



Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway Corridor Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2021 – 10:00am

Zoom Meeting

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comments
3. Approval of January 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes
 - a. Motion to approve by Ron Gregory, second by Allison Roberts; approved
4. Old Business
 - a. 2020 Annual Report completed and submitted
 - i. Alana Todd gave a status update – the Annual Report has been submitted to FDOT. Thank you to everyone who helped provide the information for that report.
 - b. Status update on disruptive behavior near Ben T. Davis Beach¹
 - i. Letter drafted (see below); Final committee approval requested
 1. Scheduled to present at May TBRPC meeting
 - ii. Julio Barrera has hired an outside security agency to work on their beaches; they have assistance from TPD; they have noticed improvement with amplified sound, but it is still happening despite warnings; they have added signage for parking; They remove food vendors; stenciled wall with “no swimming” verbiage; want to put bollards or rocks in areas where cars should not park; they would like to make additional parking areas; they have noticed improvements with amplified sound
 1. Ron Gregory made observation that food vendors are parking where they are not supposed to

¹ **Oct 16, 2020 Motion on disruptive behavior:** Be it moved that the Courtney Campbell Causeway Scenic Highway Advisory Committee draft a letter to be sent to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council that the Committee has been advised by residents of Dana Shores in the City of Tampa, of unruly and possibly illegal activity taking place along the shore of Tampa Bay in the vicinity of Ben T. Davis Beach.



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2. Julio Barrera said there is no single answer; this is a Tampa police and State Trooper issue and they don't do anything; They will be putting up signage for no overnight parking and begin towing
 3. Brian Roberts: There is no police presence in areas beyond the beach (exercise areas) on the trail.
 4. Julio: The police have been helping with the amplified sound; There is a lot of work for a staff of two in their department
 5. Michael Maurino asked how the Gandy bridge and beach is patrolled and whether there is any state policy (or if up to local jurisdiction)
 - a. Julio was not sure how that area is patrolled
 6. Julio: from pictures you can see the high volume of cars, people, and trash. The highway needs more involvement from TPD
 7. Allison has also tried to involve TPD to no avail.
 8. Ron Gregory said that because it is a state road, there should be state involvement and ticketing
 9. Pictures show that cars are parking in drainage swale; Julio pointed out that when they leave, their car gets damaged and they ask for compensation from Tampa
 10. Alex Henry is willing to encourage additional enforcement
 11. Julio remarked that parking signs are present, but Tampa Park and Rec cannot ticket cars parked illegally
- iii. The issue today is whether to send the disruptive letter to the TBRPC
1. Joan Rice made suggestion to include images
 - a. Julio will send additional images to Alana and Bill
 2. Allison Roberts suggested an additional addendum from Julio reporting what has already been done and what else is needed.
 3. Ron asked whether we need to be more specific about what is needed, like enforcement from Florida Highway Patrol
 - a. Alex will clarify what FDOT can do regarding enforcement
 4. Brian pointed out whether or not we should be trying to get a police detail for the weekends, which is different than the police responding to complaints only (which is often lower in priority for getting addressed)



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5. Allison Roberts - The first paragraph needs to be amended to reflect that the letter is not sourced solely from Dana Shores.
 6. With consensus, the letter will be sent to the TBRPC.
 - c. Update to scope verbiage of “scenic” character of water uses along causeway
 - i. Wade Reynolds was not present to provide an update.
 - d. Update to Clearwater amenities status (trail enhancements)
 - i. Michael Lavery provided an update: \$380,000 will be needed for the updates; The city of Clearwater and Pinellas agreed to split the costs, but Pinellas can no longer provide funding at this time; The city of Clearwater funded the design, there are concerns that the prices might go up due to waiting.
 - ii. Bill Jonson said that Commissioner Karen Seel reported the lack of funding for the current year, and Bill asked that they request funding for next year.
 1. Joan Rice recommended sending the request in writing to Commissioner Seel
 2. Bill Jonson did send the request via email (not formal)
 - iii. Bill Jonson recommended talking with Commissioner Janet Long on the TBRPC
 1. Bill Jonson will draft the email and send it to Sean to discuss with Commissioner Long.
5. New Business
- a. Fishing pier
 - i. People are regularly crawling over the rip rap rock to fish, which is a public safety hazard.
 - ii. Ron Gregory reported that the original trail design included a pier for people to fish safely, but was excluded due to funding concerns.
 - iii. Ron wanted consensus from the committee whether they should reapproach the fishing pier concept.
 - iv. Bill Jonson brought up the new opportunity to apply for federal grants if no other local funding sources are available.
 - v. Ron Gregory and staff will look into old files to find more information about the proposed pier with the trail
 - b. Update from Westshore Alliance

