

Meeting Summary

Volusia County Expressway Authority Coalition

November 29, 2000

Thomas C. Kelly Administration Center, Training Rooms 1-3
123 West Indiana Avenue, DeLand, Florida

Members Present:

Jim Ely	Dick McMahan
Maryam Ghyabi	Lori Campbell Baker
Jon Cheney	Brad Blais
Karl Welzenbach	Doug Daniels
Linda White	Charles Lydecker

Members Absent:

Joseph Benedict

Others Present:

Darla Zakaluzny, Recording Secretary	Al Everson
Pat Northey	John Moore
John James	Allen Watts
Pat James	Carolyn Ismart
Theone Wilkenson	Sandra Pedicini
Derek Catron	Bob Nix
Albert Pell	Glenn Storch
Tom Donohoe	Pat Lee

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Maryam Ghyabi called the meeting of the Volusia County Expressway Authority Coalition to order at 10:05 AM. It was determined that a quorum was present. Introductions of the members were made and the Chair recognized Council Member Pat Northey and Mr. Tom Donohoe, Chairman of the MPO's Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC).

2. Approval of October 31, 2000 Meeting Minutes

Ms. White moved to approve the October 31, 2000 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.

3. Review of Draft Outline for Report to Volusia County Council

Chair Ghyabi stated that a draft outline for the report to the County Council was distributed to the members for review. She stated that the report would be submitted to the Volusia County Council.

Chair Ghyabi stated that the report would be simple and it would include the information that has been received by the committee. The report would also include a recommendation based on the information that has been received.

Chair Ghyabi stated that when first started the committee was to look at some sort of solution to traffic congestion on I-4. She stated that the committee determined that there were three components important in this issue of traffic. They are congestion and traffic, funding, and environmental. Chair Ghyabi stated that at the first meeting we spoke about the importance of the environmental factor, but we do not have the capability of testing that or examining it. Therefore, it was decided that if we received money to go ahead with this, then we could fully study the environmental aspect.

Chair Ghyabi stated that we want an alignment that is the least harmful to the community and the environment. She stated that I-4 is very congested and the improvements that we are experiencing and will be receiving from FDOT are not going to accommodate the traffic for the present or the future. Chair Ghyabi stated that there is no funding for any other roads so we would have to come up with something.

Chair Ghyabi stated that Channel 6 did a news report on this group and she was and drivers in the area were interviewed for the segment. She asked Ms. White to share some of the comments that she has received from people.

Ms. White stated that she was surprised by some of the phone calls that she had received at home and at the Chamber of Commerce. She stated that most of the callers are from the Deltona area but are working in the Lake Mary/Seminole County area. Ms. White noted that the callers were supportive of the idea because they get stranded several times and are sometimes separated from their families in the evenings. She noted that several have expressed the willingness to pay for a toll road.

Mr. Welzenbach expressed concern about the direction the discussion is heading. He stated that a recent newspaper article contained incorrect statements. Mr. Welzenbach reiterated that this committee is to make a recommendation on whether or not the County Council should create an expressway authority. He stated that the article had stated that the committee had a route planned, which is not correct.

Chair Ghyabi replied that she did not feel that is what was said in the article. She stated that we need to find out what is best for the community and not worry about the media. Chair Ghyabi stated that the recommendation should be based on whether or not an expressway authority is needed and what it would do for us. She stated that the MPOs numbers support something, but it could be anything.

Chair Ghyabi expressed appreciation to the County Council for taking a proactive approach.

Mr. Ely stated that every topic discussed at the meetings of the Coalition have brought insight on whether an authority would be needed. He went on to say that everyone has the information and can make a recommendation to the County Council on this issue. Mr. Ely applauded the members of the committee for their work and noted that the information gathered would also be of help to other areas.

Ms. White stated that media coverage helps her determine if there is community support for a particular project or issue. Chair Ghyabi stated that we have heard that the people want to do something, but there are environmental concerns. She stated that the committee has no way to look at the environmental issues.

Chair Ghyabi stated that the discussion could focus on the layout of the report and what has been learned from all of the presentations.

Mr. McMahan asked if there is a potential traffic problem? Is there a problem now? If yes, is there any funding in the future to deal with the problems? Mr. McMahan stated that a group could be set up to look at alternative funding to alleviate the traffic problem.

