

Transportation Task Force

Chair, Ken Hagan
Hillsborough County Commissioner, Chair

Recap of Meeting on April 27, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.
County Center

The following Transportation Task Force members were present:

Members

Ken Hagan, Chair	Edward F. Giunta, II	Steve Polzin
Mark Sharpe, Vice-Chair	Scott Jones	Jerome Ryans**
Bob Abberger*	Rick Lott*	Thomas Scott*
Frank M. Chillura*	Dave Mechanik*	Jan Smith
Randy Coen	Gwen Miller*	Richard Wainio
Jill Collins	Louis Miller*	Phil Waller*
John G. Evon, III	Dan Molloy	*Not in attendance
John Fernandes*	Ron Pierce*	**Late arrival

Welcome

Commissioner Ken Hagan called the meeting to order at 1:43 p.m. He advised that they were one short of a quorum so they would hold off reviewing the recap. He apologized in advance, needs to leave at 3:00 p.m. He stated that they are making good progress, that the next several months will be instrumental in making progress towards referendum. He referred to the articles in the paper over the weekend concerning TBARTA going forward in presenting Master Plan to the public. There will be upcoming town hall meetings on the TBARTA Plan and he will be participating in one that is coming up. In the Fall, we will need to move forward with BOCC discussion and approval of the referendum.

Recent Activity, Transit Scenarios, and Other Mobility Needs Update

Lucia Garsys, Planning and Infrastructure Services Administrator, made a presentation to the Task Force.

Question and Answer session followed

- Scott Jones thought the presentation was well organized and well thought through. Would sales tax growth of 4 percent begin in 2011? - Yes, 2011.
- Scott Jones indicated that this may be aggressive coming out of a recession. Red and green lines on the chart are different slopes, indicator that operational costs are escalating at a higher rate than revenue source, is that intended? – Some of that is a result of when projects roll in, when projects come on line, and when bonding occurs. Will bring details forward at future date.

- Steve Polzin asked about the 75/25 split. It has been discussed, may be right number but wants to know about the degrees of freedom. Item 3, surtax options may not bind you to certain applicable uses, are you looking into that? – Yes. We are looking into that, exploring options, County Attorney looking into and will provide future updates.
- Steve Polzin indicated that assumptions on inflation and population growth need to be consistent with revenue as well as cost - Beth Alden, MPO – during research on LRTP update we looked at trends in sales tax revenue growth over time, matched to population growth combined with economic growth rate.
- Steve Polzin asked if that is consistent with inflation cost used in capital and labor side? – Very close, used inflation factor being used by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked if the growth rate for the CIT was 6% - Kevin Brickey, Management and Budget, advised that the CIT and other surtaxes were 6 1/3 to 6 1/2 percent up until the last recession. Lower than that now, however, not expected to change in the long range, growth rate will jump as economic recovery happens.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan then indicated that the 4% may be too conservative, may leave significant amount on the table. Also asked if the length of time had been determined – It was indicated that the 30 years was a working number based on the term of the Community Investment Tax.
- John Evon asked if the same percentage of subsidy was used in all scenarios – It was kept the same.
- Scott Jones asked about the farebox recovery, was it factored in?
- Richard Wainio indicated he did not understand the operating side – what assumptions were made in reference to ridership, fareboxes, operating costs, what is needed? – Beth Alden responded to Mr. Wainio’s question and to Mr. Jones’ question (above). She stated that this was something that was looked at, we needed to be sure that the operating revenues were available, indicated that HART is currently in the 20% farebox recovery range, most light rail systems recover about 30%. We are looking at between 20 and 30% farebox recovery with the remainder coming from the State operating assistance and other system revenues, similar to HART’s current budget. Once we move to light rail, state assistance may not continue at same rate.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan pointed out that a recent report from TBARTA had ridership exceeding projections.
- Richard Wainio advised that we should not build unless ridership increased. Need to see range of assumptions, low, medium and high, there are a lot of questions on ridership and farebox - Beth Alden stated that they looked at variations with terms of bonds. Opportunity to look at other numbers. Lucia also indicated that bonding scenarios will change perspective as we refine our plans.
- Steve Polzin asked if we assumed bonding at the front end – front loaded. Also, multi-lines staged over time – next level of analysis should be brought back. If you push off spending, favor more modest growth rate, Federal share assumption is more aggressive than Dallas and others, tend to be more generous early on, first and second lines are normally best lines, does not sustain over more lines, tends to move on to other areas, however, all bets are off, difficult to say what could receive. Regarding ridership, Salt Lake City, 9% farebox recovery, depends on how aggressive you are, marginal market not as productive as other areas in ridership and farebox recovery, more infrastructure to maintain. ***Steve Polzin to provide.***
- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked if staff would be coming forward with a detailed list of non transit projects so the Task Force could get a better understanding of the parked projects

from the last BOCC meeting. Staff gave a list of \$490 million in potential CIT projects that might be deferred, for lack of a better term. Probably end up at about \$350 million. Main goal is to determine which projects are most urgent and need immediate funding to continue, identify the next phase and how much it costs for each project. Less urgent projects will be delayed, projects that are delayed could be included in our recommendation to the Board to be included in the referendum or readopt for next CIP discussion – Staff is in the process of doing that kind of analysis, transportation projects are the largest, transportation is key component of that.

