

**SUMMARY OF GOODS MOVEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 28, 2006
10:00 A.M.**

Present:

Dave Fechter, HNTB Corporation
Ramon Solis, MPO staff
Karen Cunningham, MPO staff
Jackie Zakrewski, MPO staff
Sandra Knoebel-Gamache, MPO staff
Marc Hanger, MPO staff
Mike Lester, Publix Supermarkets
Deputy Nick Lazarus, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Robert Davis, Pinellas County Public Works Transportation
Mike Coleman, Great Bay Distributors
Bonnie Martinez, Pinellas County Waste Management (arrived later in the meeting)
Jim Byers, PSTA Planning Department
Danny Lamb, FDOT

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dave Fechter called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and had everyone introduce themselves

Minutes were included as part of the agenda packet. It was moved, seconded, and motion carried to approve last month's minutes

2. PROGRESS UPDATE ON GOODS MOVEMENT STUDY

A. Freight Activity Center Windshield Survey

Mr. Fechter indicated one of the tasks was to perform windshield and carrier surveys. They selected ten freight activity centers and had staff at each location for approximately four hours. This is a follow-up from the State Regional Study for District VII. This information is being summarized and will be forwarded to MPO staff. In addition, a list of the local activity centers prepared by the consultant was passed out.

B. Carrier Surveys

Mr. Fechter noted approximately ten carriers, not part of the Committee, will be interviewed for their input. The consultant will work with MPO staff regarding the GIS maps to be used as components of the study as part of the analysis. They have developed level of service maps, average daily traffic maps, and crash maps. In addition, they are showing the truck percentages on the maps.

C. Hot Spot Analysis

Mr. Fechter indicated they will be developing a hot spot map of the crashes, observations from the field, and comments from the members. The consultant will identify ten problem areas and make recommendations.

3. GOODS MOVEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. GMAC Survey Results and Interviews

Mr. Fechter noted the surveys were mailed to the members and approximately seven completed forms were returned. He has interviewed almost everyone who completed the survey form. One of the issues was the extension of the time on restricted truck routes. It was felt that it would be beneficial if the time was extended in the morning to approximately 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. due to business concerns.

Bonnie Martinez, Pinellas County Waste Management, stated that earlier extended hours wouldn't help their truck drivers because of noise ordinances in place. Their drivers also felt

the Truck Route Ordinance was not applicable because they were providing a public service. She noted the consideration of the cost of labor and fuel if a driver has to use an alternative route to stay on a truck route to get to a destination off the truck route. It was noted that a driver can get to their destination by using the shortest, direct route even if it's not designated a truck route and then back to the truck route. Mr. Solis indicated that dump trucks are covered under the Truck Route Ordinance.

Mr. Fechter stated James Marcus made a presentation to the Community Traffic Safety Team regarding rear vision cameras. Mr. Marcus had six or seven surveys completed by various truck drivers and their issues concerned the problems due to construction; i.e., disruption, detours, inadequate ingress/egress off detours. The surveyed drivers felt that truck route signs were important to drivers not familiar with Pinellas County. Mr. Fechter noted that Tom Washburn's suggestion was the possibility of restricting truck traffic during peak hours in the a.m. and p.m.; however, there was discussion noting the negative impact on businesses. Mr. Fechter continued with the Sheriff's Office concerns relating to better placement of signage, problem areas such as ruts in the road, and clarification of the Pinellas County Truck Route Ordinance.

Deputy Nick Lazarus noted the enforcement problem has to do with an uninformed police force. A lot of the police officers don't know the rules for trucks; i.e., loads are supposed to be covered by a tarp and equipment is supposed to be chained down. Police officers also don't know the weight of trucks and how to appropriately enforce the Truck Route Ordinance. The other issue is whether or not a police officer is supposed to follow a truck for their entire route to make sure they don't inappropriately deviate from their route, which would tie up officers. Pinellas County doesn't have an ordinance regarding overweight vehicles, which is enforced by FDOT through their motor carrier compliance officers and their main areas they concentrate on are the weight stations and the interstates. Other counties on the east coast have enacted ordinances to allow their deputies to enforce weight restrictions as well. The Sheriff's Office has the equipment to enforce weight restrictions if an ordinance were to be enacted. Deputy Lazarus indicated that major corporations usually obey the laws; however, small businesses are more prone for their trucks to be overweight and to use non-approved roadways for through traffic.

Mr. Davis queried what law regulated truck weight violation and gives authority for enforcement. **It was indicated someone would research and get the information to him.** Deputy Lazarus stated that, if a truck is unsafe, the violation would fall under Chapter 316 and a police office could issue a citation.

Mr. Lester stated he surveyed several of the Publix drivers and their concerns centered around the enforcement of the 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. restrictions. The drivers felt that their deliveries sometimes put them in violation of the restriction since they did not full understand the exceptions. Mr. Lester noted he had not understood the exceptions either until Mr. Solis provided him with the exceptions. He would fully support extending the hours of operation on restricted truck routes; i.e., 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Part of Publix's training includes compliance of the laws and the drivers are very observant and conscientious of all laws. The survey also indicated the drivers did not feel the routes needed to be signed (such as St. Petersburg was doing) and that, if there was not a sign indicating the route was restricted, it was a truck route the drivers could use. There are some situations where it is difficult to exit Publix stores onto a

truck route, one direction or another. Mr. Lester indicated he would review the specifics with Mr. Fechter after the meeting.

Mr. Coleman reviewed the concerns of Great Bay Distributors, noting the major concerns were the restricted routes and the limited hours. The signage didn't seem to be an issue. Mr. Fechter noted another issue from the surveys was a problem with egress/ingress from U.S. 19 onto the side streets in the south County area.

Deputy Lazarus noted the Sheriff's Office enforces the truck routes according to the posted signage and not the Ordinance so the officers are not always aware of the exceptions. A lot of concern and discussion ensued. Mr. Solis clarified the Ordinance; however, it was noted the Ordinance was confusing.

B. Freight Activity Centers/Corridors

Mr. Fechter handed out information and asked each to review it prior to the next meeting for input at the next meeting. The top six were regional freight activity centers located within Pinellas County, which were part of the FDOT Regional Goods Movement Study. He had listed the major shopping centers and several local activity centers.

C. Concerns on Restricted Vehicles, Designated Truck Routing, Operational Issues

This had been discussed as part of the survey item.

4. UPCOMING TASKS AND MEETING DISCUSSION

Mr. Fechter asked if anyone knew of someone who might be interested as a member to let him know since a couple people have resigned. He noted they would continue the analysis and that they would be conducting a public meeting Thursday, January 18, at either the Clearwater or Largo Library, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. He will be putting together criteria for restricting roadways for trucks. They will put together a survey/comment card to obtain public input regarding truck routes, restrictions, etc. The meeting will be publicly advertised and he will let the members know in case they would like to attend. The Committee will work on identifying roads to pursue. He asked that any other issues, operational or otherwise, be forwarded to him.

Mr. Solis noted that Pinellas Park has different hours of restriction than the rest of the County; however, the restriction should be uniform throughout the County and that ongoing discussion would occur. There is also an issue regarding the difference between Clearwater and Pinellas County's ordinances regarding public construction vehicles.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Next Meeting – January 30, 2007

The next meeting will be held January 30, 2007. Mr. Fechter noted there are three meetings left to develop recommendations, which would be the last Tuesday of January, February, and March. He noted the last meeting would be in May to review the recommendations to be forwarded to the MPO.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.