Mr. Cheney stated that when looking at the outline he noted that we were presenting a lot of information in a disjointed manner. He suggested structuring it like what was noted by Mr. Ely in a previous presentation.

- (a) Do we have transportation productive revenues? If yes, what are they?
- (b) Are there other funding options such as tolls?
- (c) If there are expressway authorities, what types are there?
- (d) Summarize the presentations made at the meetings and summarize them in that order instead of chronological order.

Mr. Lydecker voiced his agreement with the comments made by Mr. Cheney and Mr. McMahan. He stated that this group is to make a recommendation to the County Council on whether or not an expressway authority is needed. Mr. Lydecker noted that an expressway authority would make the determination of revenue sources.

Mr. Lydecker stated that the environmental issues and the other important issues that go into understanding the impact of creating transportation is addressed at that level. He stated that we are not addressing that now. Mr. Lydecker stated that this committee has received information over the past six months that will be used to help determine what recommendation should be brought forward to the County Council.

Mr. Cheney stated that there are two fundamental questions to be asked:

- (1) Should we have an expressway authority?
- (2) If yes, why?

Mr. Cheney stated that if the recommendation is to have an expressway authority, the committee may want to ask Council Member Northey if she would want the group to recommend a structure of some type for the expressway authority as some information has been received on that issue as well.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that in drafting the outline he tried to outline the topics of presentations that have been made and in the next section the document would reiterate or stress the more important portions of those topics. He stated that it goes directly to whether or not the committee recommends an expressway authority and why. Mr. Welzenbach stated that the group received presentations on the expressway authorities in Florida and how they were formed, how well they have done, etc. and there have been presentations on the variety of funding options that are available through the State. A presentation on the bonding and rating aspects were also given at a previous meeting.

Mr. Daniels stated that the study that was prepared for the legislature made it clear that the other expressway authorities that were created were set up to discuss special circumstances and unique local problems. He stated that we had steered away from that because we have not discussed any particular road. Mr. Daniels stated that since this was not done, he is concerned about making a recommendation that an authority be created because we have not come up with a specific project that needs to be done.

Mr. Daniels went on to say that the Committee could recommend, if the County Council wants to go forward with something like this, that they do so with caution. He stated that it could be that Volusia County would experience problems such as the ones that occurred in Osceola County (subdivisions ended up not being built). Mr. Daniels stated that brings up serious growth management issues and it is a question of where you want the growth.

Mr. Daniels stated that there are a lot of questions that have not been addressed and are in no position to comment on. He stated that one of the things that was brought up continually was the connection of SR 415 to the Greenway which seems to be an excellent project. Mr. Daniels noted that that project would help Volusia County on the east side.

Chair Ghyabi noted that the project is in the program. She stated that we are not doing this to open economic development. The first foundation for being here is to relieve existing traffic, not to get subdivisions to come in at any locations. The report by the MPO showed that there is no solution to I-4. Chair Ghyabi stated that the committee's job is not to find out if SR 415 is the solution or connection -- it is to determine if there is a problem and determine if something could be done.

Chair Ghyabi stated that there is no way that the group could come up with an alignment because that needs to be studied (environment, traffic issues, and funding, etc.). She noted that unless you have an expressway authority there is no funding to study anything.

Mr. Lydecker stated that it is important to keep it simple. He stated that there are several people in the transportation field who have helped the Committee set the criteria and to help define feelings and the thought process over the last six months. Mr. Lydecker stated that a lot of valuable information has been received, but now the committee needs to focus on a couple of things. The people in the transportation field could help with this.

Mr. Cheney asked if the group could reach a consensus on whether or not there is a transportation problem? Ms. Campbell Baker stated that this group is acting as a sponge to absorb the information and determine how the report should be put together.

Chair Ghyabi asked Mr. Ely how the traffic and revenue, environmental and funding factors could be studied? She asked what it takes to get the funding to study these factors? Mr. Ely replied that there was a presentation by Lowell Clary on the Toll Revolving Trust Fund that is available. He stated that Mr. Daniels had reservations about recommending an expressway authority and noted that there has to be a specific project to address. Mr. Ely stated that there has to be a transportation problem that needs to be solved rather than having a specific project.

