



April 25, 2023
Infrastructure Surtax Advisory Committee
Meeting

The regular meeting of the Okaloosa County Infrastructure Surtax Advisory Committee was called to order at 10:00 A.M. in the Okaloosa County Public Works Building, Large Conference Room, 1759 S. Ferdon Blvd, Crestview. Members present were: Matthew Turpin, Chairman and District 4 representative; District 1 representative: Larry Ward; District 2 representative: Jeff Fanto, Vice Chairman; District 3 representative: Hannah Wilburn. Also present were: Nathan Boyles, District 3 County Commissioner; Jason Autrey, Public Works Director; Brad Emory, Clerk of Court's Chief of Staff; Scott Bitterman, County Engineer; Roy Petrey, Engineering Manager; Carisse LeJeune, Surtax Project Manager; Steve Blalock, Project Engineer; DeRita Mason, Purchasing Manager; Glynn Stringer, Surtax Project Coordinator; Melissa Wilson, Surtax Project Coordinator.

Opening Remarks and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened by Chairman Matthew Turpin. Ms. LeJeune advised the meetings are recorded for public records. Mr. Jason Autrey stated that the meeting had been properly noticed in accordance with section 286.011, Florida Statutes on January 24, 2023.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chairman Turpin opened by thanking the team for putting the meeting together and entertained a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes as written. Ms. Hannah Wilburn noted the minutes are missing the letter "n" on Ms. Wilburn's last name and requested the minutes to be amended with that correction. Ms. LeJeune stated the correction will be made. Chairman Turpin amended the motion to accept the minutes as noted with the change. Ms. Hannah Wilburn motioned to accept and the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Jeff Fanto. Approved unanimously 4-0 with amendment to minutes.

Chairman Turpin inquired if there were any public speaking cards or public comments. None were noted.

Public Comments

None.

Presentations

None.

Project Updates

Chairman Turpin opened the floor to discuss funding for County Road Highway 2, Surtax Project #ST000014. Ms. LeJeune highlighted the project, and stated that the construction contract had gone out to bid with an amendment based upon a Florida Department of Transportation inspection of the Yellow River bridge which cited needed repairs. An amendment to the bid document increased the original estimated construction costs. The construction costs are now substantially higher than the original estimate due to the bridge repair and increased labor/material costs of the overall project.

The additional ten (10) percent project contingency brought the construction costs to over \$14 million and the time period for construction was increased to 450 days to accommodate the bridge repair. The project is expected to also see increases in CEI, post-design, and project management costs as a result of the extended time period.

Mr. Autrey added while the numbers are higher than the original projection, the increase is in line with construction costs. He noted the total project costs go up to \$15.7 million but reminded committee members that we have \$3 million from the State of Florida as well. He furthered this is a healthy dose of funding from the State to complete this project and the \$15.7 million accounts for total project cost plus 10% contingency costs for any issues that may arise. The \$1.4 contingency is healthy and within normal range. Surtax funds are healthy and we can afford to complete this project with the bridge repairs included. This is a prime example of a project that was broken into two pieces and we are condensing them into one and it is going to be a wonderful project with the benefit of the bridge repairs all done early.

Chairman Turpin inquired about the estimated cost of the bridge repair. Mr. Autrey advised the bid proposal cost was \$192,000. Chairman Turpin cited we are looking at \$1.2M - \$1.3M increase in construction and labor costs. Mr. Autrey advised that is correct and noted that it matches the contingency number.

Vice Chair Fanto inquired who authorizes expenditures of the contingency if they are required. Mr. Autrey stated we have a purchasing policy that limits us in terms of the amount. It is limited to 10% of the total contract value or the line item without going back to the board. Typically, in road construction our line items like asphalt can be projected but tend to flux on average 1% – 2%.

Chairman Turpin stated the matter can be saved for discussion but if there were no other questions or items, he would entertain a motion. Vice Chair Fanto made the motion to approve and it was seconded by Mr. Larry Ward. Motion approved 4-0.

