

Florida Transit Maintenance Consortium (FTMC)
Minutes of the Meeting
February 24, 2022 | CUTR | Tampa, FL

The Florida Transit Maintenance Consortium (FTMC) meeting was held on February 24, 2022/ 0800 at USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) in Tampa, Florida. The meeting was also presented remotely to FTMC members via MS Teams. There were 19 in attendance, and 22 members joining remotely via TEAMS; (all participants identified themselves, their agency and position), a sign-in sheet and agenda of the meeting is attached.

The meeting was called to order by Todd Parsons, Manager of the Transit Maintenance Analysis and Resource Center (CUTR), who welcomed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Central Office representative Tony Brandin, FDOT Transit Operations Manager.

Tony (FDOT) expressed his appreciation to outgoing Chairman Cheney for the leadership and accomplishments made, gave encouraging words to incoming Chair Elvis Dovalles. He wished Elvis the very best, reminding him to keep the group motivated. Thanks to all guests participating in the FTMC meeting were expressed. It was wonderful to see so many people 'in-person' to support the FTMC, and great to hear many had joined remotely.

Outgoing FTMC Chair Joe Cheney, Jr. was introduced with a round of appreciative applause for his service with the Consortium; this is his final meeting as the FTMC Chair. Joe (PSTA) has served as Chair of the FTMC for the past two years. Elvis Dovalles (LYNX) is FTMC Vice-Chair; he will be installed as the new FTMC Chair, serving a two-year term as is called for in the IAW FTMC Charter, Article VII, Section I.

Chairman Cheney expressed his gratitude to everyone, especially FDOT for their support during his tenure. Joe reminded the audience that PSTA has great facilities which can be used for practicing skills for Roadeo competition and training. He invited other agencies to utilize the PSTA facilities. To be noted, the facilities have been used by the FDOT Statewide Transit & Technical Assistance Program and the Certified Transit Technician Program (CTT) in the past.

Chairman Cheney reviewed today's meeting agenda as follows:

- Opening & Welcoming Statements
- Thanks to Outgoing 2020-2022 FTMC Chair and Welcome to New 2022-2024 FTMC Vice-Chair
- Conduct FTMC 2022-2024 Vice-Chair Election (IAW FTMC Charter Article VII, Section I)
- Create FTMC Charter/Bylaw Update Committee to review, revise and amend existing FTMC Charter and bylaws to enhance FTMC Outreach
- CTT Certification Updates / ASE Certifications
- 2022 Roadeo Information
- "Transit Hot Topics" to be presented at the 2022 PDW
- Advantages and disadvantages of conducting a one-day TMAARC/FTMC PDW.
- Results of the 2022 training SurveyMonkey
- New Business

The Chair invited everyone to stay after the FTMC meeting to join the FDOT Florida Transit Safety and Operations Network (FTSON) for their meeting, which was held immediately after the FTMC meeting. Of special interest for the FTMC will be the presentation on the '*Post Pandemic Labor Market Analysis*' by Hillsborough Community College and especially how it impacts the hiring and retention of employees of all industries.

Chairman Cheney provided several noteworthy items of information to the audience including that the 2022 Annual Roadeo has been canceled, the news was met with disappointment from the audience. Joe (PSTA) shared that in the future he intends to start bringing a guest technician with him to the FTMC meetings. His purpose is to engage and encourage the next generation of technicians to realize the support, knowledge and best practices that is provided by the FTMC. He encouraged all members to consider doing the same. This connects the upcoming technicians to the valuable resources and seasoned maintenance veterans readily available to them, which helps to foster and build a stronger workforce with the next generation of transit professionals.

The FTMC and the Charter

Chairman Cheney explained the functions and by-laws of the FTMC, which meets quarterly on a formal basis and at other times throughout the year as needed. All major decisions concerning program structure, format, content, and policy are put before the Committee for approval. Members of the Committee communicate their needs and opinions and provide the program with feedback from the most important source – the maintenance departments and technicians themselves. The Consortium is a collection of transit maintenance professionals from around the state and includes representatives from many public transportation agencies' maintenance departments. We encourage maintenance directors, managers, trainers, and supervisors to participate in this group, as participation is open to all properties.