Mr. Ely stated that identifying the transportation problems and funding availability is what was recommended. The bottom line may be the pros and cons of expressway authorities. He stated that you do not have to have a specific project to say that the expressway authority needs to build this project. Mr. Ely stated that the expressway authority could be a vehicle for research. He stated that the expressway authority could be created to start the studies to look at traffic and revenues, possible alignments, and the traffic problems.

Mr. Ely stated that the end result may be that it should not go any further or it should not be built as a toll road. He noted that there needs to be some vehicle, mechanism or a group of people that have the time and effort to focus on the studies.

Mr. Ely stated that over the past several months, the group has learned that the process of building a road is 7-10 years, not a 2 year process. He went on to say that the first part of it is the planning phase. Mr. Ely stated that the recommendation to the County Council should explain the long term process and includes a lot of public involvement.

Mr. Ely stated that the best way to do this would be to create an expressway authority with a defined mission and that mission may be nothing more than partaking in the Toll Revolving Trust Fund in order to do the early-on studies and to get the public involved. Mr. Ely stated there needs to be a study element of this up front beyond the committee's work.

Mr. Ely stated again, that we do not have to have a project, we have to have a transportation need and a defined mission for an expressway authority. Mr. Daniels replied that a transportation need anticipates that you intend to build a road to cure that need. To really get into that and decide whether or not you want to get into it you ought to know what it is.

Mr. Daniels noted that there are several issues that need to be resolved before you go forward and do something. Those questions pertain to growth management issues and feasibility.

Discussion continued.

Mr. Daniels stated that if a recommendation is made to go forward with an expressway authority and one is created, then we need to flag issues that need to be addressed before concrete is poured. Ms. Campbell Baker noted that that could be made a part of the recommendation to the Council.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that the problem with creating an authority that has no specific goal or project is that this creates another layer of bureaucracy and that bureaucracy tends to continue. He stated that there are 3-4 expressway authorities in Florida but they have not built any projects. Mr. Welzenbach went on to say that 2-3 were created without a project in mind and the authority is still in place.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that creating an expressway authority allows Volusia County to access funds that we can not get to right now such as the Toll Revolving Trust Fund. He stated that he was not sure if the County could access that funding without creating an expressway authority.

Mr. Ely stated that Mr. Clary had mentioned that it required a resolution from the County Council to form an expressway authority. Mr. Welzenbach noted that the County Council has to go through that one step in order for Volusia County to have access to those funds. He went on to say that those funds could be used to answer the questions that are being raised today.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that his concern is that if you create an authority without a specific mission or goal you have created an animal that will tend to want to maintain its self regardless of whether or not it does anything.

Mr. Lydecker stated that concerns he has heard from friends is that if an authority is created, you are going down a road without a point of return. Mr. Blais questioned if an established timeframe of 2-3 years for the authority to exist could be mandated so the monies could be accessed? If at the end of the timeframe, it did not meet the needs of the community, the organization would fold up. Mr. Ely replied that from Mr. Clary's presentation he wasn't sure that you have to have an expressway authority to take advantage of the TRTF.

Mr. Ely stated that the TRTF monies would have to be paid back by the County and there is a 7-12 year pay back cycle. He noted that the loan has a zero percent interest rate. Mr. Ely stated that you do not need an expressway authority to complete a project, but it could be set up to access the monies in order to do the preliminary studies to find out if it is a feasible project.

Mr. Blais stated that he would like the report to incorporate some type of a diagram maybe showing the major arterials that we have for 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020 and the corresponding level of services. Chair Ghyabi noted that the MPO has that report. Mr. Blais stated that this needs to be incorporated as a section of the report because it would help the County Council make a decision.

Chair Ghyabi suggested putting 2-3 members in charge of developing the report that is to be submitted to the County Council. She stated that those individuals could work together to come up with a more structured document. Chair Ghyabi suggested the following members participate: Mr. Ely, Mr. Welzenbach, and Mr. Lydecker. Ms. Campbell Baker stated that she would also like to participate.

Chair Ghyabi stated that the group would work together and communicate with the other members of the committee. Mr. Welzenbach noted that this could not be done due to the Sunshine Law. He stated that he could have discussed the outline with Chair Ghyabi and Mr. Cheney because it was considered a work product not related to any recommendation. Mr. Welzenbach noted that discussion of a report, which includes a recommendation, has to be done in an open meeting.