Office of Management and Budget

Ms. LeJeune shared Ms. Faye Douglas could not attend due to a budget meeting conflict. Mr. Autrey advised he reviewed the County Administrator's presentation for today and the Surtax program is very healthy. There is a note that states we are going to start looking towards projects for years eight (8), nine (9), and ten (10) for Surtax because we will finish our projects early. He noted the misnomer of 50 & 5 for dirt road stabilization. Last year we applied \$4 million of surtax funding and should that occur again, we will have all dirt roads in Okaloosa County stabilized by the end of fiscal 2024. This creates an annual savings of \$250,000 in grader sweeps alone, mitigation against erosion, added convenience for residence that live on these roadways, and Commission Boyles and I are a proponent for that. Chairman Turpin stated he thought the Surtax allocation for dirt road stabilization was an annual line item and inquired if it would need to be approved every year going forward. Mr. Autrey stated the 50 & 5 program was intended for any surplus Surtax that we would apply towards road stabilization and it was required that each year we would look at it. We are required to look at it again in the future and Board approval is required.

Clerk of Court and Comptroller

Mr. Brad Emory stated there was nothing to add.

Public Comments

None.

Chairman Turpin recognized Commissioner Nathan Boyles and thanked him for his attendance. Commissioner Boyles stated that he appreciates the work being done by the Advisory Committee and added Surtax has been very successful with addressing some priorities for our communities. He extended a thank you to the team. Chairman Turpin added the committee appreciates his support.

Chairman Turpin further added comments have been made that the School Board is doing a great job publicly speaking about their Surtax projects and we need to have more verbal communication on our projects. Mr. Autrey stated it is a great idea and advised that Mr. Nick Tomecek, Okaloosa County Public Information Officer, has reached out with some ideas that fit into this category. There are signs out there but the schools are getting great exposure because every school has a facility being built. Chairman Turpin added an easier way to broadcast our projects would be to get with the Chambers of Commerce during their meetings and promote what is being done with Surtax funding once a quarter. He continued whether it is someone from the panel, Committee, or the County, we would like to have Surtax projects be more promoted.

Ms. LeJeune inquired if any of the members belong to Rotary or Kiwanis. Chairman Turpin stated that was a great idea and we can have discussions in the next meeting of a plan to be more visual and increase our verbal communication. Ms. LeJeune suggested we can create a short PowerPoint presentation and provide talking points. Commissioner Boyles added to be mindful of the fact that the schools can have a thousand kids and families that will experience a direct impact to the community through their Surtax projects, which may be different from stormwater projects as a result.

Vice Chair Fanto inquired if the team had looked at the benefit for the roads to military readiness. Mr. Autrey stated our projects that are meaningful to them are spoke to and the collector roadway has significant meaning and value to the military. Vice Chair Fanto made mention he is trying to look for other talking points that make mention of the other benefits of these projects and the investments that have been made. Mr. Autrey agreed and added the 98 Parallel Collector is the perfect example and it is how we framed the Triumph grant issue, which is Surtax backed, to get us the Southwest Crestview ByPass. Vice Chair Fanto added he believes we should tie it to the overall value of the military to Okaloosa's economy.

Ms. Wilburn added she would like to know the ways we are communicating about our projects and would like to know if there is any opportunity for collaboration to learn more. The panel has a group of people that are pretty plugged in and could give recommendations that could be added on to the current methods. She suggested having a one-off meeting with plugged in committee members to talk about what the communication strategy looks, and allow for some recommendations that could assist. Mr. Autrey stated the team will compile what they have available and are open to collaboration. He furthered the team can bring an outline of what they have done up to this point to the next meeting so the committee can provide some ideas. Mr. Ward suggested that combining with the schools to spread the word on the Public Works Surtax projects would be a win-win.

Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled at 10:00 am on Tuesday, May 25th, 2023 at Okaloosa Water & Sewer Bldg. located at 1804 Lewis Turner Blvd, Suite 300 (3rd floor), Fort Walton Beach, FL.

Chairman Turpin extended thanks Ms. LeJeune and the team.

Adjournment

Chairman Turpin entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wilburn made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:23 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Wilson

Surtax Project Coordinator