- Commissioner Sharpe asked about the scenarios and where the line goes in the business community and the possible impact on future businesses. Has staff talked to Moffitt, USF, TGH? – Not yet, Task Force is the first group to view the scenarios, staff believed it is important to discuss with Task Force first.
- Commissioner Sharpe indicated with regard to ridership, it has been a past struggle, when gas goes up bus is more attractive – Before you today are the options, the economic centers need to be included. Talk with business community, those impacted, benefits from them. Bus integral to success of system.
- Steve Polzin stated that the federal evaluation of ridership focuses on the design year, this cannot be measured until then, this is the number you want to be high. Focus on future after design year determined. Want long term numbers to be high, beginning numbers to be low.
- Commissioner Sharpe indicated that we will not see the ridership we want to see until service is enhanced. Current data is based on processes in place for many years.
- Jan Smith asked if there are any new numbers based on current economic conditions, Planning Commission recommends high, medium, low to jurisdictions, interested in knowing current numbers and how they are put into the Urban Service Area, determines where ridership will be, do we have or can we get these numbers – Beth Alden advised that since the Long Range Transportation Plan is being updated they have updated these the population and job forecasts are updated using mid range forecasts, projected out using six different growth rate methods, chosen by several different factors including land use, can bring details back to the Task Force. Important, this would play part in ridership and farebox projections, jobs affect what happens here locally – will bring back this information to you.
- Steve Polzin indicated that the numbers go to County level, anything below, distribution within County, is done locally, sensitive to numbers, significant updates in long range forecasts.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe stated that bus ridership was up 9 percent and this with a modest increase in the bus fleet and no increase in population.

Review and Approval of Recap

Commissioner Hagan requested that Task Force members review meeting recap from March 30, 2009. Scott Jones requested that a change be made to the recap concerning his question/statement to Mayor Iorio, should have read Brandon/South Hillsborough area instead of University Area, unincorporated area is key, her responses were 1, 2, and 3 – Changes will be made. Motion to approve with changes by Commissioner Sharpe, seconded by John Evon, and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

Lucia Garsys, Planning and Infrastructure Services Administrator, made a presentation to the Task Force.

Question and Answer session followed

- Commissioner Ken Hagan advised that it would be more difficult if we talk about other types of taxes, concentrate on 1 percent surtax. Element of surtax is non-transit needs, no question of that, help us improve congestion on roads, something in it for every community, not everyone will use rail. Roads, trails, sidewalks need to be a component of that.
- Jan Smith advised that the current law states that no more than 25% can be spent for non-transit, could be less. To sell a transit tax, we need to focus on transit.
- Jill Collins stated that it needs to stress that it is a multi-modal plan.
- Jan Smith indicated that the wording on ballot needs to be reasonably concise and clear.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked if that was what was needed – Yes, what we were looking for that type of direction.

Jan Smith made motion to assume the Charter County Transit Surtax at 1 percent for analysis. Commissioner Mark Sharpe seconded the motion.

- Jan Smith also indicated that ½ cent would not get us where we needed to go, however, one cent is going to take a big educational process.
- Steve Polzin advised that the legislation on the split offers four options which vary the percent. Need to have legal folks look into and bring back – Let us bring this back to you next meeting. How would public perceive a penny, need to get feedback from the public before decision is made. Others have done half cent, pretty much the norm. With the ad valorem falling, if this fails, it could get nasty real fast. Would like to see the BOCC agree to the gas tax local option for next two years for HART, then revert it to roads subsequent to referendum if successful. Everyone is struggling for resources for transportation.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan indicated that the full \$350 million should not be deferred. Already have two cents of gas tax being extended, timing is everything, would be difficult to increase right now.
- Jan Smith requested sales tax information, which has been provided, she stated that the longer a decision is put off the more expensive it will get. The sooner we move, the better off we will be, if we are going to go out for the referendum, we need to go for it. Educational process needs to start soon, really believe this is the right thing to do, if we go for half now, then realize we can't do everything promised, will not be good for public confidence. Need to go for 1 cent now, leave money with HART.
- Jill Collins indicated that she is not prepared to make that decision now, wants public feedback.
- John Evon advised that the public would be looking at the investment, how will it benefit them. If it is sold right, can do this. Do not touch HART.
- Jerome Ryans asked if there was a second.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe indicated he had seconded the motion. He is not eager for a tax increase. However, need to go for what we need, not half measures. We have an opportunity to create business activity we have not had. Population will continue to grow,