Chair Ghyabi replied that you are discussing a report, not a discussion of the recommendation. Mr. Welzenbach replied that it would be difficult to start the report without knowing where you are going with it. Mr. Lydecker suggested that the group agree that a report is to be put together and then designate one person to take the input from the committee members. This would give everyone a chance to absorb the report in advance.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that there would have to be three decisions made today and they are (1) Do we recommend an expressway authority; (2) If yes, why? and, (3) What can we recommend as far as the formation of an expressway authority?

Mr. Welzenbach stated that those are the questions that were raised at the first meeting by Council Member's Northey, Lewis and McFall. Chair Ghyabi stated that the voting on where we would be going will be done at the next meeting.

Ms. White stated that the report should cover why we think there needs to be an expressway authority and then flag things the County Council should consider. She stated that she did not want to tie their hands too much or make too many solid recommendations.

Mr. Cheney stated that we need to answer the questions raised earlier about there being a transportation problem. Is there alternative funding? Is there a shortfall of funds? What are the pros and cons of an expressway authority.

Mr. Blais noted that there are attorneys present and they could possibly answer the question about the committee being under the Sunshine Law. He stated that trying to get the report ready will take more time than is available today and there are the questions of what can be done by the committee members.

Mr. Ely stated that the committee needs to come to a conclusion on the recommendation and focus on the format, chapters, and what will the report look like. Mr. Ely stated that Mr. Welzenbach has attempted to provide some of the information and the end result would be a bottom line recommendation. Mr. Welzenbach questioned if the report could be discussed without holding a meeting as they have already agreed to something during a public meeting.

Chair Ghyabi questioned if the committee members could work amongst themselves to develop the report? Mr. Allen Watts, attorney, replied that the committee would be subject to the Sunshine Law. He noted that all communication must be open to the public.

Mr. Daniels noted that the sections should be written objectively and it would be a summary of what has been presented to the committee.

Mr. Ely suggested the following format for the report based on the comments made today:

1. Mission of Coalition
2. Explanation of traffic problem
3. Funding availability
4. Alternatives available
5. Research summary
6. What was learned about expressway authorities
7. What is recommendation of Coalition, and why

Mr. Daniels stated that partnership strategies need to be placed somewhere in the document. Chair Ghyabi noted that it could be placed under the funding section of the report. Mr. Daniels stated that the main benefit is to look at transportation as a regional problem and that is the one thing that needs to be emphasized and not lost in the shuffle.

Ms. Campbell Baker also suggested listing the items that the County Council should make note of. Mr. Welzenbach suggested reiterating it under the conclusions (i.e. suggest that an expressway authority be formed but suggest that the County Council look at this when considering this, etc.). He stated that the pros and cons would be outlined with the recommendation.

Mr. Ely stated that is why he suggested including committee observations with regards to items that were picked up on during the meetings over the past several months (i.e. need for partnerships, risk associated with toll roads, and need for environmental studies and public input).

Mr. Blais stated that it would be helpful to have an executive summary at the beginning of the report (before the mission). He also suggested including some order of magnitude of costs of the environmental studies and the front end planning studies that may be incurred. Chair Ghyabi replied that that could be placed under the funding section.

Chair Ghyabi asked if the committee members were in agreement with the structure outlined by Mr. Ely? Mr. McMahan stated that the committee needs to say whether or not Volusia County needs to go forward with some type of expressway authority. Chair Ghyabi replied that there needs to be a report whether or not the answer is yes or no.

Mr. Cheney asked what the research summary would entail? Mr. Ely replied that it would include a general summary of the presentations.

Chair Ghyabi asked if the committee members were ready to vote on what should be done? Mr. Ely replied that he would like to hear the individual member comments. Mr. Cheney asked if there is a shortfall in funding? Mr. Welzenbach replied that the answer is yes and no. Chair Ghyabi noted that there are several projects that are unfunded.

Mr. Welzenbach referenced what is reported in the 20 year plan for SR 415 from the Seminole County line to the proposed extension of Taylor Road. He stated that based on the numbers that we receive from the state, federal and county government, then yes, we have that money. Mr. Cheney stated that no one knows how the approval of Constitutional Amendment #1 (High Speed Rail) will impact things.