The group acts as the eyes, ears, and voice of the maintenance department within the transit arena. They identify and bring resolution to many systemic equipment and/or policy issues that plague our agencies, as well as providing input and advice to policymakers and key stakeholders.

Article III, Section I of the FTMC charter describes membership, which *“expressly includes all maintenance professionals, employed at a Florida public transit agency, committed to improving maintenance-related aspects of transit operations. Members are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in all FTMC supported events. Members may be eligible for reimbursement for FTMC related travel.”*

Article VII, Section I addresses Voting and Amendments of the Charter stating *“Each property is allowed only one vote per issue presented for a vote. The senior member from each property may vote in person, through a written proxy, or through a designated representative to vote in his/her absence.”*

Article V Section III of the Charter defines terms of leadership stating *“The Committee Chair shall serve a term of two years after which the Vice-Chair shall become the Chair and a new Vice-Chair shall be elected. The Chair shall serve for a term of two years. A chair appointed to fulfill a partial term may stand for a full term thereafter. At the conclusion of the chair’s term, he or she shall serve as immediate past chair if otherwise qualified.”* Article V, Section III states that *“The Vice-Chair shall serve for a term of two years. A Vice-Chair appointed to fulfill a partial term may stand for a full term thereafter. At the conclusion of the Chair’s term, the vice may be elected to the chair if otherwise qualified.”*

Voting for the 2022-2024 FTMC Vice-Chair

The vote for the 2022-2024 Vice-Chair of the FTMC began with Todd reading bios to the membership for two candidates, Carlos Zambrano (ECAT) and Rocky Macaluso (PSTA). The floor was opened for any others who are interested in holding this position, but there were no other candidates to step forward. Votes were cast via QR or paper ballot. The results of the vote will be tallied and forwarded to the membership by the end of the meeting.

ASE Statistics

Todd (CUTR) gave an ASE statistics overview. The numbers of professionals currently certified by ASE with information accurate through the Spring 2021 ASE test administration. This list is updated once a year in July and can be found at <https://www.ase.com/statistics>. Activities of the Florida CTT participants are impressive on the national scale. Todd described how technicians are encouraged to study the H1-H8 Task Lists when preparing to test to be a Master Transit Technician; this is where the ASE writes their questions from. There are criteria for hours per category, OJT counts as class time and is verified by supervisors.

Todd (CUTR) provided the current costs for the ASE Study Guides and Tests Registration, which is approximately \$783.96 per person to complete the program and become ASE certified. When going thru the CTT program via CUTR, this cost is underwritten by the Florida Department of Transportation. PSTA is using the ASE certification as a gauge for advancing their technicians. The onus of advancement is placed on the employee to do the work of completing the ASE certification, but the agency provides the tools and training to do so. Likewise, there isn't a cap on how many technicians can complete the certification as the agency would prefer a garage full of certified techs than not.

Brenda (Hernando County) spoke of a new plan being instituted for technicians who complete the designated number of ASE credits. ASE credits allow the tech to receive a raise (.10¢ per hour per credit up to 4 credits, .25¢ per hour for each additional credit). This has been a great motivator for their maintenance technicians.

Roadeo

Todd reiterated the 2022 Florida Triple Crown Roadeo has been cancelled, as well as the 2022 International Roadeo. The 2023 Florida Triple Crown Roadeo is currently on schedule to occur March 31-April 1, 2023 at LYNX, the 2024 will be at Jacksonville Transportation Authority. The International Roadeo will be conducted in April 2023 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Everyone is encouraged to keep up their skills as the Roadeo will be back, and most importantly – those skills make the vehicles and roads a safer place to be for everyone.

