



**Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC)
Public Hearing and Council Meeting**



PUBLIC MEETING: July 31 & August 1, 2019
TIME: 9:00 am & 8:30 am
LOCATION: Holiday Inn Express & Suites Clearwater North/Dunedin
975 Broadway, Dunedin, FL 34698

FGTC Members in Attendance for Council Meeting:

Shawn Thomas, US Forest Service; Marti Miller, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services ; Ralph Lair, Appointed by the Speaker of the House-Greenway User; Brad Piepenbrink, Appointed by the Governor – Trail User; Robin Birdsong, Florida Department of Transportation; Becky Afonso, (Chair) Appointed by the President of the Senate-Greenway User; Parks Small, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP); Chris Rietow, Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA); Jim Couillard, Marion County Parks & Recreation; Faron Boggs, Appointed by the Speaker of the House – Trail User; Michael Nacheff, Appointed by the Governor – Greenway User; Brian Smith, (Vice-Chair) Appointed by the Governor-Trail User; Sarrah Glassner, Appointed by the Governor – Greenway User (8/1).

OGT Staff in Attendance for Council Meeting:

Samantha Browne, Bureau Chief; Doug Alderson, Assistant Bureau Chief; Katie Bernier, Regional Coordinator-Central & South

Welcome

Welcome from Becky Afonso, Chair

Approve Agenda:

FGTC REMARKS:

MOTION: Brian Smith

SECOND: Ralph Lair

FGTC RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE MEETING AGENDA

APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS:

DEFER

WITHDRAW

NOT APPROVE

OTHER:

Approve the January 23 & 24, 2019 Meeting Summary:

FGTC REMARKS:

Motion: Brian Smith

Second: Ralph Lair

FGTC RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE MEETING SUMMARY

APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS:

DEFER

WITHDRAW

NOT APPROVE

OTHER:

OFFICE OF GREENWAYS AND TRAILS REPORT:

DEP Staff Update:

Updates regarding changes within the Office of Greenways and Trails including regional shifts, potential new staff being hired in the coming months and other staff taking on new roles. Updates also included information regarding Everglades City and their progress, as well as other site visits with local and regional stakeholders.

PINELLAS COUNTY UPDATE:

Joan Rice – Pinellas County Public Works & Brian Smith – FGTC Vice-Chair

Overview of the current trail projects for Pinellas County as well as future projects that will ensure the connections between major trails within the County. Other projects include a connection to Hillsborough County as well by way of the Howard Franklin Bridge.

City of Dunedin Update:

Bob Ironsmith – Economic Development, Housing & CRA Director

Overview of the economic impact that the Pinellas Trail has had on the revitalization of Dunedin in recent years. Also, a status update on the impact of the Trail Town Designation for Dunedin.

Outdoor Recreation and Health:

Michael Nacheff – Government Relations Director, Lee Health

Lee Health is working with many stakeholders on new initiatives to promote outdoor recreation and health in their community, including walking trails surrounding the facility.

Hillsborough County Update:

Monica Martin – Trails Planner, Hillsborough County

Update regarding current progress Hillsborough County is making towards closing gaps in their trail system. The County is currently applying for several funding opportunities and is working with local and regional stakeholders through the Hillsborough Greenways Committee.

Plan Hillsborough Update

Wade Reynolds - Senior Planner, Plan Hillsborough

Overview of the Florida Gulf Coast Trail including a status update for each section. Several areas along the trail are working to close gaps, including several portions in Hillsborough County.

Conservation Florida Update

Traci Deen – Executive Director

Overview of Conservation Florida, how the organization works to protect wildlife corridors through easements and the main priorities moving forward. There are many possibilities for collaboration between Conservation Florida and OGT as well as the FGTC.

Bike Florida Update:

Joy Hancock – Executive Director

Bike Florida has several events on the horizon including biking the Coast to Coast Trail starting in Dunedin in November. There will also be a summit for Bike Florida in March 2020 held in conjunction with the SJR2C Loop Summit in Titusville

DOT Region 7 Update:

Alex Henry- Region 7 Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator

Overview of the various current and upcoming projects within FDOT's Region 7, including the anticipated finishing of the Starkey Gap Trail

EXTEND AGENDA TO END OF PUBLIC COMMENT:

MOTION: Robin Birdsong

SECOND: Marti Miller

Public Comment:

Christine Acosta – Executive Director, Pedal Power Promoters

Overview of Pedal Power Promoters and how the organization works with the community on several initiatives, including working with businesses to encourage bike friendliness, biking to work and improve bike culture overall.

Scott Daniels – Pinellas Trails, Inc.

Summary of the Pinellas Trails, Inc. volunteer work along the trail, including current and upcoming projects.

ADJOURN:

MOTION: Michael Nacheff

SECOND: Brian Smith

8/1/19 - Welcome

Welcome from Becky Afonso, Chair

C2C DATABOOK:

Katie Bernier – Regional Coordinator, Office of Greenways and Trails

Presented to Council information on a databook project for the Coast to Coast Trail that the Office of Greenways and Trails is working on. Currently conducting stakeholder meetings with partners along the trail.

5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE:

OGT Staff

Overview of tasks that have been completed, are currently being worked on and upcoming tasks that the Office of Greenways and Trails are planning for. Status update of the staff's progress regarding the 5-year plan implementation.

TRAIL TOWN DISCUSSION:

Samantha Browne – Bureau Chief, Office of Greenways and Trails

Update on the Trail Town Program as a result of several subcommittee meetings. The Trail Town Program will now be a technical assistance program overseen by OGT Staff. The Council can endorse each Trail Town that becomes recognized, as well as assist staff with site visits and mentoring applicants.

COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATES:

Shawn Thomas – The FNST will be closing on an easement next to Suwannee River State Park. Gateway Communities are thriving and there is an interactive website to highlight area businesses. Will be presenting on them at next Council Meeting

Marti Miller – Smokey's 75th birthday is coming up with many events occurring to mark the occasion, including an event at Wakulla Springs State Park. The Off-Highway Grant Cycle is currently open.

Faron Boggs – Has been quite busy taking advantage of outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida this summer, including paddling and biking.

Michael Nacheff – Gave an update yesterday and is honored to be on the Council

Ralph Lair – Session starting early and urges the FGTC to hold meetings with legislators and advocate for outdoor recreation opportunities. Pasco County is rebranding to the Florida Sports Coast

Robin Birdsong – SUN Trail 5-year plan update for Council, including new work program sheet. Safe Routes to schools open cycle is September 1st. Applicants will have to attend a workshop for using the new application for SUN Trail/FDOT. Transportation study wrapping up at the end of 2019.

Chris Rietow – Planning a hemp summit for October

Brian Smith – Florida Planning Association Conference – will be heading up a panel for Trail Towns and Sustainability. Foundation meeting in Tallahassee on Nov. 22nd and will help to plan possible OGT summit

Parks Small – Updated the previous day. OGT is experiencing more support and direction under new director, Eric Draper. Florida Parks Service is a Gold Medal Finalist

Sarrah Glassner – Thanks to Council for producing plan and would also like to assist with any summit planning for OGT

Becky Afonso – FL Bicycle Association will have its annual membership meeting in July. The Messenger is open for content

PUBLIC COMMENT:

N/A

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT MEETING:

Possibly in the Panhandle in November

ADJOURN:

MOTION: Brian Smith

SECOND: Michael Nachev