

**DRAFT**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
**LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD**  
**FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED**  
**Monday, October 21, 2024, 2:00 p.m.**  
**100 West Cypress Creek Road, Suite 850**  
**Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309**

**Members and Alternates Present**

Modeline Acreus, Florida Department of Transportation  
Barbara Bateman, Florida Department of Health  
Hugh Chen, Private Transportation  
Sue Gallagher, Children's Services Council  
Jerome Hill, Local Medical Agency  
Lori Mandke, Alternate, Florida Department of Elder Affairs  
Natasha Parks, Alternate, Florida Department of Children and Families  
Shatara Piedrasanta, Alternate, Community Action Agency  
Nancy Scott, Alternate, Citizen Advocate / System User  
Milory Senat, Disabled Community  
Vera Sharitt, Persons Over 60  
Lisa VanVoorhis, Citizen Advocate

**Members and Alternates Absent**

Chair Caryl Shuham, Commissioner of Hollywood  
Vice Chair Charlotte Mather-Taylor, Florida Department of Elder Affairs  
Torey Alston, Broward County School Board  
Marielisa Amador, Alternate, Local Medical Agency  
Sam Cox, Alternate, Persons Over 60  
Maria Chiari, Florida Department of Children and Families  
Vish Deonarine, Alternate, Career Source Broward  
Marie Dorismond, Alternate, Florida Department of Transportation  
Hazel Dumervil, Alternate, Private Transportation  
Manny Fuentes, Alternate, Broward County Elderly and Veterans' Services Division  
Alexis Harrison, Alternate, FDOE / Vocational Rehabilitation  
Ruth Masters, Alternate, Broward County School Board  
Jake McIntyre, Citizen Advocate / System User  
Prudence Mollica, FDOE / Vocational Rehabilitation  
Denise Payne, Alternate, Citizen Advocate  
Michelle Ramirez, Career Source Broward  
Reginald Shagoury, Alternate, Florida Department of Health  
Pauline Spence, Alternate, Disabled Community  
Owen Walker, Broward County Elderly and Veterans' Services Division  
Shea Williams, Alternate, Children's Services Council

**MPO Staff**

Kerrie MacNeil

Rebecca Schultz

**Also Present**

Paul Strobis, Broward County Transit (BCT) Paratransit Manager

J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**REGULAR ITEMS**

**(All Items Open for Public Comment)**

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Recognition of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. It was noted a quorum was present.

It was determined by unanimous voice vote that in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Ms. Gallagher would serve as Acting Chair (A/Chair) for today's meeting.

**2. Approval of Minutes – September 16, 2024**

**Motion** made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Chen, to approve the minutes for September 16. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion** made by Mr. Chen, seconded by Ms. Senat, to approve today's Agenda. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**4. Public Comments**

None.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**1. MOTION TO APPROVE the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Annual Operating Report (AOR)**

**Motion** made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Ms. Piedrasanta, to approve the fiscal year 2023-2024 Annual Operating Report.

Broward County Transit (BCT) Paratransit Manager Paul Strobis explained that BCT had submitted a draft Annual Operating Report (AOR) which was late due to its review by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) in Tallahassee. The

CTD emailed both Mr. Strobis and Rebecca Schultz of MPO Staff to inform them that the submission was accepted and the Board may officially vote to approve it.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (12-0).

### **NON-ACTION ITEMS**

#### **1. Paratransit Update and Transportation Disadvantaged Grant Tracking Report – Paul Strobis, BCT Paratransit Manager**

Mr. Strobis noted that the AOR reflects the first two months of the current grant cycle. There is significant growth in the Paratransit program on both the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) side and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Paratransit side.

The 2023-2024 Florida Public Transportation Association and CTD Annual Conference was held in September 2024. Mr. Strobis noted that the passing of Board member and former CTD member Bob Siedlecki was commemorated at the conference's banquet.

Mr. Strobis continued that BCT's fiscal year (FY) 2025 budget was approved by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners on September 27, 2024. The budget includes a \$7.2 million increase in the Paratransit operating budget to allow for continued growth in order to meet demand. The 2023-2024 fiscal year, which ended on September 30, reflected 15.6% growth over the previous year. BCT has exceeded its pre-COVID-19 ridership totals and is seeing an increase in the number of new applicants for Paratransit service.

BCT also received a TD trip and equipment grant, which brought its operating budget to nearly \$42 million. This grant constitutes roughly 18% of the total annual operating budget. Paratransit is responsible for 3% of BCT's annual ridership, which grew to over a million passenger trips for the first time in program history in FY 2023-2024.

The first 22 of 40 vehicles ordered have arrived in Broward County and are being prepped for service. The remaining 18 vehicles are expected by the second week of November 2024.

On September 15, 2024, Mr. Strobis participated in the annual White Cane Awareness Day in Broward County, which was sponsored by the Broward County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. The event raises awareness of the importance of pedestrian safety for individuals with visual impairments.

Also in September 2024, BCT kicked off its "Just Try It" marketing campaign to reeducate the public on the benefits of using public transit. After the Florida Panthers recently won the Stanley Cup, BCT operated special shuttles which allowed parade-goers to park in parking garages near Port Everglades and brought them into the

parade area. There was significant positive feedback on this service. BCT also operated shuttles to the stadium area during the Stanley Cup playoffs. He emphasized the importance of the campaign, particularly as gas prices remain high.

