

**MINUTES  
MID-BAY BRIDGE AUTHORITY  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022**

**CITY OF NICEVILLE COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
208 NORTH PARTIN DRIVE  
NICEVILLE, FLORIDA**

**I. OPENING**

Members present: James D. Neilson, Jr.  
Parker Destin  
Kim Wintner  
James T. Wood, Jr.

Members absent: Gordon E. Fornell (Excused)

Also present: Van Fuller Executive Director  
Michelle Anchors Legal Counsel  
Cathy Demoreski Administrative Assistant

Absent: Bryant Paulk FDOT Ex officio, non-voting

**II. INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS & PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Neilson welcomed visitors David Vardaman and Emily Probst, Bluewater Bay Residents; Will Lyon, Prosser; Mike Lewis, David Carbajal, and Whit Pettis, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and member of the press, Daniel Guillot, WEAR News.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting – October 21, 2022**

**A motion to approve the October 21, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Destin with a second by Mr. Wood and a 4-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**IV. TREASURER’S REPORT**

Mr. Destin presented the Treasurer’s Report for October 2022. Account balances were:

|          |    |                 |
|----------|----|-----------------|
| FNBTBANK | \$ | 234,669.15      |
| Regions  |    | \$50,234,175.63 |

**Mr. Destin made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Reports for October 2022 with a second by Mr. Wintner and a 4-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**A. Operations.** Mr. Fuller reported that FY 2022 was the second-best year in history for traffic and revenue.

He pointed out that the 30-hour toll suspension for Hurricane Ian in September suppressed monthly collections. After coordination with the traffic and revenue consultants, we will be returning to the pre-COVID forecast for FY2023 and plan to update the projections for 2024 and beyond this fiscal year.

**B. FDOT SR293 Safety Study Presentation.** Mr. Fuller explained that one year ago the Authority approved a SR293 Safety Study be completed in response to concerns regarding head-on collisions on the Mid-Bay Bridge. The report addresses the entirety of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority system, with emphasis on the Mid-Bay Bridge.

Mr. Fuller introduced Mr. Mike Lewis, FDOT District 3 Traffic and Safety Director, who explained that the report contents with suggested mitigation recommendations for areas of concern. Funding and mitigation decisions will be a collaborative process between the Authority and the FDOT. Mr. Lewis introduced Mr. Will Lyon, Vice President, Prosser, the FDOT consultant responsible for the report.

Mr. Lyon thanked the Authority for the opportunity to study the safety on SR293 and provide recommendations. He explained that in accordance with standard procedures there are two types of crashes, certified and non-certified based on the accident report provided by the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) at the time of the crash. The FDOT and FHP follow-up after the crash to verify the certification status. This information can be used for determining funding eligibility. He further explained that the report is broken down into three segments; Segment 1 – Commons Dr E to Mid-Bay Bridge, Segment 2 – Mid-Bay Bridge to Toll Plaza; Segment 3 – Toll Plaza to SR85.

- Segment 1 – Commons Dr E to Mid-Bay Bridge  
Had 1 fatality and 2 incapacitation injuries. It was recommended that a traffic signal modification be installed at Commons Dr E and consider modifying the intersection geometry to eliminate negative left turn offset.
- Segment 2 – Mid-Bay Bridge to Toll Plaza  
Had 1 fatality and 3 incapacitating injuries. It was recommended that tightly spaced RPMs be installed on the centerline.
- Segment 3 – Toll Plaza to SR85  
Had 7 fatalities and 7 incapacitating injuries. It was recommended that chevrons, curve warning signs, and flashing beacons and tightly spaced RPMs at horizontal curve be installed south of North Lakeshore Drive; installing dynamic speed feedback signs to slow drivers; and installation of lighting on SR293 from North Lakeshore Dr interchange to the Toll Plaza.

Discussion included benefits of recommendations and other options available in accordance with state and federal highway standards as well as concerns for funding options. Mr. Neilson noted the importance of taking the information and fine tuning it now to make a decision that is right the first time and not drag out the process so funding can be secured quickly. Mr. Destin pointed out that we are heading in the right direction and that the Authority is tasked with making fiscally conservative decisions as it relates to

current debt and the availability of federal/state funding options.

Public comment from Mr. Vardaman and Ms. Probst, residents of Bluewater Bay, included the need versus the cost decision and funding mechanism as well as the criteria used to determine the certification of a crash based on severity. Also of concern was the timeframe for completing the Study and whether mitigation will take as long. Mr. Vardaman suggested the Authority consider changing its motion to “accept” (versus “concur”) the SR293 Safety Study as submitted.

Follow-up comments included RMP is a general term there are many kinds, disadvantages of a 4’ centerline buffer is that there will be no shoulder for disabled vehicles or walkers/cyclists. The Mid-Bay Bridge data does not stand out as compared to other bridges.

Ms. Anchors recommended clarification of the motion be made, in response to Mr. Vardaman’s request, prior to the vote.

**A motion was made by Mr. Wood to concur with the SR293 Safety Study as presented and follow-up be provided and the January 19, 2023, regular meeting of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority with a second by Mr. Destin and a 4-0 vote taken for approval.**

**VI. LEGAL COUNSEL**

None

**VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

None

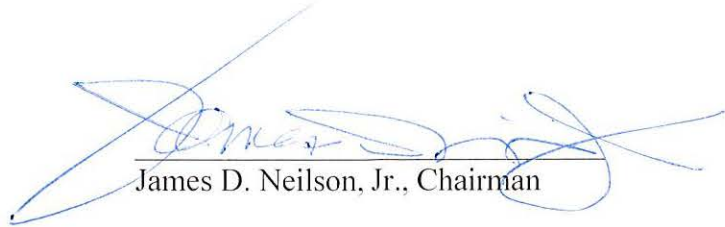
**VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The next regular meeting of the Authority will be held a week earlier, on **Thursday, December 8, 2022**, at 9:00 a.m. in the Destin City Hall Board Room, Destin, Florida.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:10 a.m.

**Approved this 8th day of December 2022.**



James D. Neilson, Jr., Chairman