Survey Monkey

Discussion regarding the marginal responses from the most recent SurveyMonkey distributed to the Consortium was addressed. Nearly 175 surveys were sent out, with only 14 responses. The survey took about 2 minutes to complete, but surprisingly few people responded. It's important to take the time to participate in these surveys as they are a collective voice allowing FDOT to address issues with vendors. We cannot support you without the input of the FTMC members - use your voice!

He also addressed were various types of training including OSHA, Air Brake training, Preventative Maintenance, etc. A Transit Maintenance Supervisor Certification course is in the development stages. Once it is ready for preview, an FTMC committee will review the content. This training will be from the efforts of the all. Lean on us for your needs, we are here for you!

To be noted, *don't use the word mechanic to describe your maintenance team members*. They are technicians. The difference between mechanics and technicians is that mechanics are skilled workers who use their hands to fix things, while technicians study, profess and use computers and other complex machinery to diagnose and repair problems.

Todd (CUTR) fielded questions from the Teams participants, some of which discussed training opportunities including Latitude Learning Management Systems technology training. It is not transit specific, but it is good,

basic training for the transit professional. Reach out to Todd if you or a staff member has interest in Electude training so the Maintenance director is aware of the training, and we can track it.

Certified Transit Technician Program

Discussion regarding the CTT program ensued. CTT will be put on pause for the moment, and ASE training will be utilized. The program is being regionalized with training being held at locations other than LeeTran making it more accessible to different areas of the state. This change is occurring because the program is very structured when going thru HCC, and we can only teach what is in Transit Technician I lineup/schedule. By utilizing ASE, training will be for what is needed, and not is what 'on the schedule'. Therefore, Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification will be the focus, allowing for the flexibility of the needed training topic. Numerous comments were made of the value and importance of having a 'blue ribbon garage' full of certified technicians.

ASE gives more flexibility to maintenance technician training. Lively Tech has provided assistance in how to perform ASE test, contributing to the program. Depending upon the topic, a manual, task lists, and OJT paperwork is provided on day one of the class. The technicians are responsible for their OJT. It is the goal that FTMC sets a standard for the nation, leading the way for transit technician training. Todd (LPIP) asked about hour requirements; and yes, the criteria for the ASE training will be based upon the successful CTTTP requirements for accountability. Each module requires different hour requirements ranging from 120-200 hours.

Ongoing Voting for Vice-Chair

Only a few responses were received for the Vice-Chair vote via the QR. Everyone was asked to verify if their vote was received thru their cell phone. If not, they were asked to cast a vote. The candidates' bios were restated. The results of the vote were tallied and forwarded to the membership. Carlos Zambrano (ECAT) was elected to be the new Vice-Chair.

New Business

MDT is working to develop a hybrid maintenance overhaul class. Todd has coordinated with several FTMC members to put this training together to be able to share with others throughout the state. Todd (CUTR) has assembled individuals within the group who are experts within their field (i.e. Electrical, Air Conditioning, etc.). These individuals are the go-to professionals to call upon, the best of the best in their field.

Update of the FTMC Charter/Bylaws

Joe shared information of using Compass Help Desk, it has been very beneficial to his department. A motion by Joe (PSTA) to update the Diesel training by adding L1. The motion seconded by Todd O'Neal (Lively Tech) and Carlos Zambrano (ECAT). The motion was quickly modified to add L1, L2 and L3 (diesel training) to the program. The modification of the motion was seconded by Walter (StarMetro) and Brenda (Hernando County). The vote was unanimous to move forward. A volunteer committee consisting of Carlos Zambrano (ECAT), Henry Lukasik (PSTA), Scott Groth (VOTRAN), Sean Irvine (HART) and Brad Mills (MDT) was formed to review, revise and amend existing FTMC charter and bylaws reflecting this addition.

Adjournment

Tony (FDOT) asked if there were any online questions regarding the motion/vote to proceed on the addition. He expressed his appreciation to everyone for their participation and made special recognition to Bobby

Westbrook, Operations Administrator/Assistant Manager and Elizabeth Stutts, State Transit Manager, who have championed the FTMC since its inception in the late 1990's.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 0955.