

**POLICY COMMITTEE**  
Hall County Government Center  
2875 Browns Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30504  
Minutes of May 14, 2019 Meeting

**Voting Members Present:**

Mayor Mike Miller, City of Flowery Branch, Chair  
Stan Brown, on behalf of Mayor Lamar Scroggs,  
City of Oakwood  
Chairman Richard Higgins, Hall County  
Mayor Danny Dunagan, City of Gainesville  
Charles Robinson, GDOT  
Commissioner Ralph Richardson, Jr., Jackson  
County

**Others Present:**

Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO  
Sam Baker, GHMPO  
Joseph Boyd, GHMPO  
Emily Foote, Hall County  
Sarah McQuade, Hall County  
Kevin McInturff, Hall County  
Jock Connell, Hall County  
Jeff Stowe, Hall County  
Lisa Johnsa, Hall County  
Zach Propes, Hall County  
Laura Ogletree, Hall County  
BR White, City of Oakwood

**Voting Members Absent:**

None

Bill Andrew, City of Flowery Branch  
Phillippa Lewis Moss, HAT  
Justin Crighton, Jackson County  
Bryan Lackey, City of Gainesville  
Angela Sheppard, City of Gainesville  
Chris Rotalsky, City of Gainesville  
Matt Tarver, City of Gainesville  
Steve Cote, RS&H  
Eric Lusher, POND  
Jeff Gill, The Times  
Marc Eggers, WDUN

**1. Welcome**

Mayor Miller opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

**2. Approval of February 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** Mayor Dunagan made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2019 meeting, with a second from Chairman Higgins, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

### **3. Report from the Technical Coordinating Committee**

Mr. White presented a summary of the Technical Coordinating Committee meeting on April 18, 2019.

### **4. Report from the Citizens Advisory Committee**

Mr. Baker, on behalf of the CAC Chair Renee Gerrell, presented a summary of the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting on April 25, 2019. Mr. Baker also conveyed that the Citizens Advisory Committee continues to believe that conducting a North Hall Bypass Study as soon as possible would be beneficial to our community.

### **5. Approval of an Amendment to the FY 2019 Unified Planning Work Program**

Mr. Boyd stated that an application requesting federal transportation planning funds for the State Route 365/Jesse Jewell Parkway Traffic Impact Study was approved. He added that the Federal Highway Administration and the Georgia Department of Transportation require that the budget be updated in the current UPWP showing the addition of the \$160,000 federal grant.

**MOTION:** Mayor Dunagan made a motion to approve the amendment to the FY 2019 Unified Planning Work Program, with a second from Chairman Higgins, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

### **6. Approval of the Resolution Adopting the FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program**

Mr. Boyd stated that the Draft FY 2020 UPWP describes the planning projects, studies and activities the GHMPO will undertake in FY 2020. He added that this is the second of two reviews of the draft document by the Policy Committee after it had been sent to the Georgia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration for review and comment, and their comments have been incorporated. Mr. Boyd stated that the required 30-day public comment period was conducted from March 3 through April 2, 2019, and no public comments were received.

**MOTION:** Mayor Dunagan made a motion to approve the resolution adopting the FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program, with a second from Mr. Brown, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

### **7. Approval of the Resolution Adopting the Dawsonville Highway-McEver Road Connectivity Study Report**

Mr. Baker stated that RS&H presented the results of the Dawsonville Highway-McEver Road Connectivity Study at the last meeting of the Policy Committee in February 2019. Following the presentation, the consultant has prepared a report summarizing the study findings. Mr. Baker suggested that the Committee approve the resolution adopting the study report.

**MOTION:** Chairman Higgins made a motion to approve the resolution adopting the Dawsonville Highway-McEver Road Connectivity Study Report, with a second from Mayor Dunagan, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

## **8. Gainesville-Hall Regional Transportation Plan: 2020 Update**

Mr. Cote with RS&H reported on the federally-required update of the Gainesville-Hall Regional Transportation Plan. The update was undertaken in January 2019. The project team has since collected various data, prepared 2015 base year socio-economic data, started an online survey to be open until June 9<sup>th</sup>, and engaged in several citizen engagement events. The team is preparing an existing conditions report and developing 2050 future year socio-economic data for submission to Georgia DOT. The team is also planning additional public engagement activities. The most important element of this plan update will be the development of a financially-constrained project list by September 30, 2019. The update is scheduled for adoption by June 2020.

Mr. Yamala added that GHMPO staff would be asking RS&H to look into financial projections reflecting a scenario showing TSPLOST dollars in the coming years and what a project list could potentially look like with the additional funding. This will not be part of the official RTP document but will serve as a reference for future discussion.

