

**Meeting Summary**  
**SWFRPC Technical Stakeholders Committee**  
**Regional Component of LeeTran VCLI Grant Project**  
**November 4, 2013**

A meeting of the SWFRPC Technical Stakeholders Committee for coordinating the regional component of LeeTran VCLI grant project was held on November 4, 2013, at the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council offices in Fort Myers, Florida.

**Attendees:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Ann Arnall, Director	Lee County Human Services
Julia Davis	Omnibus Innovations Group, appearing on behalf of GoodWheels
John Ebling	Lee County Veterans Affairs
Wayne Gaither	LeeTran Planning Department
Paul Goyette, Deputy Director	LeeTran Fixed Route Division
Linda Hafner, Director	United Way 211
Courtney Lallo	SWFRPC
Sean McCabe	SWFRPC
Deborah Reardon	SWFL Works
Kathryn Sayers	Cape Coral Mini Bus Director
Don Scott	Lee County MPO Director
Dennis Simon	Veterans' Representative
Debra Stephans	FDOT Transit Project Coordinator
Tim Walker	SWFRPC
Jeff Wood	VA Clinic Mental Health Counselor
Margaret Wuerstle, Exec. Director	SWFRPC

**Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introductions**

Meeting called to order by Sean McCabe at 3:05 pm; attendees introduced themselves.

**Agenda Item #2: Meeting Summary of September 16, 2013 Meeting**

Meeting summary distributed.

**Agenda Item #3: Overall Project Update from LeeTran Perspective, Mr. Paul Goyette**

Mr. Goyette provided an update on project status; county is finalizing RFP to go to county purchasing department. County is considering opening up the scope of work to include some other intelligent transportation pieces to the technology specified in original scope of work (kiosks, automatic vehicle

location devices, etc.), such as “smart fare box” which would allow riders to use electronic tools such as smart cards and phone apps to pay for fares (county is currently using “first generation” fare boxes.)

The smart fare box technology would be for Lee County only; Mr. Goyette said that PSTA (Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority) and HART (Hillsborough Area Regional Transit) are working on a regional smart fare box device<sup>1</sup>; Collier is already using their own version.

Mr. Goyette said that Lee Tran planned to use information from the regional transportation study when planning future services, including the location of the kiosks and where to provide transportation; he said that the survey questions regarding where Veterans want to go (services and places they need connectivity to) and their transportation challenges could be helpful in planning future services.

**Agenda Item #4: Planning Efforts for Regional Coordination Study - Ms. Margaret Wuerstle**

**a. Project Portal - Updates**

Staff explained that documents on the project portal are being updated periodically, and to check portal periodically for updates.

**b. Outreach - Margaret Wuerstle: Described outreach to date.**

i. Master Outreach List, Veterans Day Events

Staff asked that committee members review master outreach list, which is being updated as project progresses, to include new places to collect information.

ii. Partner Collaboration

Staff asked for assistance from committee members in getting surveys completed at various veterans events.

iii. Survey findings to date

Staff reviewed handout summarizing survey findings to date.

iv. Challenges -

a) Families – most Veteran’s benefits are available only to Veterans, not to their family members.

b) Access – staff has been having difficulty getting access to VA and other facilities to conduct surveys.

**c. Transportation Analysis: Assets, Gaps & Needs**

i. Revised Maps - Tim Walker provided overview of updates to maps since last meeting.

ii. Draft regional demographic analysis – Staff had attendees review handout summarizing Veterans’ demographic information.

iii. Outline of study - Staff had attendees review draft outline of report and asked for feedback.

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<sup>1</sup> HART initiated the Regional Fare Collection Working Group in 2012; participants include members include FDOT District 7 management; Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Citrus, Hernando counties from District 7; and Manatee and Polk counties from District 1.

- iv. Needs Assessment Discussion (SWOT Analysis) – Staff reviewed the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis of Veterans’ transportation issues.

**Agenda Item #5: Questions, Comments, Concerns**

Miscellaneous comments and recommendations:

Dennis Simon suggested getting social workers at VA facilities to conduct surveys for us.

John Ebling recommended asking Jean Fisler, director of volunteers at the facility, for assistance in getting surveys completed.

Jeff Wood, VA Clinic Mental Health Counselor, commented on transportation issues from his perspective:

- The location of the new Lee County VA Healthcare facility is not ideal.
- He is from Milwaukee, and expected to see a large homeless population in south Florida, but has not seen many.
- After investigating, he found that clients are having difficulty getting to Lee County Healthcare facility; for example, after taking a bus from other places to get to the VA facility – e.g., routes 40, 70, and 140 come within a mile of the VA facility -- people need to then take the 590 to get to the facility, which takes over an hour to make the loop to get to the clinic.
- He believes that there are a number of people that are not getting services due to its location in Cape Coral, that would be able to access services if the clinic was still in Ft. Myers.
- He expects that surveys will not reach all Veterans, and that homeless and isolated Veterans will be underrepresented on surveys.

**Agenda Item #6: Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm