

**Summary of Discussion
Broward County Charter Review Commission
Transportation Subcommittee Meeting No. 1
Thursday, April 5, 2007- 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Annex - Room A-200
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

Members Present:

Michael Buckner, Esq., Chair
David Esack
Commissioner Ted Mena, Vice Chair
Hazelle Rogers, CRC-Vice Chair
Bruce Rogow, Esq.
Jodi Jeffreys-Tanner

Members Absent:

Petey Kaletta

Others Attending:

Roger Delrio, Acting Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning Organization
Chedley Etienne, Administrative Assistant, CRC
Dan Glickman
Yolanda Grooms, Administrative Specialist, CRC
Maria Gross, Assistant Director, CRC
Phyllis A. King, Transcriber, PKING Consulting
Chris Walton, Executive Director, Broward County Mass Transit Department
Patricia G. West, Executive Director, CRC

(A copy of the sign-in sheets identifying those present is filed with the supplemental papers to the summary of this Subcommittee Meeting.)

A meeting of the Broward County Charter Review Transportation Subcommittee "Committee, Subcommittee, or TSC", was held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 5, 2007 at the Broward County Governmental Center Annex – Room A-200, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

I Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Michael Buckner called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The Chair then requested the roll call by Phyllis A. King, PKING Consulting, Inc. Upon completion of the roll, the Chair recognized the presence of a quorum for the record.

The Chair advised that the format of the TSC meetings will be an informal format in order to expedite the meeting due to the limited amount of time provided to cover the issues. However should the need arise to go back and be more formal for voting purposes then the Committee will do so.

II Review List of Issues Assigned to Transportation Subcommittee

The Chair referenced the list of issues assigned to the TSC by the full Commission which include the following:

- Airport/Seaport
- Mass Transit
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Ms. West informed the Chair that a discussion is planned for the next full Commission meeting with regard to the targeting of February for the Subcommittee recommendation deadlines in order to provide a guide to the Subcommittees as to how much time remains for them to prepare their recommendations for the full Committee.

The Chair stated that this is very important especially when it comes to prioritizing the three very broad issues which the TSC has to discuss. He advised that each issue has its own detail as well as the question of whether the Charter itself can be amended in order to address any issues that the TSC might find that needs to be addressed. The Chair then asked the Committee their thoughts regarding to the prioritization of the issues.

Mr. Mena mentioned the one cent tax increase which came up in the last election with regard to Mass Transit. He stated that he believes that Mass Transit is something that is long-range and in his opinion should be something that is left last. He advised that he believes that Airport/Seaport is more important because the subject has not be touched. He advised that he sits on the MPO with Roger (Delrio) and there are so many complicated issues there and most

have to do with Mass Transit as well as the Development of Roads. Mr. Mena stated that he thinks that the Airport/Seaport is vital to the County as a whole, that in his opinion it should be concentrated on first.

Mr. Rogow agreed with Mr. Mena.

Ms. Tanner also agreed stating that she believes that there is a very small section in the Charter regarding Transportation which can be reviewed and addressed. She also advised that she agreed with regard to the one cent tax but added that she understands that it is in the very long-term but this is when it should begin and it is important for us to look at the future for our children and their children and where we will be in 20, 30, 40 years. Ms. Tanner advised that she is looking forward to hearing from the MPO. She stated that the Airport and Seaport are an integral part of Broward County Revenue and she is ready to go forward.

Mr. Esack advised that he is in agreement with the Airport and Seaport but he does not think that it should be a long range goal. He agreed with Ms. Tanner that long-range is now and Mass Transit needs to be addressed and should not be put to the back-burner. He stated that he believes the Airport and Seaport need to have greater continuity between the two, some type of mover system between the two. He stated that he looks forward to hearing from the experts and hearing what is suggested and realistic for the TSC as a whole to achieve between now and February.

The Chair acknowledged the presence of the TSC guests and asked them to introduce themselves. Chris Walton, Director, Broward County Office of Transportation, introduced himself and Roger Delrio, Acting Director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization introduced himself. The Committee members welcomed them and thanked them for attending. The Chair informed them both that the Committee looks forward to hearing from them later on.

III Establishment of Priorities

The Chair confirmed that based upon the discussion regarding establishing priorities, the general consensus is that the focus of the Subcommittee should be first on Airport/Seaport and then Mass Transit as a secondary issue. He reminded everyone that they've heard from Mr. Goren (Sam) with regard to the limited nature that the MPO can be addressed in the Charter. He then left open the decision to try to address some of the options outlined by Mr. Goren at the last CRC meeting.

Ms. Tanner stated that she does not know much about the MPO so she would like to see how it fits into what the TSC is supposed to be doing and what changes can be made for the Charter.

The Chair asked the Committee for a speaker format preference in terms of full Commission format vs. TSC's own format (i.e. time limits, question/answer etc.). Ms. Tanner suggested that a lot more time be afforded each speaker. Mr. Esack suggested an unlimited question/answer being respectful of the time.