Corridor Management Entity – Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
4000 Gateway Centre Blvd., Suite 100
Pinellas Park, FL 33782
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- i. New construction and sidewalks and pedestrian amenities
- ii. Michael Maurino is working with the city of Tampa to get a new sidewalk along Rocky Point;
 - 1. Issues with Frontier and moving their lines
- iii. On southside, city of Tampa will be resurfacing the road (Rocky point drive); There will be a limit to building sidewalks - issues with road ownership and drainage.
 - 1. Tampa got a lot of support from Shriners in making sure the sidewalk will be large enough
- iv. Michael Maurino informed the committee that Wade Reynolds is working on an updated bicycle map
 - 1. They are looking at the Pinellas County maps as a guide
- v. Allison Roberts asked whether there is the ability to get lighting between Skyway Park and the start of the trail near Bayport Drive (NE end of causeway).
 - 1. Michael said he would bring it up with Westshore Alliance; possibility for solar lighting.
 - 2. Julio Barrera said that this is an issue he can bring to Karla Price with Tampa
- c. Update from FDOT (Alex Henry)
 - i. Florida Scenic Highway's senior management staffing changes
 - 1. Jeff Castor retired last year and FDOT has been working to fill his position; Paul Hires has been serving as the interim state scenic highway coordinator; COVID-19 prompted a hold on FDOT hiring
 - 2. Alex is expecting a more detailed update for the next meeting.
 - 3. The scenic highway website is also down, but should be back up soon.
 - ii. 2021 Garry Balogh Award (See below)
 - 1. The application cycle is open now and closes on the 30th of April. The award is for any individual or organization that has had a significant impact on a scenic highway.
 - iii. Alex Henry asked for any questions or issues that he could report to FDOT
 - 1. Brian Roberts mentioned the issue of trash on the southside of the Tidal Gates area (from Seasons Hotel, near Waterford plaza, east to Tidal Gates area).

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- a. Julio with Tampa works to keep the trail clean, but they are limited with a staff of two.
 - b. Alex Henry requested pictures
 2. Michael Maurino has also reported trash in the same areas. He asked whether there are any state policies (or clarification on roles) since it is a state bridge.
 3. Allison requested an update on the rumble strips
 - a. Alex Henry said that FDOT is restricted from using rumble strips in urban areas. FDOT can provide an update at the next meeting about putting in speed bumps or other alternatives to address the racing
6. Organization Updates – as appropriate/if any
 - a. Clearwater
 - i. This will be Michael Lavery's last meeting as the city is finding a replacement for his old position.
 - ii. Clearwater is looking into some mangrove planting along the causeway in collaboration with the aquarium. These would be planted in areas where there were mangroves historically
 - b. Tampa
 - c. Pinellas County
 - d. Hillsborough County
 - e. Clearwater Chamber of Commerce
 - f. Westshore Alliance
 - g. Dana Shores
 - h. TBRPC
 - i. FDOT
7. Other Business
8. Meeting adjourned 11:20

Next meeting dates: August 20, 2021; October 15, 2021



Courtney Campbell Causeway

Attendees: Ron Gregory, AECOM; Bill Jonson, Chair; Julio Barrera, City of Tampa Park and Rec; Alana Todd, TBRPC; Sean Sullivan, TBRPC; Michael Lavery, City of Clearwater; Joan Rice, Pinellas County Public Works; Allison Roberts, President of Dana Shores Civic Association; Brian Roberts, Dana Shores; Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas; Michael Palozzi; Michael Maurino, Westshore Alliance; Kristina Alspaw, Amplify Clearwater; Alex Henry, FDOT

Draft letter on disruptive behavior:

May 10, 2021

Chair Jack Mariano
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
4000 Gateway Centre Blvd., Suite 100
Pinellas Park, FL 33782

RE: Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway (CCSH) Trail Disruptive Unsafe Behavior

Dear Chair Mariano and Council Members,

The Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway Corridor Advisory Committee (CCSHCAC) has voted to advise the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC) about unsafe behavior taking place along portions of the Causeway.

