



May 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 Water & Sewer Bldg., 1804 Lewis Turner Blvd, Suite 300 (3rd floor), Fort Walton Beach, FL.

Members present were: District 1 representative: Larry Ward; Vice Chairman and District 2 representative: Jeff Fanto; District 3 representative: Hannah Wilburn; Jim Foreman, District 5.

Also present were: Jason Autrey, Public Works Director; J.D. Peacock, Okaloosa County Clerk; Scott Bitterman, County Engineer; Roy Petrey, Engineering Manager; Carisse LeJeune, Surtax Project Manager; Eric Aden, Okaloosa County Sheriff; Major April McDaniel, Okaloosa County Jail, Chief Robert Bage, City of Fort Walton Beach Police Department, Captain Ron Kimball, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; Major David Allen, Administration Bureau, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; Nick Tomecek, Public Information Officer; Joshua Allen, Board Services Director, Okaloosa County Clerk of Court ; Brad Emory, Chief of Staff, Okaloosa County Clerk of Court; Glynn Stringer, Surtax Project Coordinator; Melissa Wilson, Surtax Project Coordinator.

Opening Remarks and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened by Mr. Jason Autrey. Ms. Carisse 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 April 20, 2023.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Vice Chairman Fanto opened by thanking the team for putting the meeting together and entertained a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes as written. Mr. Jim Foreman made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Larry Ward. Approved unanimously 4-0.

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

Public Comments

None.

Presentations

Vice Chairman Fanto introduced the Okaloosa County Sherriff's Office (OCSO) to discuss their Data Management System funding request. Sheriff Eric Aiden presented the Public Safety Data Information Exchange Project PowerPoint printout. The funding request had been placed on hold for a year to allow for more in-depth product and vendor research. Records Management Software (RMS) is very important and has become a double edge sword for the staff that works on the road. The OCSO moved from handwritten reports to automation around 1999-2000. Today the Deputies, Jailors, etc. have much more administration functions. OCSO were one of the first agencies to have RMS in the area with a company called Smart Cop. Customer service level of Smart Cop has declined and the product itself has been

superseded by their peers. One company that the OCSO is looking at has the interface capability, and there is a public safety component in the Surtax funding.

To answer why is this necessary, Deputy Sheriffs' have to make four arrest copies; one goes to the Judge, the Clerk of Court, the Jail, and the agency of record get copies. The Jail would benefit from this investment. County Clerk Peacock's staff has to get the data entered accurately for the Jail and one digit off can cause problems. The new system can import automatically and improve efficiencies. The cost is about \$900k for the OCSO and it bumps it to \$1.4 million with the Jail included. Compatibility allows for import of data at the same time. The OCSO has to get a new RMS and we know there is an upfront cost. The new system is a major startup cost and carry costs are not being requested. Those would be put in the annual budget. The OCSO feels it is a reasonable request for the Infrastructure Surtax Advisory Committee (ISAC) to consider.

Mr. Ward inquired how the other municipalities responded, and if they will interface with the product. Sheriff Aiden advised they are not going to change vendors and would like to have funding for the interface value. The County Clerk's Office has the capability and would be requesting \$41k to allow for the compatibility for importation. The Jail would benefit the most.

Mr. Peacock added he had the benefit of viewing this from many different perspectives, having been in many different roles across the County. Mr. Peacock continued, in this day and age we all have tons of data going back and forth. There is currently no system where the data automatically transfers, which takes away valuable time. The efficiency that can be gained by eliminating the paper will bring value to the core missions. A value for all the stakeholders is that the Jail is the hub of all the data and the paperwork initiates from the Jail after the agencies make the arrest. The interoperability data exchange component is the greatest benefit because the computer systems have to have the ability to send data back and forth as opposed to printing it, typing in all the data, and sending it. The pre-trial service team does not have a system package at all and uses spreadsheets and word documents. A more efficient system will gain significant cost benefits down the road, specifically the interoperability component of it. It will allow data to flow to the Jail to pre-trial, back to the agencies, and back to the County Clerk's Office. The OCSO cannot log in to review a case, and this would allow more access to data.