Mr. Mena stated what the TSC is going with is fact-finding and he stated that this is the time to ask the speakers as they are experts in their particular departments. He then expressed concern of there being no representation of the Airport/Seaport at today's meeting.

Ms. West advised that because the TSC is just beginning she thought it would be good for the TSC to have the initial meeting, establish priorities and then guide her with plans for the next meeting. Ms. West called attention to an email from The Chair dated Tuesday, March 20, 2007 reflecting issues that he would be interested in for the TSC. She stated that based upon the issues she knew that Mass Transit and MPO were both on the list.

The Chair informed the Committee that he was brainstorming when he developed the email and provided a brief summary. He then advised that it is nothing official and asked for input from the dais in terms of who they want to hear from and where they would like to obtain their information from during fact finding. He advised that this will be coordinated with CRC staff to ensure that as much information as possible is retained after completing the fact finding.

Mr. Esack inquired of the existence of a current Port Director. Ms. West advised that there is a Port and Airport Director.

Ms. Tanner also stated that she believed that Commissioner John Rodstrom is also Commissioner for the Airport. She therefore suggested that he be invited.

Ms. West advised that she believes Commissioner. Ritter might now be the Commissioner for the Airport and Mayor Eggelation for the Port.

Mr. Mena suggested that Ms. Ritter's knowledge might not be as broad as Commissioner Rodstrom due to her recent appointment. The dais agreed.

Mr. Mena asked Mr. Delrio for suggestions as to who the TSC should invite to speak with regard to the Airport and Seaport.

Mr. Delrio suggested contact with the Directors of both entities as they are probably the best individuals to provide insight.

Ms. West confirmed that she would invite Acting Director, Bob Bielek from Aviation and Phil Allen, Director of Port Everglades, for the next TSC meeting.

Mr. Mena suggested inviting a gentleman who provided a very impressive presentation on the Port while on a trip with Enterprise Florida and stated that he will provide his business card to Ms. West.

Ms. West stated that she believes he is with the Marketing Department at the Port and she will definitely speak with the Port to invite him.

The Chair asked if there were any other thoughts on additional speakers. There being none he reminded everyone that it is a rolling process and as the Committee speaks with more people the question will be posed as to others the speakers might recommend the Committee to hear from.

The Chair called for any other business in terms of the issues, priorities and other items.

Ms. Tanner suggested inviting one or two drivers from Mass Transit since they are on the routes every day.

Mr. Walton advised that this would be his area, and he could ensure that this could happen.

Mr. Mena advised that Mr. Walton gives great presentations as he provided presentation to the League of Cities. He then expressed concern with regard to the last attempt to pass the one cent sales tax and the present situation with property taxes. He advised that a group in Tallahassee is attempting to push a 2.5 cent increase on sales tax to 8.5 cents which does not leave much room in case the Committee wants to revisit the 1 or 1 ½ cent again for transportation. He stated that he is opposed to it vehemently and the problem is that with the long-range transportation needs there is not enough money. Mr. Mena also stated that he hates to see the Committee spin their wheels talking about things for the future yet nothing comes of it

because of lack of funds. He reminded everyone that this is always the “catch 22”. Mr. Mena stated that personally, he’d like to see a monorail above the ground which could solve a lot of problems as it has in other Cities but it is expensive. He also stated that the Save Our Homes issue has also caused many hassles in Tallahassee due to the current property tax fiasco therefore unfortunately, Tallahassee is more concerned with getting that through and then the next in line is Insurance. Mr. Mena then stated that people are leaving this area because they cannot afford it. He stated that his point is to come up with ideas that will not be a waste of time because if they are not going to be funded then there is no use in addressing them.

Ms. Tanner stated that she knows that one cent is earmarked specifically for Transportation so the money is there it is just a matter of when the voters will decide to use it.

Mr. Walton advised Ms. Tanner that it failed it did not pass, but it is earmarked as dedicated for Transit.

Mr. Mena stated that here is a happy medium in between.

Ms. West advised that she thinks that the Committee has to have its discussions and look a little further. She advised that the session ends in May and probably an election in November of 2007 and then there is still the consideration of what the Charter is working on for November 2008. She cautioned the dais to be optimistic that maybe the right thing will be done. She stated that the reality is that there are other things that are crushing people such as gas prices. People are getting to the point that they cannot afford to drive their cars which eventually means that the County will be responsible for more people wanting a way to travel around Broward County using Mass Transit. She then cautioned the Committee not to think about Tallahassee at this point but to look on a local level in terms of what type of services can be provided and what would make life easier for the citizens of Broward County because you can never tell what will happen with Tallahassee.

Mr. Mena stated that we are all tied in with Tallahassee. Ms. West agreed but added that at some point there are local options and things that can be done for the Community.

Mr. Rogow asked Mr. Walton what he suggests.

IV Presentation: Chris Walton, Executive Director, Broward County Office of Transportation - Mass Transit Overview

Mr. Walton advised that the reality in Broward County is that public transportation is not well funded. He then distributed a slide presentation entitled ***Broward County Transit (BCT) – Challenges and Opportunities.***

Mr. Walton advised that for FY07 BCT has an operating budget of \$119,549,620.00 with a Capital Budget of approximately \$24.5 Million. There are 1,049 Full-time Employees and 52 Part-time Employees. Mr. Walton advised that BCT Operates 3 types of services.

