mr. Gary Bryant said that our annual CTC audit and review which is conducted by Tallahassee is scheduled for mid October. This year, they are using an outside audit agency, Thomas Howell Ferguson, to do their reviews and inspections. Anyone is welcome to participate in the review.

Agenda Item #8 – Member Announcements and Comments

Ms. Davis stated that FDOT is holding its annual Grant Program Management Training Workshop in Bartow September 21st 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. or in Fort Myers on September 22nd 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. to help individuals and agencies to learn how to apply for our grant programs.

Commissioner Turner said that the Transportation Disadvantaged program is handled out of the SWFRPC offices of the MPO. Planning Agency staff reported that the SWFRPC has one grant for the Glades-Hendry TD program and the Lee County MPO has the grant for the Lee TD program.

Ms. Kooi reported that the Glades-Hendry TD program would stay with the SWFRPC.

Mr. Raimondo stated that if the MPO moves out, he would be going with the MPO. It should still be planning staff that would be handling the TD program.

Commissioner Turner said that he was glad to hear that the Glades-Hendry TD program was under the jurisdiction of the SWFRPC.

Ms. Davis said that Chapter 427 defined that if there was an MPO for a county, then the MPO was the staff. If there is no MPO for a county, then the program goes to the Regional Planning Council or to some other agency. In Monroe County, the Health Council in Monroe County serves as the TD Planning Council.

Agenda Item #9 – Date, Time and Topics for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on December 7, 2011 at 10:30 a.m. at the Glades County Library, 2 Riverside Drive, Moore Haven, Florida.

Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN BY COMMISSIONER STORTER AND SECONDED BY MR. GORDON BRYANT AT 11:22 A.M. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.