Sheriff Aiden stated that we all stand to benefit from it because it is the same premise behind the Radio System project (#ST000018) with the municipalities. The RMS system is over 25 years old and this would be a long-term fix. Some of the administrative functions need to be taken off the Deputies to let them to get back to public safety, but to also alleviate some of the stress on them because it takes time away from the core mission. Police Chief Bage from Fort Walton Beach and Major McDaniel's from the Jail were asked if they wanted to speak about the system.

Chief Bage stated he wanted to be here to support the process because it is desperately needed. He continued, when you look at the redundancy of work, we should not be doing data entry work, we should be out in the community enforcing the law, encouraging public safety, and being out there in the community. We are fully committed to inoperability and that is really what we want to see. If we can have the whole criminal justice system operating together, I think that is really where we need to be at the end of the day. Sheriff Aiden stated that the State Attorney was on the list too.

Ms. Hannah Wilburn inquired if multiple municipalities stand to benefit, why are they not required to share in the cost?

Mr. Peacock added that we are not talking about the product the municipalities use, it is the interoperability of the system component we are talking about. Fort Walton Beach just went through a product upgrade. The County Clerk's Office is going through an upgrade. The API (application programming interface) tool kit is an increased cost to allow us to have the interoperability data exchange.

Further discussions ensued and Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to approve. Mr. Ward made the motion to approve. Mr. Foreman seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

Sheriff Aiden thanked the committee and extended his appreciation.

Project Updates

Vice Chairman Fanto opened the floor for project updates.

- A. April 30, 2023 Surtax Project updates – Ms. LeJeune presented some of the projects highlights.
 - a. Overbrook Area Stormwater Improvement (ST000011) –The project is in the permit and acquisition phase.
 - b. Lloyd Street Stormwater Improvement (ST000012) – Staff is negotiating a task order for design and will be funded by RESTORE grant money.
 - c. Lake Loraine Stormwater (ST000022) –Substantial Completion has been issued and the project should be closing out soon.
 - d. Santa Rosa Boulevard (ST000024) – Project kick-off meeting has been held and the project is officially in the design phase.
 - e. Old Bethel Sidewalk Improvements (ST000027) – Project is completed and closed out.
 - f. Live Oak Church Road Improvements (ST000028) – The advertisement for bid is open and the bid opening is scheduled for June 28th.

- B. Surtax Project Reconciliation –
 - a. Ms. LeJeune presented the reconciliation spreadsheet and inquired if there were any questions from the review. None were noted.

- C. Southwest Crestview ByPass (ST000009) – Ms. LeJeune thanked the committee for allowing the format change.
 - a. Mr. Autrey added the project is going really well. Timeline is about two (2) years and PJ Adams widening should be done by the end of this calendar year. DOT interchange portion is about three (3) years out. Discussions continued.

- D. Annualized Funding Projection –
 - a. Ms. LeJeune advised permission to finalize the new format was provided in previous meeting and it is now a living document. Brief overview of the sheet was provided. Mr. Autrey added in year five to six, over half of list is done, we are making great progress and looking forward to beginning the next projects on the list.

- E. Project Update List –
 - 1. Surtax Project Dashboard – Ms. LeJeune thanked Melissa Wilson for the development and management of the new Power BI Dashboard. Printouts were presented. Ms. LeJeune

presented the Surtax webpage on the projected screen and proposed several changes to upgrade the site and dissemination of information. Discussions ensued.

2. Dirt Road Stabilization – Ms. LeJeune referred the Committee to the Annualized Funding Projection spreadsheet under Transportation Capacity and explained that Bone Creek Road and Dowdy Road were originally identified as independent projects, but were both completed under project #ST000021, Dirt Road Stabilization. Staff requested that the identified allocation of funding in the amount of \$1, 452,000 for Bone Creek Road and Dowdy Road be allocated and transferred to the Dirt Road Stabilization project to have all dirt roads stabilized by 2024. Mr. Autrey added we have funds allocated so let's keep going with 50 and 5. Discussions continued.