Fixed Route Service which operates on 42 routes throughout the County serving 410 square miles of developable land in Broward County. He advised that in 2006 the BCT carried 37.5 million passengers with a fleet of 290 buses including 6 new articulated buses on 441. Mr. Walton advised that most of the BCT's headway / interval between buses average approximately 15 and 90 minutes depending upon the demand.

Community Bus System wherein the BCT has partnerships with 21 municipalities where the County provides operating capital for those municipalities to operate small shuttle type buses which are primary community circulators that link with the Fixed Route Service. Mr. Walton advised that this is a very successful program for community circulators for people who want to shop within their own communities.

Paratransit (TOPS) Mr. Walton advised that this service is federally mandated as a result of the 1990 Americans With Disabilities Act which requires equal access transportation be provided by all transit operators receiving federal funds to anyone who cannot get to a fixed route bus stop due to mental, physical or other limitations. He advised that this is a very expensive form of transportation that the County is required to provide.

In addition to the above services, Mr. Walton advised that BCT provides other special services including hurricane evacuations, shelter transportation for the homeless due to cold weather, special events shuttles (i.e. Air & Sea Show).

Mr. Walton then walked the Committee through the handout explaining that he wanted to cover three things including where we are today, where we need to be and how to get there.

Mr. Walton advised that system-wide the BCT carries approximately 40 million passengers in total with 37.5 million on the Fixed Route System.

Mr. Walton advised that this page 4 covers growth from years 2000 through 2006. He advised that Broward County is the only fleet in the United States, which has a Paratransit Fleet that is larger than its Fixed Route Fleet. He explained that this is due to the resources allocated to operate the Fixed Route Fleet are not nearly enough to serve the population of Broward County. Mr. Walton stated that the Community Bus Program, which was implemented in 2000, has grown substantially and has grown even more than what is reflected on the graph as the numbers are old fixed numbers and updated information has been provided on slide number 7.

Mr. Rogow inquired as to what types of vehicles are used for Paratransit.

Mr. Walton replied that they are small vehicles, cars, vans some are medically equipped to transport people with medical disabilities. This program is called TOPS which stands for Transportation Options which means options other than fixed route or community bus transportation. Mr. Walton explained that this program is completely farmed out and new contracts are being finalized where there will be 9 providers and the cost will be approximately \$16 million to operate that service. Mr. Walton explained that historically Paratransit has been approximately 3% of BCT ridership but is 20% of BCT budget.

Mr. Mena inquired if this is because there is such a large population of retirees who use Paratransit Services in Broward County especially out West.

Mr. Walton explained that Paratransit Services nationwide are expensive. He stated that from a cost standpoint Broward County does better than Palm Beach and Miami Dade Counties in terms of cost per trip. Mr. Walton added that Paratransit Services is a very expensive service because of the nature of the service.

Ms. West asked if a group of people are transported at the same time.

Mr. Walton stated that it is similar to a cab service, but whenever possible there are common pick-up points and destinations generally within close proximity that will limit the trip time to less than an hour. Mr. Walton referred to this process as *multi-loading* whereby one to three persons can be transported in one vehicle. He advised however that this opportunity does not present itself often enough to increase the efficiency of the system.

Mr. Esack stated that as a Physical Therapist he automatically becomes curious as to the criteria for individuals to utilize the Paratransit Service as opposed to the Fixed Route Service and how appropriate the criteria are.

Mr. Walton advised that the criteria are established by the Act itself. He stated that BCT has hired a third party reviewer/contractor who is familiar with the criteria by which each person must be assessed after being referred by their physician. This reviewer makes the determination whether the individuals can or cannot ride.

Mr. Esack expressed a concern with the way physicians refer their patients for the service.

Mr. Walton advised that the doctor's recommendation alone can't authorize an individual. The riders must be qualified by the *Neurological Resources Center* in order to qualify to use the TOPS vans.

Mr. Mena asked Mr. Walton about non-ambulatory people and if there is some sort of service that can be provided to assist them. While family might be able to assist the person from home to the van but upon arrival at the destination he understands that the TOPS drivers do not assist and he is wondering if this was a planning oversight.

Mr. Walton advised that the system allows for a companion/Personal Care Attendant to travel free and many people in this circumstance have an individual travel with them to assist them. However, from a liability standpoint he stated that BCT cannot assist.

Mr. Mena asked what the fare is.

Commissioner Rogers joined the meeting at this time [10:35 am]

Mr. Walton stated that the law allows up to two times the base fare of the Fixed Route System which is \$1. Therefore, the TOPS fare is \$2 which has been a topic of discussion recently as well since the fares have not increased since April of 1995.

Mr. Mena expressed concern advising that gasoline has tripled since that time.

Mr. Rogow asked Mr. Walton if he has any figures on the bus capacity in relation to the 37.5 million ridership. He stated that he understood that this many people are being carried but he wanted to know at what % capacity the buses are operating.