Mr. McMahan moved that as a member of this committee and with the information that I presently have, I think there would be a need for an expressway authority in Volusia County subject to a report that expresses at least what I believe would be in the report at this stage. Mr. Lydecker seconded the motion.

Mr. Welzenbach stated that he cautiously suggests that we have an expressway authority. He stated that the MPO just completed the 20-year plan for Volusia County and there is still a very long list of what has been identified as unfunded needs to meet the projected traffic. This includes a commuter rail system that the MPO is strongly supporting and have set aside identified funding for it over the next 20 years. Mr. Welzenbach stated that even with all of that he feels that the County will be fighting an uphill battle to address the concerns and issues with traffic congestion. He stated that he **cautiously recommends** an expressway authority because that allows the County to tap into additional funds and to address specific issues that we do have access to nor can we afford to pursue through traditional funding methods. Chair Ghyabi stated that this should be discussed under pros and cons.

Mr. Lydecker echoed Mr. Welzenbach's comments.

Mr. Cheney voiced his agreement with Mr. Welzenbach's comments. He went on to say that there is a transportation problem in the county and there may be a shortage of revenues depending on how Constitutional Amendment #1 comes out. Mr. Cheney stated

that the expressway authority would be another tool or another way of securing or looking at getting additional funds to the County.

Mr. Cheney stated that his main caution would be the structure of an expressway authority. Mr. Welzenbach noted that a recommendation needs to be made on that issue as well.

Mr. Blais voiced his agreement with the comments made thus far. However, he stated that he would like to amend the motion as the title of the group says a lot about what the groups mission is, but he thinks having expressway authority as the title implies that there is going to be an expressway. He stated that the need for the expressway is there but its name probably should not be the Volusia County Expressway Authority. Mr. Blais suggested that it be called the Volusia County Expressway Authority Investigation Coalition or some other entity that describes what the true mission would be.

Chair Ghyabi replied that it would be an authority in order for us to be able to tap into the funding. Mr. Cheney stated that this refers back to his question on the structure of the authority. He stated that we have seen the Orlando Orange County Expressway Authority come to us and they have a very formal format and a rigid structure. Mr. Cheney stated that Seminole County staff contacted him this morning because they are trying to gear down their authority instead of gearing it up. He noted that Seminole County has asked him what this group is going to do because they need to determine whether or not their authority should stay in place.

Mr. Blais stated that a recommendation is being made for the purpose of the report at this time. He noted that there will be opportunities for the draft report to be reviewed and commented on. Mr. Welzenbach stated that the report needs to address the three questions raised at the first meeting by the County Council members.

Ms. White stated that we should not tie the hands of if there is an authority and we should not speculate what they are or what they should be because we may make them unsuccessful if we do that. She stated that the committee should do their job and the County Council is the elected body and they are able to govern that body. Chair Ghyabi agreed.

Mr. Blais stated that he is in favor of the recommendation and agreed with comments voiced by Mr. Welzenbach, but he does not know how a cautious recommendation could be stated.

Mr. Daniels stated that he agreed that a cautious recommendation is the way to go because we really need to emphasize feasibility and whether or not there would be ridership here. He also noted that it could bring urban sprawl into Volusia County to take care of it. Mr. Daniels stated that if it is urban sprawl, then that raises a lot growth management issues that would need to be addressed before the road is built.

Mr. Daniels stated that one of the reasons for organizing an authority has been to get it out of the political arena and get over it to businessmen. He stated that doing these types of things are political because it affects the entire County and it affects what the County is going to be. Mr. Daniels stated that building a toll across the county would be a political decision and political decisions ought to be kept in the political arena.

Mr. Daniels stated that regardless of what happens, a lot of tax money goes into supporting these roads. He stated that he has difficulty with taxing everyone including people who might not be able to pay the toll to build the road. Mr. Daniels stated that you have to be practical if it is the only way to get a necessary road built. He stated that this issue is something that the County has to keep in mind.

Mr. Daniels went on to say that Volusia County has to get into regional transportation planning and it has to increase its connections to the rest of Central Florida and become part of Central Florida. Mr. Daniels noted that he is in agreement with Mr. Welzenbach.