Mr. Strobis continued that BCT's PREMO Plan has achieved significant milestones. Commuter rail services are now brought to the FEC Railroad tracks on which Brightline operates. The PREMO Plan has also passed its National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) studies and may begin applying for grants for the design of stations.

The first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor will run along Oakland Park Boulevard and is currently in the design phase. This includes a lane repurposing study, as BCT hopes to provide dedicated lanes for BRT throughout the corridor. This is on track for implementation in 2027.

The People Mover project is also underway. This service is intended to connect the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL), Port Everglades, and the new Convention Center using an above-ground light rail connector system.

A/Chair Gallagher requested an update on the status of drivers. Mr. Chen, who serves as vice president of the company used for Paratransit services, replied that there are currently 459 drivers, as they had been aware of the 40 incoming vehicles and had prepared for them.

A/Chair Gallagher also asked if there are any plans affecting east-west service on the 595 corridor. Mr. Strobis stated that over 26 miles of rail service will be included in the PREMO Plan. BCT has purchased land between the Sawgrass Mills Mall and the stadium in order to create an intermodal transit hub which will include a light rail station in the future. The People Mover will also extend to the west to access this hub.

A/Chair Gallagher noted that the AOR documents over 100,000 passenger "no-shows," and asked if this was a typical amount. Mr. Strobis confirmed that this was not an unusual number, noting that some no-shows may occur because of last-minute changes. Paratransit decided against any policy which would penalize riders for no-shows. They also choose not to deny service if a rider cannot pay the fare. BCT also hopes to change their fare collection process, moving away from an on-vehicle process toward an account-based system.

Ms. Scott requested clarification of how Paratransit can be used for regional transportation. Mr. Strobis acknowledged that this can be difficult, although it is possible: the Transportation Options (TOPS) program extends into northern Miami-Dade County, where riders can then transfer to Miami-Dade Transit for the remainder of their trip. The process is the same to the north of BCT's service area, as BCT extends into Boca Raton and allows riders to transfer to Palm Tran Paratransit.

Mr. Strobis continued that ADA riders are permitted to transfer between these systems as visitors. TD riders, however, would need to determine whether or not they may qualify for ADA service. ADA riders may receive 21 days of visitor service within the year. Paratransit also assists in determining appropriate first mile/last mile service.

Ms. Scott asked how a rider might access these services. Mr. Strobis replied that the rider would need to contact his office, as well as the other system's service. Paratransit sends proof of eligibility to that entity so they can create an account that allows their service to be used. He emphasized that BCT takes this step on a daily basis.

Ms. VanVoorhis asked if a TOPS user living in Miami-Dade County but working in Broward County would have to pay their fare to both counties. Mr. Strobis confirmed this, noting that this is the same for users of fixed-route service in multiple counties.

## **2. Committee Members' Presentations**

Ms. Senat, Community Liaison for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), gave a presentation on how TOPS assists members of this Agency. They receive both federal and state funding to serve individuals diagnosed with disabilities since birth. APD serves individuals who have been diagnosed with a range of disabilities before the age of 18.

APD offers adult day programs, transportation, physical, emotional, and behavioral therapy, and residential placement, among other benefits. Many of these individuals work within the community and need TOPS service to take them to and from work. They may also use TOPS to access other activities and events. Ms. Senat strongly emphasized the importance of safety as well as accessing meaningful activities.

Ms. Parks requested clarification of the processing and screening time of an application to APD. Ms. Senat explained that some applications are accompanied by crisis letters if the applicant is experiencing a crisis. These applications are addressed within 24 hours. In non-crisis situations the agency has 45 to 60 days in which to gather collateral documents and process the application.

Ms. Senat added that APD is not income-based and does not ask for proof of income. Once all necessary documentation has been provided, the application is processed within 10 days.

## **3. Safe Streets Summit – Kerrie MacNeil**

Kerrie MacNeil of MPO Staff gave a PowerPoint presentation on the upcoming 2025 Safe Streets Summit. This event serves as South Florida's Complete Streets training conference and focuses on promoting and creating healthier, safer, and more vibrant communities by encouraging the skills necessary to implement Complete Streets. Each

year, technical experts and speakers highlight the successful implementation of these projects.

The Safe Streets Summit was begun in 2014 by the Broward MPO to bring policymakers, technical staff, and interested parties together to discuss Complete Streets projects from planning through implementation. In 2017, the Summit expanded to include the Miami-Dade TPO and Palm Beach TPA, emphasizing the importance of partnerships in creating a safe and accessible region-wide transportation system. The event now rotates between these three counties each year.

Outcomes from the Safe Streets Summit include:

- Providing proven methods and strategies to implement projects
- Garnering support for Complete Streets principles from elected officials and technical staff
- Encouraging support for the implementation of mobility projects
- Highlighting the Broward MPO as a national leader in Complete Streets education and training

The Palm Beach TPA will host the next Safe Streets Summit in West Palm Beach at the Hilton Hotel on February 6-7, 2025. Early registration is now open at [SafeStreetsSummit.org](https://www.fdot.gov/safestreetssummit.org).

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

#### **1. Member Comments**

None.

#### **2. Monthly LCB Operating Reports: July-September 2024**

#### **3. Planning Related Grant Agreement Tasks Quarterly Progress Report**

#### **4. Upcoming CTD Business Meetings – <https://www.fdot.gov/ctd/ctd-home>**

#### **5. TD-LCB Board Member Guidebook**

#### **6. Attendance Roster – Members and Alternates**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: January 27, 2025**