Mr. Walton stated that the answer to this question depends on the time of day and the route but typically during rush hour in the morning where there is a more pronounced travel pattern typically between 6:30 am and 8:15 am this would be close to 100%. In the afternoon on some routes where this is a longer more intense peak, he advised that ridership reduces by 50% and at the late afternoon/evening peak it exceeds the 100% capacity. Mr. Walton advised that there are some routes where demand just absolutely cannot be satisfied, where some people are hanging onto the straps and others are just passed up because BCT does not have the capacity or the fleet.

Ms. Tanner asked Mr. Walton how often stop necessity is re-evaluated.

Mr. Walton replied that the routes are re-evaluated annually.

The Chair asked what type of influence politics plays in terms of setting the routes. The Chair explained that he poses the question because he is not a politician and he feels that the TSC needs to rise above any politics and actually solve the problem. He stated that he is aware that in other communities mass transit routes have been laid along and planned along certain political routes and has not been efficient or effective and wastes money and he does not wish to see this happen in Broward County.

Mr. Walton explained that there is some of that and a lot of it occurred before he came to Broward County and it is an ongoing attempt to provide coverage throughout the County. He advised that there are some areas of the County where densities are not transit supported where there may be 2 or 3 houses per acre. He also stated that there are some routes that either need to be restructured or eliminated and there are plans to go before the County Commission sometime later in the year with a proposal to do this in terms of being able to evaluate routes on a numerical basis or performance basis and if certain standards are not met and after a certain period of time nothing can be done to raise the ridership level then those resources should be reallocated back into the system to be more appropriately utilized.

The Chair asked Mr. Walton to identify things in the current Charter which might be prohibiting the BCT from operating more efficiently.

Mr. Walton responded that he would not say from a Charter perspective because as he stated before from an efficiency standpoint BCT is one of the most efficient operations in the United States. He stated that the other side is that it must be efficient because it does not have the

resources to pump into transit like everyone else. He pointed out that our numbers in terms of passengers per hour and passengers per mile we are much higher than the national norm. This indicates that Broward County has a fleet size that is too small which makes us look more efficient on that end but there are other issues that actually cost on the other side because of those efficiencies and because the fleet is not large enough to service the community. Mr. Walton advised that more hours are put on the buses and they carry more people. He advised that with the standard bus in the United States, the FTA will allow you 12 years or ½ million miles which is established as the useful life of the bus and 1/3 of our fleet has already exceeded that because we are trying to meet the demand with a fleet that is too small which costs in maintenance on the other end. He stated that it is like a car as it gets older, the more miles it has on it the more maintenance it requires and until we are properly funded we are basically hanging on with the fleet that we have.

Mr. Rogow asked what inhibits raising the fare.

Mr. Walton stated that this has to go before the County Commission which will be happening this year.

Mr. Rogow asked if BCT has gone in past years before the County Commission and been turned down.

Mr. Walton responded no, not during the time he has been Director for just over a year. He reminded the dais that the fares have not been raised since 1995.

Mr. Walton stated in comparison to Palm Beach, they have a base fare of \$1.25 and Miami-Dade has a base fare of \$1.50. He stated that where we really take the beating is because 57% of our passengers utilize passes which we encourage. However the discount on the passes is even more severe because a monthly pass on BCT is \$32.00, in Palm Beach a monthly pass is \$50.00 and in Miami-Dade it is \$75.00. Mr. Walton stated that the strategy to go before the Commission is in the works and is expected to be ready within the next 3 to 4 months.

Mr. Esack stated that 12 years does not seem to be a reasonable review period.

Ms. Tanner asked if there are any subcommittees or sub-Task Forces within the BCT to find out where bus shelters should be to make the system more accessible and more user friendly for people to ride.

Mr. Walton replied that BCT is aware and tries to establish bus shelters at high-low points where it is known that a lot of people congregate to ride the bus. He pointed out the difference in Broward County's system that he has not seen anywhere else that Mass Transit does not control bus shelters and the bus shelters are the purview of the individual Cities. He advised that BCT only installs and maintains bus shelters in the unincorporated areas of the County which are disappearing.

Ms. Tanner asked Mr. Walton if he has any other recommendations for the municipalities as far as where and how far apart to place the shelters.

Mr. Walton advised that based upon ridership, recommendations are made to the municipalities.

Ms. Tanner asked if municipalities are following those recommendations.

Mr. Walton replied yes in many cases. He stated that one of the issues which caused the County to work more closely with the municipalities is due to the fact that the County was sued in Court for the inaccessibility of our bus system coupled with a system that the County formerly operated called the Water Bus. He advised that the County was sued and found liable because in 1990 when the ADA Act was implemented most Transit Systems around the Country made their fleets and bus stops accessible but for whatever reason Broward County did not. He advised that Broward County is working toward this now and we have 5 years to accomplish it. He advised that the settlement requires the County to allocate minimally \$2 million annually in our budget to make sure that this occurs. He advised that last year was the first year of the settlement agreement and the County had to show that all terms and conditions were met in the first year and he has no doubt that everything set forth in the agreement will be accomplished. Mr. Walton stated that one of the areas requiring accessibility was the Water Bus where neither the boats nor the stops were ADA accessible. They were actually working as a subcontractor under BCT receiving the pass-thru of the Federal Funds so the County was required to ensure that their system was ADA accessible, they refused, so the County terminated the contract with them. He advised that they still operate, but they operate independently of the County.

