

William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway
Corridor Management Group
Meeting Notes – Thursday, October 16, 2025, 6:30 PM

Informational Meeting Commenced at 6:40pm

1. Introductions of those Present: Al Abbatiello, Melissa Brunz, Luis Cabellero, Ann-Marie Evans, Justin Fairman (virtual), Joe McAnarney, Mike Palozzi (virtual) and Amy Roberson (virtual).

2. Administrative – Informational Meeting only

a. Approve September Meeting Minutes – Moved to November

b. Treasurer's Report – Current balance \$17,897.78

3. Committee Reports

a. Membership Update – We would like to add more members. Al volunteered to draft a letter for Joe to approve. However, Melissa has already drafted a letter and Joe will route a copy to Al for input. Al has compiled a list of appx. 200 names with email addresses that he would like to email the letter to. Melissa mentioned the possibility of doing an outreach day outside of Publix. She will reach out to Publix. Ann-Marie suggested that we reach out to Kim Kendall to see if she can help increase awareness of our group.

b. Website – Melissa has updated the website. Hyperlinks for the 2026 workplan, September minutes and October agenda are on the website. Luis brought up adding additional agendas and minutes to our website and Melissa agreed to add those. Martin County's website is getting a lot of likes, their set-up is different as they use a tagline of, "Keep Martin County beautiful." Maybe something we would like to explore.

Decals are printed. Melissa visited several businesses to provide them with a decal for their door. She also left our business card and let the businesses know that, if they provide a business card, their business can be promoted on our website and facebook. Melissa showed the decal to the group. Mike said he can include the decal in the newsletter.

4. Project Ideas and Updates

a. 2026 Work Plan – The 2026 Work Plan and Annual Report are due each year. The Work Plan was drafted and routed to our membership. We will have a vote in November. Mike can submit the Work Plan for us and then we will vote on it when we have a quorum. We can make changes prior to the vote. Mike will see if his IT person can add a canopy photo highlighting our trees. He said that our vision statement was rather lengthy and he drafted a more compact version. It was suggested that Orangedale be added. The scenic highway is a constrained road which means it can never be more than 2 lanes; we

want to prevent trees from being destroyed in the Orangedale section. Unfortunately, even if FDOT flags the area, utilities do not have to get permits before doing work. Amy suggested we might want to reach out to utility companies. Another suggestion was to make changes to the comprehensive plan and land development code. Utilities look for the most efficient way to accomplish tasks but we need to regulate how this occurs. Group asked to finalize; vote will be added to the November agenda. Mike will route a copy. We have a lengthy list of accomplishments and would like to add the Bartram Trail Society Conference in St. Augustine and the Spring and Winterfests at Alpine Groves to the list.

Luis asked if the old workplans are on the FDOT website. Amy and Mike do not think so but expressed that it is a good idea. As we work toward finalization, Mike will send us a couple of examples that include income and expense projections. Other scenic highway donors want to know how their money is going to be spent so we will need to consider the addition of the income and expense projections.

b. \$10,000 Anonymous Donation – An individual made this donation and was very enthused about plans for a Bartram Education Center at the library. The money was earmarked for this project. The library manager, Maribeth Beck, emailed Joe that the library has grown like crazy, is tremendously busy and needs expansion. Unfortunately, the only area for expansion is the same area we had hoped to use. Luis inquired as to whether there was a site plan in place for expansion, Joe does not know of one and responded that the current library is about 15k square feet and the expansion would be an estimated additional 8-10k square feet. Joe was very positive and discussed the possibility of an indoor display.

Joe brought up the idea of a matching donation. Mike and Amy see no problem. Donor is not requesting money back. Melissa suggested sending out an email promoting the match. Mike agreed and said this is new territory and we just need to make sure we are compliant with the IRS. Melissa will work on the email. Mike could include a paragraph in the Scenic Highway Newsletter regarding the match. Mike also mentioned that the A1A Scenic Highway bought a CD with their money that was not being used for an immediate need. Mike has a contact at Green Mountain and will make an introduction between them and Joe.

Joe will try to meet with Deborah Gibson with the library to discuss the Masterplan and share that we have a donor. Joe has met with 4 of our 5 commissioners, went to 2 meetings of the Friends of the Library and met with the folks that run Alpine Groves. The leader of the Friends of the Library group was excited about an outdoor area and has 2 sons (Pratt brothers) that are landscape designers. Joe talked with Adam Pratt of Pratt Guys and he is excited to help. He believes the education center at the library could be done for \$250k, much less than the \$650k number that was previously quoted by another landscaper.

Adam will probably become a member. Mike added that pro bono work can be matched too.

c. Wildflowers at Julington Creek Bridge

- Amy has no new updates. She will check in with FDOT. Peanut grass is going to be ordered. Will do a news release that highway beautification is happening on Bartram Scenic Highway. The group can ask businesses to support. Melissa mentioned using signs similar to open house signs with a sponsored by whomever. Amy will check into this. Joe said at some point, we were posting signs. Amy can put something on the FDOT website or Facebook about the project as well as the groundbreaking ceremony.

d. Business Advisory Group

- Melissa put together a letter to property managers with the purpose of bringing ideas that would benefit tenants. Bartram Corners was one idea of a name for an area where people can pull over out of traffic and take a photo. There is a sign by the Bank of America on SR13, we need to see who that belongs to, etc.

e. Bartram Library – See above comments.

f. Neighborhood National Parks – Joe has been discussing this concept with Adam Pratt.

g. Other

- Joe met with Commissioner Whitehurst and said that he is excited about a, “Welcome to St. Johns County” sign. Commissioner Whitehurst will follow up with Public Works.
- Joe met with Parks and Recreation to discuss Blueways, Greenways Trail Plan. Joe is trying to secure a seat at the table.
- Florida Historic Society has placed a number of plaques.
- Creekline did publish an article publicizing our 20th anniversary. Unfortunately, due to the timing, the date of our next meeting had already passed.

5. FDOT / FSHP Updates

a. Amy

- Amy gave kudos to the group. A Scenic Highway Newsletter should be out the end of next week. Joe inquired as to whether a visit to the Lake City office would be possible to meet other staff and develop relationships. Amy said that would work.

b. Mike

- Mid-Year Meet-Up – Mike relayed that he attended this 2 hour meeting in September. Scenic Highways must be in compliance with Sunshine laws. Notice of meetings must be posted and Mike recognized Joe for being the first in the state to comply with this

requirement. Agenda and meeting minutes need to be posted and we need to follow the appropriate records retention schedule. Not retroactive, but must start doing it now according to the FDOT attorney. Elected officials should not discuss issues that could be voted on outside of meetings. Option and fact finding meetings as well as strategy sessions are ok. If we have questions, contact Mike. A pamphlet is being drafted to help with compliance.

- **Bi-Way Management Plan Update**
Must have goals and objectives. Our plan is dated and needs to be updated. Each plan should include: #1 history, #2 where we are today and #3 plans for the next 5 years. Mike and Amy are available to help.
- Mike said the Old Florida Heritage Highway is talking to the William Bartram Trail Society about a possible bi-way extension. Al will try to make sure that Sam Carr with the William Bartram Trail Society and Joe get introduced. Mike suggested inviting Sam Carr to one of our meetings, could even be virtual. Joe said that partnering with the William Bartram Trail Society would provide greater visibility and help promote the concepts of preserve and protect. Melissa mentioned starting our own chapter. This group is very active in Clay and Putnam Counties.
- Luis provided Joe with a document that shows the historical markers on the Bartram Trail Historic Highway. Melissa is going to pdf the document. Luis thinks we can get a marker for being a part of the William Bartram Trail Society.

6. Public Comments

7. Next Meeting Date – November 20, 2025 @ 6:30pm

8. Adjourned at 7:58pm