## **9. Micro-Transit Feasibility Study**

Ms. Lewis Moss presented the results of the Micro-Transit Feasibility Study, completed in February 2019, which explored the feasibility of ride-share services, such as Uber and Lyft, to provide transit service in Hall County in light of the expected reclassification of Gainesville as a "large urbanized area" after the 2020 Census and the resulting cut in federal transit operations funding. The Study recommended replacing the existing Dial-A-Ride demand response service and three underperforming fixed route services of the Gainesville Connection with ride-share service.

## **10. New or Additional Requirement for PL Funds Application Process**

Mr. Baker informed that the Federal Highway Administration has added a new or additional requirement to future MPO applications for additional federal transportation planning (PL) funds. This new or additional requirement is that any proposed PL-funded studies be discussed at least twice on two separate occasions and provide documentation of such discussions with future applications. He added that GHMPO already meets or exceeds this two-discussion minimum requirement.

## **11. Approval of Amendments to Policy Committee Bylaws**

Mr. Yamala presented proposed changes to the Policy Committee Bylaws suggested by Hall County and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). GDOT proposed changing its voting member from the Commissioner of GDOT to its Director of Planning. GDOT also proposed to remove its Director of Planning as a non-voting member. Mr. Yamala explained changes suggested by Hall County, specifically the creation of Article IV which stated:

- One (1) additional voting member shall be added to a jurisdiction for every 30,000 people within the urbanized area.
- With the exception of City of Flowery Branch, City of Oakwood and Jackson County, any new jurisdiction shall have a minimum of 10,000 urbanized area population to be added as a voting member
- The Policy Committee shall reconsider its voting members following every decennial Census number.

Hall County also requested changes to Article III, specifically the addition of District 1 Commissioner who covers South Hall, and the District 4 Commissioner who covers the Gainesville area. Chairman Higgins stated that unincorporated Hall County includes 69% of the urbanized population within the GHMPO planning area and that Hall County felt it needed better representation on the Policy Committee based upon its population.

Mr. Brown stated that the current membership structure of the Policy Committee has worked well from the City of Oakwood's perspective for 14 years and that the City does not understand the reasoning behind the requested change. Mr. Brown also added that population estimates could sometimes be misleading as Oakwood's daytime population swells far above its stated population.

Mayor Dunagan responded that the City of Gainesville supported the requested changes by Hall County and that it made sense to have the Policy Committee reflect the different jurisdictions based on their populations.

Mayor Miller stated that he agreed with Mr. Brown in that the City of Flowery Branch also did not understand the need for the change. He also added that he feels the population count for Flowery Branch, especially in respect to SPLOST funding allocations, is behind and does not accurately reflect the growth the City has experienced in recent years.

Mr. Robinson stated that he would abstain from the vote as GDOT views changes such as these to the committee bylaws a local matter.

**MOTION:** Mayor Dunagan made a motion to approve the amendments to the Policy Committee Bylaws, with a second from Chairman Higgins, and the motion passed by a 3-2 vote (Mayor Miller, Mr. Brown opposed; Mr. Robinson abstained).

## **12. Jurisdiction and Agency Reports**

Representatives shared the status of transportation projects being completed by their jurisdictions: Mr. Andrew for the City of Flowery Branch, Mr. Tarver for the City of Gainesville, Mr. Brown for the City of Oakwood, Mr. McInturff for Hall County, and Mr. Crighton for Jackson County.

## **13. Upcoming Meeting Date: July 30, 2019**

## **14. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

*If you have a disability or impairment and need special assistance, please contact GHMPO prior to the meeting at 770-297-2625.*

## 15. Other: Next Meeting Location

The location of the July 30, 2019 meeting will be determined shortly. If available, the meeting may be held at the newly opened GDOT District 1 office in Gainesville. If not, the meeting may be held at the Hall County Government Center. Staff will follow up with the committee once a location is selected.


Mayor Miller brought two additional points up for the consideration of the committee. First, he stated that the intersection of Hog Mountain Road/Ridge Road and Friendship Road needed to be further evaluated from a safety and operations point-of-view and that dedicated left turn lights may be necessary on all four sides of the intersection. Secondly, a student from Johnson High School reached out and asked for further information regarding the tree removal process occurring along I-985. Mr. Robinson said he would gather more information on this and get back to Mayor Miller shortly.

## 16. Adjourn

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 AM.



Chairman Richard Higgins, Vice Chair



Joseph Boyd, Senior Transportation Planner