Mr. Esack asked Mr. Walton about his background and experience.

Mr. Walton explained that he has been in Transit for approximately 24 years. He advised that he was a Transit Consultant in Detroit, Los Angeles, Toronto and a few other places around the Country.

Ms. Rogers asked what role Broward County plays as it relates to transportation. She stated that she understands that municipality involvement has only occurred within the last 5 years through the development of the Community Bus System. She stated that prior to that transportation was solely the County's responsibility. Ms. Rogers also asked why municipalities would be involved in determining bus stops and bus shelter types, quality and locations. She further stated that she did not think that this was her City's responsibility.

Mr. Walton explained to Ms. Rogers that it is her City's responsibility. He added that municipalities became involved in 2000 and the bus shelters are the responsibility of the municipalities. He stated that he believes that the reason municipalities wanted the responsibility at that time is because of the advertising revenue it generates.

Ms. Rogers stated that she knows that Lauderdale Lakes is gaining revenue from the new bus shelters and bus benches but she is shocked at the County for having limited resources and in giving up a resource that could generate funding for the County.

Mr. Walton informed the Committee that there are some things that BCT will try to do with the Cities in terms of trying to bring it under one (1) umbrella to try to standardize on ADA issues and comfort issues throughout the County and still allow each City to retain the revenue. He stated that it is believed that if everyone is brought under one umbrella a lot more advertising dollars could be generated which could then be turned into more shelters throughout the County.

Mr. Mena stated that the City of Coral Springs does not allow signage at bus terminals. He stated that there are green shelters throughout the City which contain no signage and the shelters are provided strictly from the City's general fund. He stated that even the Community Buses have no signage and there is no revenue generated from either because Coral Springs has always been very restrictive with signage. He advised that there may be other Cities with the same restrictions.

Mr. Walton expressed emphasis on the Fleet Size Comparison slide (#5). He stated that the comparison was completed a year ago so there have been changes in the numbers but they are relatively constant. He asked the Committee to focus on the *Population* and *Fleet* columns and by doing so they can see where we stand in comparison to other fleets throughout the Country.

Ms. Tanner asked what a single bus capacity is.

Mr. Walton responded that typically a bus seats 40 passengers.

Ms. Tanner asked about the articulated buses (expanded buses which bend around corners) in Miami-Dade County.

Mr. Walton corrected Ms. Tanner explaining that those buses are in Broward County and they have been in service for 2 weeks on State Road 7. Mr. Walton explained that they are in service on State Road 7 because it carries over 5 million people per year and it is the most heavily travelled route in Broward County. He provided a comparison that tri-rail carries about 3 million people per year.

The Chair asked Mr. Walton what other areas with similar population such as Atlanta are doing and what is Broward County not doing.

Mr. Walton replied that the difference is **revenue**. A local dedicated revenue source that allows participation on a federal level for billions of dollars which are available for transit building capital projects. He added that Mr. Delrio can elaborate on this when he discusses the Long-range Transportation Plan and list of projects. He explained that the Federal government will help with capital, they will not provide operating dollars but they want to know that if they help build something that the funds to operate it are available. Additionally they will expect the County to make capital contributions toward that. He advised that Mass Transit is going through this right now with the proposed Fort Lauderdale Downtown Rail System where the County has agreed to be the sponsor as well as to absorb the operating costs. He advised that they are looking for the DDA to come up with the dollars to build the system and a local contribution from the County to help build from a capital standpoint. He advised that all properties have some form of revenue such as the penny sales tax that the government knows is going to be there and they know they can fund and have an opportunity to participate in building. He stated that in Miami with the ½ cent they are able to extract millions of dollars for a number of other Transit Capital Projects. This is the difference. We do not have the dollars to attract the federal match for building our Transit Systems.

Mr. Mena asked Mr. Walton what he recommends the TSC do for BCT.

Mr. Walton stated that if nothing is done to provide the revenue stream then BCT can't even "tread water" because the County cannot continue to fund Transit to the level that they have in the past.

Mr. Esack and Mr. Rogow asked Mr. Walton what the funding choices might be.

Mr. Walton replied that a number of different options are looked at but the reality is that the most successful systems have some form of a committed sales tax. Whether ½ cent as in Miami-Dade or in some cases the full-penny he stated that there has to be a dedicated revenue stream to attract the Federal dollars to build rail systems, transit facilities etc.

The Chair asked if a dedicated revenue stream were secured for Mass Transit if there are plans in place or a logical idea of what things will be done that would best serve the needs of Broward County.

Mr. Rogow asked that The Chairs' question be revisited. He then asked, other than the sales tax if there are any other dedicated sources of funding.