The TBRPC, the Corridor Management Entity for the Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway, has delegated the programmatic initiatives for the causeway to the CCSHCAC, which convenes quarterly with representatives from nearby communities and all local government and planning agencies that touch the highway. During the last few years, residents of the Dana Shores community have shared information about disruptive and unsafe activities occurring along the Causeway that pose public safety risks and diminish public use of the multi-use trail. The main problem area exists along the multi-use trail on the south side of the causeway between Ben T. Davis Beach and the Courtney Campbell Boat Ramp.

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Courtney Campbell Causeway

Actual management of the Causeway was and is retained by FDOT, FHP, and the cities of Clearwater and Tampa. Stakeholder representatives of FDOT and the Tampa Parks Department have reported actions taken to mitigate this behavior. FDOT has installed access gates that are now closed at night by Tampa staff, which has resolved many of the nighttime activities. The disruptive behavior, however, continues during the day and especially on weekends. The following problems continue:

1. Crowds, approaching a thousand people or more, gather to party along the south side of the highway, using the drainage swale on the southside of the Causeway (between the guardrail and pedestrian path) as a makeshift overflow parking area.
2. With the crowds come excessive trash, unpermitted uses, blocking of the multi-use trail, and damage to the drainage infrastructure.
3. People driving along the access road are encouraged by crowds lined up in the pedestrian trail and on the other side of the frontage roadway to “burn out their tires,” posing a high risk to these crowds and trail users.
4. To navigate the trail, families, pedestrians, and bicyclists end up breathing in clouds of burnt rubber, secondhand marijuana smoke, or both.
5. Numerous vehicles show up with large speaker systems, and the crowds play music so loud it causes passersby’s ears to ring (violating Tampa City ordinance Sec. 14-155 – *Unreasonably excessive noise from a vehicle prohibited.*)

For over 85 years, the Courtney Campbell Causeway has served as a vital link between Tampa and Clearwater for residents and visitors across the Tampa Bay Region. Each day thousands of cars traverse the scenic highway and walkers, bicyclists, and runners enjoy the recreational opportunities afforded by its paved trail. These disorderly activities do not pair well with the intended use of the recreational trail – which supports a healthy lifestyle and recreation for athletes, individuals, and families. Weekend recreational trail users find it dangerous to themselves, children, and others to navigate amongst large groups of people blocking the pedestrian and bicycle paths.

We have yet to see a consistent presence, education, and enforcement policy applied to keep the area safe for the recreational areas’ intended use. Therefore, the Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway Corridor Advisory Committee would respectfully advise the TBRPC and its member governments that additional creative solutions are needed to resolve these issues while not discouraging people from using the Courtney Campbell amenities and trail.



Courtney Campbell Causeway

Sincerely,

Bill Jonson,
Chair, Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway Corridor Advisory Committee

Enclosure: Map of activity location (highlighted) along the Courtney Campbell Trail

2021 Garry Balogh Award:

The Florida Scenic Highways is a grass roots-based program with a passionate community of supporters. This award provides an opportunity to recognize an individual, or organization that has made a significant and lasting impact on the scenic highways program.

The schedule for selecting the 2021 recipient is as follows:

March 1st	Open Nomination Cycle
April 30th	Close Nomination Cycle
May 15th	Complete Evaluation of Nominations
May 21st	2021 Recipient Selected
June 15th	Announcement of Award Recipient

The nomination letter should describe the nature and length of the nominee's involvement with the Florida Scenic Highways Program, and actions demonstrating leadership, innovations, and inspiration. Letters must be on byway letterhead and emailed to Claudia.Calzaretta@dot.state.fl.us prior to the close of the nomination cycle.