

**MINUTES  
MID-BAY BRIDGE AUTHORITY  
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2020**

**DESTIN CITY HALL BOARD ROOM  
4200 INDIAN BAYOU TRAIL  
DESTIN, FLORIDA**

**I. OPENING**

Members present:                   Gordon E. Fornell  
  James D. Neilson, Jr.  
  Victoria S. Harker  
  T. Patterson Maney  
  Bryant Paulk                    FDOT Ex officio, non-voting

Member absent:                   Parker Destin

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

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

Mr. Fornell welcomed all visitors. In attendance were Michael J. A. Panarisi, Student/Resident Mike Panarisi, Resident; and Jade Rung, FIGG.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting – May 14, 2020**

**A motion to approve the May 14, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes, was made by Mr. Neilson with a second by Mr. Maney and a 4-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**IV. TREASURER’S REPORT**

Ms. Harker presented the Treasurer’s Report for May 2020. Account balances were:

FNBT	\$ 132,294.19
Regions	\$43,715,124.95

**Ms. Harker made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report for May 2020 with a second by Mr. Neilson and a 4-0 vote was taken for approval.**

**V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**A. Operations.** Mr. Fuller reported that a leaking diesel storage tank at the Mid-Bay Bridge Toll Plaza is being replaced by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the FDOT will be reimbursed by the Authority.

Mr. Fuller noted the traffic graphs for both the Bridge and Parkway clearly reflect the impact on traffic because of the Governmental restrictions due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Traffic in the beginning of March 2020 appeared to be on the same track as 2019; however, once the restrictions went into effect, traffic declined dramatically in April 2020. Raw data for the end of May indicates a traffic rebound with the reopening of businesses and beaches.

The annual tourist season North Lakeshore Drive ramp closures were staged and ready to begin on the Memorial Day weekend; however, due to low traffic caused by the Pandemic restrictions and weather forecasts, the first closure was delayed by Sheriff's Deputies until the weekend of May 30. From that point forward, the interchange will be closed every Saturday from approximately 12:00 p.m. until approximately 6:00 p.m. with all toll lanes open. The Chairman shared earlier with Mr. Fuller that he only waited 11-12 minutes from SR20 to the Toll Plaza on a recent Saturday.

Mr. Fuller reported that an inquiry had been made regarding the Authority's reserve funds. He explained that the Treasurer's Report provides the current month's balance in both the savings and checking accounts administered by FNBT Bank for use by the Authority for budgeted office operations as well as the total of all accounts administered by the Authority's Trustee, Regions Bank. The report further provides a Summary of Cash Asset balances which shows the breakdown of the total trustee-held funds with a monthly balance of \$43.7M: \$21.7M is debt service reserve (bond indenture requirement) to ensure debt service payments in the event of lost revenue from unforeseen events like a hurricane or the pandemic; \$6.2M is the year-to-date total of the required debt service funds transferred monthly by the Trustee from the revenue fund into the principal and interest accounts in order to make the bi-annual debt service payments each October and April; and \$1.1M includes all monthly tolls collected and investment returns. Due to the Pandemic that total is significantly lower than normal for this time of year. Finally, \$14.4M in the general fund is the Authority's cash, of which \$5M is invested. In lieu of the reserve funds, the general fund would be used to cover debt service if revenues were insufficient. Fortunately, we have not had to dip into the general fund and do not anticipate having to do so.

Discussion included that the general fund may be used for any legal expenditure, for example advance planning for second bridge, paying down principal, etc. Use of these funds should be considered conservatively. Additionally, discussion on paying down principal on the debt included the requirement to pay full interest until the year 2025.

After a discussion on system capacity requirements identified in the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization Strategic Plan, it continues to be the Authority's desire not to incur any additional Bond debt for system improvements or expansion, and instead the intent is to pursue those needs through the state program. The Chairman recommended reviewing these items on a recurring basis.

Another discussion item was a question on the status of the proposed legislation related to hurricane related toll suspensions. Mr. Fuller reported the proposal did not receive the required support to move forward.

Finally, Mr. Fuller reported that the Toll Plaza Administration office continues to be closed for the safety of the staff and patrons since the pass-through area is very small and confined which is unsafe at this time. We have however been informed that loading cash only on SunPass accounts can be accomplished at any Walmart in the area and we have sent out a press release to that effect.

**B. Mid-Bay Bridge Maintenance, Inspection, and Repair-Update.** Mr. Fuller reported the repairs continue to be moving along well. Equipment is currently being fabricated to replace tendons along the sidewalls of the segments. He will notify the Board when the next overnight closures are scheduled.

#### **VI. LEGAL COUNSEL**

None

#### **VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Fornell shared that he is offended by political comments relating the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority and that the Authority's financial team is second to none and toll revenues have been and continue to be responsibly managed. Mr. Neilson expressed concern over negativity and lack of facts in politics. Mr. Maney contacted Triumph Gulf Coast and was informed that the Authority's Bond debt is not eligible for Triumph funding and suggested that it is unwise for a candidate to grab at an idea that has no merit.

#### **VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The next regular meeting of the Authority will be held on **Thursday, July 16, 2020** at 9:00 a.m. in the Niceville City Hall Board Room, Niceville, Florida.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:35 a.m.

**Approved this 16th day of July 2020.**



Gordon E. Fornell, Chair