Mr. Walton replied that there are some but they typically do not generate the revenue needed to support Transit in a County such as Broward.

Mr. Rogow asked for examples.

Mr. Walton stated for example there was a penny added to the gas tax in 1990 which raised about \$6 million which helped fund the Community Bus Program. He explained however that \$6 million dollars from a Transit perspective in Broward County is a drop in the bucket.

Mr. Rogow asked what type of revenue Mass Transit would be working towards.

Mr. Walton stated that had the penny tax passed last year, based on last year's sales would have generated approximate \$290 million which could have been leveraged into many more dollars from the Federal government.

Mr. Rogow advised Mr. Walton that he can forget about a sales tax. He stated that a proposed rise in the sales tax will never pass as that day is gone. He then asked Mr. Walton what else could be looked at in order to raise \$300 million dollars.

Mr. Walton replied that he did not know, he could only advise from his experience in Transit how it has worked. He advised that there are a number of systems out there such as San Diego for example which pulls 1/6 of a penny from Sales Tax as well as Hotel Taxes and cobble things together that way. But he advised that this is not consistent because after 911 when people

were not flying and hotels were empty this took a dive and they had to cut service. He stated that this could happen anywhere. Mr. Walton then advised that whatever we do needs to be much more substantial than what was done in 2000 with the \$6 Million.

Mr. Esack asked Mr. Rogow if he feels 19 to 20 months from now that his opinion would be the same as far as the penny tax.

Mr. Rogow stated that he does not think that people will vote to raise the sales tax and if the State puts something else out there even a penny to 8 – 8.5% he stated that it would not happen either. He believes that people would absolutely bridle that. He then stated that there has to be some other method because you can't just keep raising the sales taxes especially in a community like ours. He stated that in Portland, Seattle and places like that you will see more receptivity to it but not here in Broward County.

Ms. Tanner asked Mr. Walton if he thinks everyone understood what the penny sales tax was about. She stated that she understood it but there were a lot of people who did not and maybe the outreach was not good.

Mr. Walton explained that the campaign was contracted and not well funded, it was not well run and it did not receive the political support that it needed.

Ms. Tanner stated that if something is put out there it needs to be better explained.

Mr. Walton returned to the Chair's question posed earlier with regard to there being a defined plan. He stated that there was a plan that was put forth which basically doubled the number of buses, built 66 miles of rail 25 of which were on the FEC corridor and also with a Downtown Circulator BCT identified what is called Bus Rapid Transit or High Capacity / Higher Speed Transit on a number of East-West Corridors. He stated that the plan would have built the first segment of rail on 441 from revenues generated locally because of the time it takes to secure the federal dollars. He stated that it also had 10% of the penny (roughly \$30 million) which would have been distributed back to the Cities based upon the population distribution and another 10% of the penny would have gone to improve signalization throughout the County because right now the signals are not properly timed.

Ms. Tanner suggested letters of support with cities participating in the lobbying effort to pass it.

Mr. Walton stated that Mass Transit has letters of support from approximately 15 municipalities and some actually contributed funds.

Ms. Tanner asked if other Cities opposed.

Mr. Walton replied that there were some that opposed and some just sat out the discussion.

Mr. Mena advised that some weren't affected especially those in the Southern portion of the County. He stated that Coral Springs wants to get rid of the cars, but it has to make sense. He stated that he thinks some of the plans are too ambitious.

Mr. Walton stated that the bottom line is that it will not become important enough until gridlock gets to be too bad. He advised that we are getting there and if nothing is done, there will be an additional 450,000 cars on the road daily by the year 2030 based upon projections.

Mr. Mena mentioned the well organization of Atlanta and asked why we can't do the same here.

A general discussion ensued as to the belief of whether citizens would be willing to pay or not in comparison to the rising gas prices.

The Chair advised that when he travels to Washington or Atlanta if he has no business outside of the Metro areas of those Cities he does not rent a car because he knows that Mass Transit will be able to take him from the Airport, to his Hotel, to any other place he needs to go. He asked in terms of Broward County geography he has noticed that Mass Transit solutions presented have been more North/South. He asked what other things can be done to address the East/West Corridors.

Mr. Walton stated that East/West is critical because the employment centers are on the East and residences are in the West and each day the population of the East swells based upon people coming from the West. He advised that the plan that was put forth did address an East/West rail line which has been discussed for many years which went up I-595 to 441 to Broward Boulevard on into downtown. He stated that there is also High-capacity Transit or Bus Rapid Transit lines on Hollywood Pines Blvd., Atlantic Blvd., Sample Road and Broward Blvd. therefore the planners are thinking things through, it is just that there is no money to make things happen. He stated that the East/West has been considered and Mr. Delrio may have more input on this as well but from a Long-range Planning standpoint, the East/West

Connectors are critical and North/South is right now the single most populated commute, but if you add up the East/West he stated that it far exceeds that.

Mr. Rogow asked about tourist and if people who go on a Cruise if they pay another \$1 or two.

Ms. Tanner stated that she agreed, if we add another penny tax on everyone who came through.