Mr. Foreman motioned to recommend approval of placing the dollars into the Dirt Road Stabilization project. Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

3. Transportation Capacity – Ms. LeJeune noted that County Road 393 Phase 3 Reconstruction project & Old River Road Improvements project were identified in the 2019 Annualized Funding Projection spreadsheet. Staff requested \$200K for the County Road 393 Phase 3 Reconstruction project for preliminary design to address road reconstruction.

The Old River Road Improvements project can be completed in house to stabilize the road base, replace the wooden bridge, and stabilize the ditches. Staff is requesting \$1M for asphalt, bridge replacement, and stormwater improvements.

Mr. Foreman made a motion to recommend allocation of \$1.2M for the two projects. Ms. Wilburn seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

4. Transportation Capacity – Ms. LeJeune requested funding for Al Hammett Road and noted it is a sub-project under the West 98 Stormwater project. The project was originally slated to construct a secondary convenience system to Skylark Road due to neighborhood flooding. The project is currently at 90% plans for construction but there is a property owner that will not grant a utility easement. There is another property owner willing to grant an easement and the project needs a redesign to the outfall. An additional \$30K for redesign is being requested.

Vice Chairman Fanto inquired if \$30K will beget the finalized design. Ms. LeJeune responded yes.

Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to approve recommendation for allocation. Ms. Wilburn made a motion to approve. Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

5. County Pond 314 Stormwater Improvement – Ms. LeJeune summarized the project which is to improve stormwater issues in the area by building a second (2nd) retention pond adjacent to the existing pond and connect the two to allow for more room for stormwater runoff. The project is currently at 60% design and additional property on the other side of the pond has been identified as being owned by the County. Staff is requesting an additional \$35K to expand design to include the third (3rd) pond, and to include contingencies for utilities.

Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to approve recommendation of allocation of the additional \$35K. Mr. Ward made motion to approve. Ms. Wilburn seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

6. NW Crestview Bypass – Ms. LeJeune stated that Staff is requesting allocation of funding to purchase an easement for corridor protection and deferred to Mr. Scott Bitterman. Mr. Bitterman explained that the NW Bypass was one of the original projects on the Annualized Funding Projection list as a study. Staff earmarked \$2.4 million in Surtax funding but was able to leverage \$750K in Surtax dollars as a FDOT 50/50 grant match. Discussions ensued and Mr. Autrey asked the Committee to recommend allocation of \$235K to ensure the preservation of the corridor. He noted preserving the corridor now is cheaper and more effective prior to the build out of the planned residential development.

Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to approve recommendation of allocation of an additional \$235K to the project. Ms. Wilburn made a motion to approve. Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

7. 6th Street Stormwater and School Resource Officer Support projects – Ms. LeJeune noted both projects are complete and closed out. Audits have also been completed and reconciled with finance. Staff is requesting approval to transfer remaining funds back to Surtax Reserve.

Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to approve. Mr. Foreman made a motion to approve. Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

F. Public outreach draft –

- a. Ms. LeJeune presented a draft Communication Strategy Outline and asked if there were any questions from the Committee. Discussions ensued.

Vice Chairman Fanto requested that this topic be brought back as a discussion item at the next meeting.

Office of Management and Budget

Mr. Autrey stated Faye Douglas, OMB Director is in budget meetings but added the budget has been reviewed and is looking good.

Clerk of Court and Comptroller

Mr. Peacock stated the report that is generated by Staff is specific to Surtax and added he will assess if the Clerk's Office will continue to provide the report in the future because the Surtax team is doing such a good job. Mr. Autrey noted revenue is up at \$22M projected for next year and the original was \$12M.

Public Comments

None.

Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled at 10:00 am on Wednesday, Aug 16th, 2023 in North Okaloosa County – First Floor – Board of County Commission Chambers, located in the Okaloosa County Courthouse, 101 James Lee Boulevard East, Crestview, FL 32536.

Adjournment

Vice Chairman Fanto stated that Memorial Day is celebrated this weekend and asked that everyone remember those who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms.

Vice Chairman Fanto entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wilburn motioned to adjourn. Mr. Ward seconded and Mr. Ward seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Wilson

Surtax Project Coordinator