

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY – PUNTA GORDA**

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE 21, 2021

MURDOCK ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, ROOM #119

PORT CHARLOTTE FL 33948

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Commissioner Joseph Tiseo,** Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Chair

**Commissioner Christopher G. Constance,** MD, Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Vice Chair

**Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch,** Charlotte County Commissioner

**Commissioner James Herston**, Charlotte County Airport Authority

**Mayor Lynne Matthews**, Punta Gorda City Council

**STAFF PRESENT**

Gary Harrell, MPO Director

Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Principal Planner

Wendy Scott, MPO Planner

Betty-Ann Sherer, MPO Planner

Janette S. Knowlton, Charlotte County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)

Heather Bacus, Charlotte County Human Resources

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Ronnie Blackshear, MPO Director Applicant

Thomas Burke, MPO Director Applicant

Ravi Kamarajugadda, MPO Director Applicant

James Brown, CAC Member

Noah Fossick, City of North Port

**OTHERS PARTICIPATING VIRTUALLY**

Bekie Leslie, MPO Administrative Services Coordinator

##### **1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

MPO Chair Tiseo called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. The roll call was taken, and all members were present.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

*Agenda Item #4 was completed prior to the start of interviews.*

**4. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**3. Interview of select applicants for MPO Director position – Discussion/Direction**

MPO Chair Tiseo introduced Janette Knowlton to explain the interview process. Each MPO Board Member had reviewed MPO Director applications after receiving an informational binder. Collectively, the top three applicants were shortlisted to interview at the meeting. Forty-five minutes per applicant was scheduled for the interview process. Staff suggested that the MPO Board Member take turns covering a listed category. Identical questions would be asked of each applicant with specific follow-up questions allowed for each individual. Scoring would be from 1 to 5 with a total of 25 points as a perfect score. MPO Board Members were asked to make notes throughout the interviews. On page 7, there was the Candidate Summary Evaluation sheet which would be used for scoring. After all three candidates were interviewed, each MPO Board Member’s score sheets would be completed, signed and given to Human Resources Director Heather Bacus for tallying the scores. Chair Tiseo kept track of the time for questions and responses. Janette Knowlton requested that MPO Board Members place each candidate’s name and their own name on each sheet. This was the interview schedule:

* Ronnie Blackshear (2:15 pm interview time)
* Thomas Burke (3:00 pm interview time)
* Ravi Kamarajugadda (3:45 pm interview time)

Each applicant was allotted one additional minute to a total of 46 minutes each.

Commissioner Constance suggested a change on #4 of the scoring sheet to cross out the words “in some areas” before scoring was completed.

**5. Staff Comments**

Gary Harrell noted that three great candidates had been selected. Whomever is selected will be managing a great professional staff. He introduced the MPO’s newest planner, Betty-Ann Sherer. Commissioner Tiseo welcomed her.

Heather Bacus tallied the MPO Board Members score sheets. Janette Knowlton announced that Thomas Burke received the highest score.

***Commissioner Deutsch*** *made a Motion to select* ***Thomas Burke*** *as the potential MPO Director****,*** *and authorize Human Resources staff to negotiate a hiring package with Mr. Burke and then, return to the MPO Board in another Special Meeting or at the next regular meeting to finalize approval.* ***Mayor Matthews*** *seconded the Motion, which was approved unanimously.*

**6. Member Comments**

There were no additional Member comments.

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the MPO Board will be held on Monday, July 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at

the Murdock Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Building B, Room #119, Port Charlotte, Florida.