

**MINUTES  
MID-BAY BRIDGE AUTHORITY  
THURSDAY, JANURY 19, 2023**

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

**I. OPENING**

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

Also present:               Van Fuller                   Executive Director  
                                  Michelle Anchors        Legal Counsel  
                                  Bryant Paulk             FDOT Ex officio, non-voting  
                                  Cathy Demoreski        Administrative Assistant

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

Mr. Neilson welcomed visitors David Vardaman and Emily Probst, Residents; Will Lyon, Prosser; and Michael Lewis, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). He also congratulated the members of the Authority recently re-appointed by Governor DeSantis.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting – December 8, 2022**

**A motion to approve the December 8, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Fornell with a second by Mr. Wood and a 5-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**IV. TREASURER’S REPORT**

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

FNBT Bank	\$	217,679.30
Regions		\$51,828,727.36

**Mr. Destin made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Reports for December 2022 with a second by Mr. Wintner and a 5-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**A. Operations.** Mr. Fuller reported that traffic and revenue are consistent with the Authority’s Traffic and Revenue Consultants projections and year-over-year data. The projections will be updated in the Spring of 2023.

Mr. Fuller attended a meeting with representative of the City of Destin regarding their possible grant application for a third eastbound north turn lane at US98 and Danny Wuerffel Way. Mr Fuller communicated the Authority would likely not have any issues as long as there is no costs by the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority.

Stifel, the Authority's Investment Advisors, continues to update the investment portfolio to take advantage of the currently high interest rates.

Mr. Fuller provided an update on the State Toll Relief Program that was enacted by the legislature and approved by the Governor. The program went into effect January 1, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2023.

Mr. Fuller attended a Legislative Delegation meeting last week where the delegation unanimously supported eliminating Okaloosa County review and approval of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority's operating and administrative budget.

An arbitration case between Figg Bridge and United Bridge Builders is being held on Friday, January 20, 2023, and Mr. Fuller has been subpoenaed to provide testimony via ZOOM as to the Authority's experience over the years with Figg a consultant.

Finally, Mr. Fuller reported that George Smith has left Bryant, Miller, Olive for private practice. Mr. Randy Clements, who worked directly with Mr. Smith during the Series 2015 Bond Issue will be representing the Authority as Bond Counsel going forward.

**B. SR293 Safety Study – FDOT.** Mr. Mike Lewis, FDOT Traffic Safety Engineer invited Mr. Will Lyons, Traffic Engineer with Processor, the Departments Consultant to provide a response to citizen questions/concerns resulting from the findings of the SR293 Safety Study reported at the November 17, 2022, regular meeting of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority. Mr. Lewis explained:

**1. Crash Data**

Two of three crashes were included in the Study and were classified as non-incapacitating based on certified data between 2015-2019.

**2. Classification for injured or uninjured**

Classification is by the highest reported injury by accident or individual using a cost per crash ratio.

**3. Definition of incapacitating crash**

An incapacitating crash includes any injuries that are not fatal that cause, loss of blood, broken or crushed bones.

**4. Definition of head-on crash**

A head-on crash is impact to the front end of two vehicles and back.

Mr. Lewis explained that the FDOT crash data rules are mandated in the Florida Statutes for consistency and uniformity. He further explained that after further investigation it has been determined that the "UFO" shaped devices break loose often due to the epoxy used in placement. There is another treatment being used in Maryland (hand-out provided by FDOT and being made part of these minutes) which is a multi-layer thermoplastic for vibrating on the centerline. FDOT determined RPMs to be the best solution on the Mid-Bay Bridge with shorter spacing in a double row, at most five feet apart.

An upcoming project is scheduled to begin in late Summer this year and will include the installation of the new, tighter-spaced RPMs. At the southbound side of the Lakeshore Drive interchange, the study recommended signage to better identify the curve south of North Lakeshore Drive where there have been several crashes mostly involving motorcycles. The signage could be included in an upcoming resurfacing project.

**C. Election of Officers**

**a. Resolution 2023-01**

Mr. Destin nominated a new slate of Officers for the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority effective January 19, 2023, and voting resulted in the election of:

- **Gordon E. Fornell, Chair**
- **James D. Neilson, Jr., Vice-Chair**
- **James T. Wood, Jr., Secretary/Treasurer**

**D. Signature Authorization**

**a. Resolution 2023-02**

Upon election of new officers, the Authority is required to provide Signature Authorization for Authority Members and the Executive Director to sign for expenses, from the checking and savings accounts with FNBTBank, which are administered by the office. All checks require two (2) signatures.

**A motion was made by Mr. Destin with a second by Mr. Wintner and a 5-0 vote taken for approval and adoption of the new slate of Officers listed on Resolution 2023-01 and to adopt Resolution 2023-02 FNBT Bank Signature Authorization.**

**VI. LEGAL COUNSEL**

**Executive Director Authorization for Mid-Bay Bridge Authority Projects.** Ms. Anchors recommended the Authority renew this authorization to avoid delays awaiting review and approval by the Authority or the need for special meetings at short notice, allowing the Executive Director specific authority within the already approved Budget to act to approve actions to keep the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority projects moving forward. The Sunshine Law requires that the Board members not discuss issues among themselves that could at any time require a vote, so use of e-mail to approve proposed actions is not appropriate. Acknowledging such authority formally would permit the Executive Director the latitude to address matters immediately, although such action would be subject to review and ratification at the next meeting of the Authority. This would allow the projects to advance in a timely manner. Both Mr. Fuller and Ms. Anchors confer regularly about the projects, and this suggestion is made only to continue to meet the objective of the Authority in moving the projects forward.

**A motion was made by Mr. Destin with a second by Mr. Fornell to grant the Executive Director, within the approved Budget and in consult with Legal Counsel, the authority to take specific actions prior to the next duly Noticed Meeting, where any action will be ratified, to move the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority projects forward during 2023, in lieu of a Special**

**Meeting while continuing to keep the members informed appropriately, as may be necessary to advance the forward progress of the projects. A 5-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Wintner recommended that Mr. Neilson offer visitors the opportunity to address the Board and he did at which time Mr. David Vardaman addressed the Board and specifically requested the minutes reflect that cost benefit ratio reflected in the SR293 Safety Study is inaccurate due to the calculation not including costs of injuries and only fatalities. He also pointed out that crossing the centerline side swipe accidents were not included in the report. Additionally, Mr. Vardaman wanted it to be clear that citizens are specifically concerned with mitigation efforts on the yellow line not the white line. He acknowledged that the Authority is only an administrative body and that the FDOT are the experts and thanked everyone for their attention to the matter.

**VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The next regular meeting of the Authority will be held on **Thursday, February 16, 2023**, at 9:00 a.m. in the Destin City Hall Board Room, Destin, Florida.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:38 a.m.

**Approved this 16th day of February 2023.**

  
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Gordon E. Fornell, Chairman