Ms. White stated that she agrees with the recommendation to establish an expressway authority with the authority mission probably doing the studies and having the funding to do those studies (i.e. environmental and all of the other issues discussed). Ms. White stated that we have established the need and have determined that there is public support. She stated that we have an existing problem that we are working on -- we are not speculating 10 years down the road.

Mr. Ely stated that he is not an advocate of toll roads, but he is an advocate of transportation. He stated that the toll roads are a means to an end. Mr. Ely stated that if we had all of the money that was needed for transportation, he would be the first in line to bulldoze the toll plazas on Florida's Turnpike. He went on to say that we do not have all of the money that is needed for transportation.

Mr. Ely stated that it was learned during the presentations that there are other ways to build toll ways. He stated that his recommendation would be to create a local expressway authority. Mr. Ely stated that there could be existing authority, but another agency such as the Turnpike District or the Orlando Orange County Expressway Authority could build the facility. He stated that the bottom line is that the expressway authority could look at local issues and the community sensitive issues.

Mr. Ely stated that the expressway authority should be subserving and under the direction of the County Council and the reports needs to have a description of the mission of the expressway authority. He stated that the mission is not to build roads, it is a mechanism to study what the transportation problems are and are toll roads feasible from a financial and environmental standpoint.

Mr. Ely stated that the committee should not specify the type of authority, but an explanation of the different types of authorities that exist should be included as a part of the pros and cons section of the report.

Chair Ghyabi stated that she liked the cautious recommendation and it would come under that section. She stated that the purpose is not to go and build a road tomorrow, it is to examine the funding, the traffic, the environment, and the impact on the environment.

Mr. Welzenbach noted that the report also needs to point out that those resources have to be repaid.

Ms. Campbell Baker stated that her recommendation is to have an expressway authority and it would be up to the authority to use caution as they are the ones that are going to do the studies. She stated that in terms of the recommendation to the Council, she feels that the committee needs to be enthusiastic about what is being recommended. Chair Ghyabi agreed.

The motion carried unanimously through the comments made by the members.

Mr. Cheney stated that he would come up with the agenda item for the County Council meeting once the committee is ready to present the report to the Council. He noted that he would need about two weeks notice to get it on the Council agenda.

Mr. Cheney asked if there was a consensus on the structure of the authority. Ms. White replied that she would prefer that the Council determine this.

Mr. Ely stated that Mr. Welzenbach would be the principal author of the report and noted that he would be happy to provide assistance. It was noted that Mr. Cheney would also be happy to assist. Mr. Cheney noted that he would put the draft report on the Internet.

Chair Ghyabi stated that the next meeting would be held on January 10, 2001. Mr. Cheney offered to reserve the training rooms for the meeting.

Mr. Welzenbach noted that the report will be sent out to all of the members of the Coalition and it will also be posted on the Internet.

4. Discussion

5. Public Comments

Mr. Donohoe referenced the Sunshine Parkway and noted that when it was built I-95 from Vero was not completed. He stated that it was found out why it was necessary to have the road put into place.

Ms. Theone Wilkenson, DeLand, questioned who was responsible for building the roads now and would the County not be able to handle the task? Chair Ghyabi replied that the County, the State and the cities are responsible for the construction of the roadways, but funding is limited.

Ms. Wilkenson questioned where the money from the 5-cent gas tax was going. She stated that it was supposed to be for new roads and noted that last year the State Legislature returned money to the State of Florida to divvy out to the counties to do the roads. Mr. Welzenbach asked that she provide her name and address so that he could forward a copy of the 2020 Plan which will explain where the money is going for the next 20 years.

Ms. Wilkenson stated that she and the members of the committee are questioning having another governmental entity. She stated that everyone seems to indicate that there is need for caution. Mr. Lydecker replied that there is caution among the members until they have reviewed the final report.

Ms. Wilkenson questioned the need for another form of government and noted that the County staff could handle this. Chair Ghyabi replied that that may be the Council's choice.

Mr. Glenn Storch stated that one thing to be stressed in the report is that this is a planning option that can be utilized. It will also provide the opportunity to tap into other funding sources that we presently are unable to access because they are only for expressways.