Mr. Rogow said that he thinks this plus another \$1 or \$2 on the hotel bill; which, nobody pays any attention to..

Mr. Walton stated that this is already considered and tourist would pay approximately 30%.

Mr. Rogow stated that you would think that and you go in with a 7% tax on your purchase, you see it directly therefore it never sales. He stated that you have to tax people who don't get a chance to vote. He stated that this is really, what it is all about.

Mr. Esack stated that it seems that the ridership growth has increased dramatically in excess of the population growth and the users are getting a good deal considering there has been no rate increase in 12 years.

Mr. Rogow stated that during this time users of Mass Transit were/are being paid minimum wage rather than a living wage..

Ms. Rogers suggested the adoption of European ways e.g. in certain areas cars are not allowed.

Mr. Rogow advised that in London extra money must be paid to enter downtown.

Ms. Rogers stated that she is just saying that there are other ways to deal with the issue and if alternate solutions are proposed citizens will make a choice picking what is best for them.

Mr. Rogow departed at this time [11:07 am].

Mr. Walton stated that he would love the opportunity to come back with suggestions for other alternatives and he would like to take a look at what the most recent Transit initiatives have

been and they typically pass about 70% around the country but he would like to take a look to see how they were done.

Mr. Esack suggested that rather than using the statistic by 2030 that a more realistic projection be used such as a 10 year projection. He stated that most people really don't project that far in advance to their own lives.

The Chair agreed advising that the average person lives day-to-day and therefore suggested a 5 to 10 year.

Ms. Tanner agreed.

Mr. Walton stated that he will come back with a realistic projection.

Mr. Walton then reviewed the remainder of the slides addressing growth in the fleet, routes, schedules and passengers. He stated that passenger per hour accounted for every hour of revenue service compared nationally, Broward County exceeds the national numbers and our ridership is growing much faster than our capacity to carry them.

Ms. West confirmed that Mass Transit has been able to do what it is doing basically with the support of the County Commission where they supply a big chunk of the funding.

Mr. Walton replied yes that the County does provide a very large portion of the funding; funding also comes from the State and the capital dollars come from the Federal government and approximately \$1 million from advertising revenue. He stated that we also have what is called **Fare Box Recovery** which is a percentage of money that comes back from the fare box to support the operation of almost 23%.

Mr. Walton referring to page seven showed where Paratransit Growth, the unfunded mandate, in 2006 equaled 20% of Mass Transit budget and 3% of ridership. He explained that on Page 8 – Community Bus Growth, where Mass Transit provides \$20 per operating hour and in some cases will provide capital dollars to buy a vehicle. He informed the Committee that the dollars received from the penny gas tax funds raised for the Community Bus Program have been expended on the existing providers of the service other than concurrency dollars which is a new program.

Mr. Mena asked why can't there be a 25 cent charge for Community Bus rides to offset and maybe take care of growth of the service. He also asked if not charging is a mandated law.

Mr. Walton responded that it is not a mandated law and explained that there are 2 to 3 municipalities that do charge thereby offsetting their revenue. He explained again that Mass Transit will pay \$20.00 per hour but the cost to operate the systems is approximately \$40 to \$50 per hour. Therefore the Cities are paying the difference.

Ms. Tanner asked if the Schools / School Board have anything to do with the Community Bus Program.

Mr. Walton replied no.

Ms. Rogers advised that kids do use it.

Mr. Mena replied that they are going to take some of the City's income; something will have to be done. He then asked how much Cities are charging.

Mr. Walton stated that it is 25 cents.

Mr. Mena stated that this sounds reasonable.

Ms. Rogers stated that ridership would be limited because of connecting from one bus to the next.

Mr. Mena asked if the revenue would go back to the Cities or to Mass Transit.

Mr. Walton replied that it would be negotiated.

Mr. Mena stated that many people couldn't drive or use the service to get around within their communities such as going to the malls. etc.

Mr. Walton stated that ridership is very good in the community and it has grown more than 20%.

Slide Page 9 – BCT Bus Facility Capacity. Mr. Walton explained that BCT has two operating facilities located in Dania Beach and in Pompano. He stated that upon receipt of the new bus number 48 which is due in October this year, he stated that both operating facilities will be at

capacity. He stated that Mass Transit has been attempting to find land in the County to build a 3rd operating facility.

Ms. Rogers asked Mr. Walton if they have an idea of places where they would like to locate the new facility.

Mr. Walton advised that a study has been completed and sites have been narrowed to a list of 3 potential locations. He advised that one of the things in Transit that minimizes costs is the deadhead (i.e. to minimize the time that it actually takes the bus to get into revenue service). He stated that the problem Mass Transit has with just the two facilities is because the Southern facility has already maxed out. BCT has begun to run some of the (northern) Southern routes out of the Northern facility so takes a long time to get into service which costs money. Therefore, there is a need for something more centralized that will allow the buses to get into and out of service much more quickly.

Mr. Walton explained that slide number 10 is one of the biggest problems because the buses are being overused. He stated that 1/3 of the fleet is ready to be retired by federal standards. He stated that ideally a bus reaches its useful life at 12 years or 500,000 miles he stated that you want to average around 42,000 miles per year. He stated that Broward County buses are among the highest in the Country at approximately 54,000 miles per year. He explained that our buses are reaching 12 years old at about 9 ½ years of age which leads to increased maintenance costs.

Mr. Walton gave a brief overview of Slide #11 – Frequency of Service and moved on to slide page #12 – Transit Oriented Concurrency which he states generates the dollars for this year. He stated that funds that went to roads and new developments is now coming to Transit which will allow BCT to add services to the Community Bus and Fixed Route Services.

Ms. Tanner asked if this is an impact fee.

Mr. Walton replied yes.

Ms. Rogers asked if this impact fee has been increased over the last 12 years or if it is the same formula.

Mr. Walton explained that it is brand new and this is the first year. Mr. Walton explained that Slide #13 shows planned improvements to be made utilizing the concurrency funding. He stated that two weeks ago the New "Limited Stop" service on Federal Highway began and a new route was added on Stirling Road and other interval headway improvements were made on a number of routes. He stated that the balance of the year they are in discussions because of the County's budget position. He stated that Limited Stop is done, the New Route on Douglas Road is done and headway improvements / frequency improvements were made on route 72, 36 and 22.

The Chair acknowledged that Mr. Delrio has been waiting patiently and asked if there were any other points from Mr. Walton.

Ms. West recommended that Mr. Delrio return due to time limitations.

Mr. Delrio stated that he would be more than happy to return.

Mr. Walton continued stating that Mass Transit is talking to other transit systems in the region regarding using a Smart Card technology for fare payment, so that there will be seamless fare systems throughout the tri-County. He stated that this is coming along a little slower than expected. He stated that BCT began to purchase technology, Miami-Dade has it, Tri-rail is soliciting at this time and Palm Beach does not have the dollars right now to participate. He stated that Broward County Mass Transit also cooperates with them on a Customer Information Network that allows for regional trip planning.

Mr. Walton stated that the challenge is the dollars and he mentioned that the County cannot continue to support Mass Transit. He stated that in 2005, Broward County gave Mass Transit from the General Fund just under \$35 million, in 2006 they gave \$35.5 million and in 2007 it is up to \$39 million and given the other needs throughout the County he advised that there will not be any real growth in the system if the County can't get to support such levels.

Ms. Tanner asked how the County arrives at the dollars they provide Mass Transit; if it is the bottom line.

Mr. Walton replied no, they typically fund operations at a level of where it is and he will ask for more when the need arises and rarely do they say yes, so they basically stick to funding what Mass Transit has.

Ms. Rogers ask for a definition / explanation of unfunded mandates.

Mr. Walton stated that there is an unfunded federal mandate program which will cost Mass Transit approximately \$16 million dollars which comes directly from Mass Transit's operating budget.

The Chair asked Mr. Walton to look at the Charter while preparing his additional costs and Proposed Solutions Document for the TSC, for ways within the purview of the Charter by which the TSC might be able to assist Mass Transit. He then asked Mr. Walton if there are any sources of information including experts whom he believe the TSC should have speak regarding Mass Transit or any issues that he has spoke of.

Mr. Walton suggested that **FEC** (Florida East Coast Railroad); Other Transportation Providers in the Region, **South Florida Regional Transportation Authority** (SFRTA) from an informational standpoint, and what he suggested might be better, would be to bring in someone from the **Center for Transportation Excellence** who is the group who provides input and information on ballot initiatives nationally. He then advised staff that he will provide a contact person.

The Chair called for any more questions of Mr. Walton. There being no additional questions he thanked Mr. Walton for speaking today.

[End of Speaker]

Ms. Tanner asked if it would be okay to contact Mr. Walton directly with any additional questions and share information with everyone else through CRC Staff.

The Chair responded yes.

Mr. Mena asked Mr. Walton if he has any ideas of what plans there are to link Mass Transit with the Airport / Seaport.

Ms. West advised that Mr. Delrio will be able to address this question.

Mr. Delrio advised that he has a presentation which was presented at the MPO a few months ago which shows all of the initiatives and he will be able to provide that presentation which would be an entire meeting.

Mr. Mena suggested that Mr. Delrio be the speaker at the next meeting.

V Next Meeting

A general discussion ensued with regard to the time and date of the next meeting. It was agreed to postpone the decision until everyone can coordinate their schedules. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 18 and staff will coordinate with the Chair and email everyone with a final date since the 18th was convenient for everyone.

The Committee agreed to invite a speaker from the Airport / Seaport for the next meeting. It was the consensus to invite one speaker unless it is known that two speakers can fit into one meeting.

The Chair called for public comment.

VI Public Comment

Mr. Dan Glickman – Deerfield Beach

Mr. Glickman stated that the first meeting was a very good meeting and he thanked the Committee for allowing him to attend. The Committee responded thanking Mr. Glickman for attending.

VIII ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion and no additional comments the meeting was adjourned at 11:32AM.

The minutes of this meeting are recorded on CRC-TSC CD # 4.5.07 (BCGV CTR)