

CHARLOTTE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD (LCB)
REGULAR MEETING
January 8, 2026

Minutes of the regular meeting held in a hybrid format on January 8, 2026, utilizing TEAMS remotely and in-person at the Charlotte County Family Services building on 21500 Gibraltar Dr. Building A, Port Charlotte, FL 33952.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON

Commissioner Ken Doherty, *Charlotte County Commissioner (LCB Chair)*
Suzanne Roberts, *Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic - Medical Community Representative (LCB Vice-Chair)*
Donna Fain, *Agency for Persons with Disabilities*
Maricela Morado, *Area Agency on Aging-Florida Department of Elder Affairs*
Lynn Dorler, *Children-at-Risk Representative*
Victoria Upthegrove, *FDOT, District One Modal Development Office*
Carmen Henry, *Regional Workforce Development*
Ezequiel Tirado, *Veteran Services (Alternate)*
Shery Stahnke, *Economically Disadvantaged Representative (Alternate)*

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY

Dottie Fulton, *Citizen Advocate-User*
Leigh Ann Bellamy, *Division of Blind Services*

ABSENT MEMBERS

Tony Conte, *Public Education-School Transportation (alternate)*
Tabitha Larrauri, *Department of Children & Families*
Cheryl Sytsma, *Disabled Interests Representative*
Pamela Jordan, *Representative for Elderly Interests*
Vacant, *Local Private-for-Profit Transportation Industry Representative*
Michael Stahler, *Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)*
Joseph Sabatino, *Citizen Advocate*

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Lakshmi N. Gurram, *MPO Director*
Mark Yaxis, *MPO Multimodal Planner*
Bekie Leslie, *MPO Administrative Services Coordinator*
Heidi Maddox, *Charlotte County Transit*
Emily Black, *FDOT*
Aimee Shafran, *Charlotte County Fiscal Services*
Lindsey McGinnis, *Veteran Services*

OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY

Sheri Powers, *Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)*

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

LCB Chair Ken Doherty called the Regular LCB Meeting to order at 10:08 am, immediately following the closing of the LCB Public Meeting. Since some members may have arrived after the call to order during the Public Meeting, any member now present was noted. All members present during the Public Meeting were also present during the Regular Meeting. An in-person quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes: November 6, 2025

Maricela Morado made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. **Lynn Dorler** seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

5. Election of LCB Vice-Chairperson

The LCB Bylaws require the election of a Vice-Chairperson during the first scheduled meeting of the calendar year. The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by a majority vote of a quorum of the members of the Board present.

LCB Chair Ken Doherty asked Mr. Laks Gurram to chair the election of the LCB Vice-Chair. Mr. Gurram opened the floor for nominations for LCB Vice Chair.

Chair Ken Doherty nominated Suzanne Roberts as LCB Vice Chair. **Lynn Dorler** seconded the motion. No other nominations were received. **Suzanne Roberts** was elected unanimously.

6. Overview of the LCB Process (Annual Training)

As described in the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) annual planning grant executed with the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, planning staff members are required to annually “provide technical assistance and training for the local coordinating board.”

Staff presented the LCB training video available on the MPO [website](#).

Following the video, the Board held a brief discussion regarding both the video and its content. Chair Ken Doherty asked about the status of the new video currently under development. Staff responded that the updated version is expected to be completed in time for the next LCB training in January 2027, as they continue working with Charlotte County TV (CCTV) to update the video's style and presentation.

Maricela Morado inquired whether the information included in the presentation attached to this agenda item had been updated to reflect current data. Staff confirmed that while much of the content remains consistent from year to year, all figures and information that have changed within the past year have been updated and included in the attachment provided to members.

7. Review/Endorsement of Charlotte County's Section 5310 and 5311 Grant Applications

Federal transportation legislation includes the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 and Section 5311 funding programs. Section 5310 is aimed at enhancing mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities, while rural residents benefit from Section 5311. Charlotte County Transit is applying for both Section 5310 as well as Section 5311 funds.

Heidi Maddox introduced the item and described the purpose of both grants as they relate to Charlotte County. Ms. Maddox stated that Charlotte County Transit is seeking \$100,000 in federal funds with a direct match from Charlotte County for Section 5310 funds as well as \$82,800 in federal funds with a direct match from Charlotte County. Mr. Gurram provided insight into the fact that Section 5310 is aimed for seniors and persons with disabilities, and Section 5311 is aimed for rural residents.

Chair Ken Doherty sought clarification on how these numbers for funding are determined. Ms. Maddox stated that Charlotte County Transit determines the funding needs based on a trips-by-purpose methodology.

Suzanne Roberts made a motion to endorse Charlotte County's Section 5310 and 5311 grant applications. **Chair Ken Doherty** seconded the motion which passed unanimously. **Victoria Upthegrove**, FDOT, abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest in these grant applications being sent to FDOT.

8. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Quarterly Report

Given the timing of the holiday period resulting in a short turnaround time, the CTC Quarterly Report covering the October-December 2025 timeframe was not available for the January 8, 2026 LCB meeting. It will be reviewed along with the January-March 2026 report at the May 7, 2026 LCB meeting.

9. Member Presentations

As discussed at the September 4, 2025, LCB meeting, during each Regular LCB meeting, members are invited to prepare and present their roles outside of the LCB in hopes of providing insight into the work their peers are doing, fostering a better understanding of each member's role on LCB and opening dialogue for cooperation and coordination. The following presentations were given at this meeting.

1. Ezequiel Tirado – Charlotte County Veteran Services (Veteran Services)

Ezequiel Tirado presented on behalf of Matthew McGee, representing Charlotte County Veteran Services. Following the presentation, there was discussion involving unhoused veterans and veterans suffering from mental illness, which Mr. Tirado stated the department does extensive work with both groups. There was also a comment made that this information provided would allow other members of the board in their own roles to refer people directly to the free service offered by Charlotte County. Chair Ken Doherty also mentioned the ability for the county to streamline the process for veterans to obtain services guaranteed to them and to do so for free as a county service was the goal of creating the department.

2. Angela Hemstreet – Goodwill (Economically Disadvantaged)

Angela Hemstreet presented, representing the economically disadvantaged interest in her role at Goodwill of Southwest Florida. Following the presentation, Suzanne Roberts thanked Ms. Hemstreet for prior work they had done together during the last hurricane. Chair Doherty mentioned that he was unaware of the important work that Goodwill does aside from their typical storefront operations which Ms. Hemstreet acknowledged is an ongoing issue she continues to encounter.

3. Lynn Dorler – Boys and Girls Clubs of Charlotte County (Children-at-Risk)

Lynn Dorler presented on behalf of the children-at-risk interest representing his role at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Charlotte County. Prior to his presentation, Mr. Dorler thanked Charlotte County for providing the organization with their facility and the opportunities that arise from being housed within a county facility. Following the presentation, Chair Doherty mentioned that it is logical to put the Boys and Girls Clubs of Charlotte County within a county facility, and that he can see that there is a need for the organization to expand into other areas of the county.

10. Public Comments

No public comments were received.

11. Staff Comments

MPO Director, Lakshmi N. Gurram, provided staff comments.

The next two MPO Board meetings are joint meetings held with Sarasota-Manatee MPO as well as Lee County MPO. The Sarasota-Manatee MPO joint meeting will be held on January 26, 2026 at 11:00 am at the Doubletree by Hilton across from the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport, 8009 15th St E, Sarasota, FL 34249. The Lee County MPO joint meeting will be held on February 27th, 2026 at 9:30 am at the Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, 11330 Burnt Store Rd, Punta Gorda, FL 33955. The next regular MPO Board meeting will take place on Monday March 30, 2026. MPO Staff also attended a CTD regular meeting on December 8, 2025 in which they discussed the future of grants aimed at providing funding for innovative ways to address the needs of public transportation. Funding for this grant is available in all 67 counties of Florida.

Charlotte County Transit Operations Manager, Heidi Maddox, provided transit comments.

Transit is continuing to work with their marketing firm on the rebranding. Though the quarterly report was not available at this meeting, Quarter one of the county fiscal year has seen an increase of 3% in total trips provided since the previous year.

12. Member Comments

The following members provided comments.

Suzanne Roberts thanked Transit for their cooperation during a conference held at Sunseeker resort by shuttling attendees between the conference and clinics in the area. Ms. Roberts mentioned that the attendees gave praise to the abilities of Charlotte County Transit to accommodate them.

Maricela Morado mentioned that the area agency for the Florida Department of Elderly Affairs is holding the first inaugural awards for older adults with disabilities. These awards are aimed at providing recognition for adults with disabilities within the area doing service for the community and to recognize that service and the impact they cause. Ms. Morado mentioned that they are currently accepting nominations.

Angela Hemstreet took the opportunity to pass a handout to members that discussed the Opportunity Accelerator program offered by Goodwill.

Victoria Upthegrove mentioned that FDOT is aware that Charlotte County has applied for both the Section 5310 and Section 5311 grants this year. She also mentioned that FDOT is providing a TDP workshop at the FDOT District 1 Bartow Office on January 21 that she will

send the information for if any member is interested in attending. Finally, she introduced Emily Black who, moving forward, will serve as the FDOT liaison for Charlotte County LCB.

Lynn Dorler added to the information shared during his member presentation under Agenda Item 9, noting that in 2025, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Charlotte County served over 5,000 children in total.

Chair Ken Doherty mentioned that the county is aware of the state's consideration of removing property taxes in the next legislative session and at the county level they are closely examining what types of impact they can expect from losing this essential revenue stream to fund local governmental services.

12. Adjournment (Next Meeting – May 7, 2026)

There being no further business, the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board adjourned at 11:38 am. The next LCB meeting is a regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2026, at the Charlotte County Family Services building, 21500 Gibraltar Dr. Building A, Port Charlotte, FL 33952 at 10:00 am.