Mr. Albert Pell, Osteen, asked if SR 415 was funded? Mr. Welzenbach replied that in the 20 year plan there is money set aside to widen SR 415 from the State line up to the proposed extension of Taylor Road in Port Orange. Mr. Pell asked if we are talking 20 years or could it be changed? Mr. Welzenbach replied that it would not be within the five years as that is already fixed, and within the next 15 years we have identified funding streams that could pay for the widening of SR 415 within a 20 year time period.

Mr. Pell stated that when traffic backs up all the way to the Seminole County line at 5:30 PM it is impossible to cross SR 415 in Osteen or to make a left hand turn off of Doyle Road. He asked if the County would be doing anything about traffic signals? Chair Ghyabi asked that Mr. Pell contact Mr. Cheney, Volusia County Traffic Engineer, after the meeting. Mr. Cheney stated that if there are specific locations that he feels traffic lights need to be installed the County could cooperate and partner with FDOT since SR 415 is a state road and a study could be done to see if a signal is warranted. He noted that this would have to be in the Volusia County area. Mr. Cheney noted that the Seminole County Traffic Engineering Department would need the information for their area and he would be happy to forward that information.

Mr. John James, Moderator for the Volusia County Voters E-Mail Forum, discussed briefly what took place with I-4 and the East/West Expressway in the early years. He also discussed what happens when special interests get involved with projects.

Mr. James stated that he had e-mails from members of the forum, which he started to read to the members. Members of the Coalition replied that the e-mails should read by the senders, not Mr. James. The Recording Secretary obtained a copy of the e-mails and said e-mails will be forwarded to members of the Coalition.

Mr. James stated that the public perceives that is imbedded specials for making another **words unclear** on the public and they are not happy about it. He stated that he has given up on counting on how many people are receiving e-mails through this forum. Mr. James stated that the committee would have to do a sales job on the taxpayers as they are upset with what has been perceived to be another raid on the public treasury.

Mrs. Pat James stated that the authority is trying to get funding and they are trying to get state funding. Mr. Welzenbach clarified that if the County forms an authority, they are eligible to tap into the Toll Revolving Trust Fund. Ms. James noted that the voters recently passed the Constitutional Amendment regarding high speed rail and it must be done by the year 2003 which will totally sky-rocket the cost of doing that. She stated that the State will have to find funding for this project and she is seeing a conflict as the State does not have a big pot of funding. Mrs. James stated that the citizens are the state funds and she is not sure where the funding for this project would come from. She stated that there is a limit!

Mr. Welzenbach replied that the State does not know where they are going to get the funding for this project. He stated that this very argument makes this decision very critical because if it is transportation funds that the State will tap into to build the system, then everything in the 20-year plan is out the window. Mr. Welzenbach stated that the funding stream that he spoke of earlier would not exist anymore because it would go to high speed rail.

Mr. Welzenbach noted that expressway authority opens up another avenue to pursue and tap into additional funding streams that we can not get to at this time.

Mr. Bob Nix, Deltona's City Planner, voiced his agreement with Mr. James about the need for a sales job being needed and the citizens will need to be informed in great detail. He stated that the hardest thing to do is build something, and the easiest thing to do is tear down.

Mr. Nix voiced his appreciation for the committee's efforts and noted that the public is deeply concerned about the quality of life. He stated the City of Deltona committed to the concept to suspend development in their Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Nix stated that it might be a good idea suggest linking land use planning and transportation planning and asking the County to look at the concept of suspending development along the proposed corridor in order to address environmental issues and other issues.

6. Other Business

Mr. Welzenbach clarified that the report will be written in the following format:

- Executive Summary
- Mission and Membership of Committee
- Traffic situations (current needs, demands, and projected demands on the system)

- Funding (current funding streams, anticipated funding streams, needed funding, and partnership strategies)
- Alternatives (partnering with other agencies such as the OOCEWA, Turnpike District, etc.)
- Key Issues (research summary section with an exhibit with all of the technical and background information)
- Expressway Authorities in Florida (make-up, pros and cons)
- Recommendation which would outline specific concerns and recommendation for a specific mission for the Expressway Authority

Mr. Welzenbach noted that he was in favor of Mr. Blais' idea to suggest a time limit of 3-5 years. If after that time they have not identified a specific project or a specific need that they could address with a specific project. Mr. McMahan stated that this should be made as a suggestion to the County Council.

There were no objections to the summary noted above.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.