will double by 2040. If we do this early, less expensive and more federal match. Cost is dependent on work being done by HART and TBARTA, needs to be based on plan that makes sense, needs to be analysis that shows how all aspects are tied together, need to involve partners. Need to have a plan that shows ramped up mobility, have to show vision, not just cost.

- Commissioner Ken Hagan stated that we need to involve cities, include them in recommendations. Also, there needs to be something for everyone. Bruce B Downs will be included in recommendations, meets Mayor Iorio's definition of a tightly woven plan and falls under transit, since transit corridor would eventually go up Bruce B. Downs. Lots of these projects could fall under transit instead of non-transit needs.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe stated that it is important that rather than tell cities, look at plan and work together. Buses will be going on Bruce B Downs in future, will be widened, which will help transit. Needs to be discussed with partners. Need to go forward with one cent and make this work
- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked what the intent on asking for this - Need revenue source to work with, just want to confirm we are working with transit surtax. Is it good enough to just say transit surtax, percentage non-transit included, intent that HART millage stays – Yes, that is fine, want to make sure HART millage is part of this.

Jan Smith stated she stands by motion. Will make separate motion on HART millage.

Commissioner Mark Sharpe stated use up to 1 percent and will stand by second. Motion carried unanimously.

Jam Smith then made motion to continue to include HART millage as the established funding source. Jerome Ryans seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- Commissioner Ken Hagan excused himself from the meeting. Commissioner Sharpe took over the Chair.
- Lucia Garsys advised that we will work with up to 1 cent of transit surtax, leave HART millage and that a portion of tax to be used for non-transit. Intend to bring next level of detail, assumptions you have identified, why 30 years, and non-transit projects, which are important. Will start scheduling coordination meetings, will overlay with economic development centers, will include Westshore Alliance at recommendation of Commissioner Sharpe. Recognized work by staff: John Patrick, Ned Baier, Sandra Pinol, Donna Budke, Cassandra Ecker, David Armijo, Mary Shavalier, Ed Crawford, Beth Alden, Bob Campbell, Kevin Brickey, Tim Simon, Bob Gordon, Sam Hamilton, and Bob Clifford. This is an incredible effort
- Jan Smith stated that HART sets reduced fare for Americans with disabilities, will same policy apply if we get federal assistance – Mr. Armijo indicated yes by nodding from audience.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe thanked the Chair for doing a phenomenal job. Lucia and staff have also done a great job. Please continue to work together, success or failure depends on it. Opened floor up for public comment.

Public Comment

Vivian Bacca spoke about the TBARTA presentation, noticed how bond cost remains constant but property values go up around rail hubs. If bond cost remains constant and property value escalates, more revenue is generated by rail line – was this incorporated into matrix? As a citizen, does not like Charter County Transit Surtax, large amount of regressive tax. Show how project pay for itself. Property tax goes up and pays for rail line. Gas tax should be maximized, even if you don't do transit, plus it is one more reason to take mass transit. Diversity of revenue sources, affects bonding, may get bonding cost down – Increased ad valorem has not been added in scenarios.

Adjournment

Commissioner Mark Sharpe thanked everyone for attending the meeting and closed the meeting at 3:15 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 18, 1:30 p.m. at the County Center.

Interested Parties

Don Schings, TBARTA CAC
Joe Smith, Tampa Bay Partnership (Volunteer)
Jean Dorzback, City of Tampa
Ron Rotella, Westshore Alliance
Elaine McCloud, City of Tampa
Vivian Bacca, U-Can
Mary Shavalier, HART
Chris Weber, Westshore Alliance
Linda Stackewicz, FDOT
Cassandra Ecker, TBARTA/Jacobs
David Armijo, HART
Ed Crawford, HART
Vin Marchetti, Foley
Jim Drapp, HNTB

Staff and Support

Peter Aluotto, Planning &
Ned Baier, Planning & Growth Mgt.
Kevin Brickey, Management & Budget
Donna Budke, Planning & Growth Mgt.
Bob Campbell, Planning & Growth Mgt.
Lucia Garsys, Planning & Infrastructure Services
Bob Gordon, Public Works
Sam Hamilton, County Attorney
Sandra Pinol, Planning & Infrastructure Services
John Patrick, Planning & Growth Mgt.