



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716  
[WWW.PSTA.NET](http://WWW.PSTA.NET) 727.540.1800 FAX 727.540.1913

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MINUTES – JANUARY 27, 2016**

---

The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors met in regular session in the Board Room at PSTA Headquarters at 9:00 AM on this date with the following members present:

Darden Rice, Chairperson  
Julie Bujalski, Vice-Chairperson  
Janet Long, Secretary/Treasurer  
Joseph Barkley  
Doug Bevis  
Mark Deighton  
Ben Diamond  
Dave Eggers  
Samantha Fenger  
Pat Gerard  
Patricia Johnson  
Bill Jonson  
Brian Scott  
Kenneth Welch  
Lisa Wheeler-Brown

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO  
Alan Zimmet, PSTA General Counsel  
PSTA Staff Members  
Members of the Public

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairperson Rice called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM and the Board was led in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**[Mr. Bevis entered the meeting at 9:06 AM.]**

Chairperson Rice moved **PSTA Board Officers 2016** before the Public Comment section.

**PSTA BOARD OFFICERS 2016**

Mr. Zimmet explained the rationale and process for rescinding the December 9, 2015 Board Officers vote. He recommended that the Board have a full and complete discussion and then conduct another vote for the 2016 Board Officers. He also recommended that Ms. Johnson and Chairperson Rice state the substance of their discussion that resulted in this alleged violation of the Sunshine Law; which they did. Ms. Gerard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to rescind the December 9, 2015 election of the 2016 Board Officers.

In response to Chairperson Rice's call for public comment, Tom Rask, unincorporated Seminole (also speaking for Sully Grasso), spoke of the alleged Sunshine Law violation and suggested that Chairperson Rice be Vice-Chairperson instead. He also commented on an email that he sent the Board.

**[Mr. Eggers entered the meeting at 9:13 AM.]**

Dan Harvey, Jr., St. Petersburg, stated his opinion that there are two qualified people for the Chairperson position. He believes the CSX line will be a big decision and said South County and North County need to unite, and the Chairperson should be someone who has the best regional perspective.

There were no further public comments. Motion passed unanimously. Immediate Past Chairperson Jonson took over the gavel for the discussion and new vote for Board Officers.

Mr. Diamond reported on the December 23, 2015 Nominating Committee meeting and indicated that the Committee nominated Ms. Rice (4:1 with Mr. Welch dissenting) to serve as Chairperson, Ms. Bujalski to serve as Vice-Chairperson, and Ms. Long to serve as Secretary/Treasurer.

Chairperson Jonson asked for other nominations from the Board members for Chairperson and Mr. Scott nominated Ms. Bujalski. The Board had a lengthy discussion about the nominations and how succession was handled in the past. In response to Chairperson Jonson's call for public comment, Mr. Rask, (also speaking for Sully Grasso), spoke of the succession plan in the past and North County and South County support.

Wengay Newton, St. Petersburg, stated his opinion that just because it was the norm in the past for the Vice-Chairperson to move into the Chairperson position does not mean it is guaranteed to occur.

After more discussion among the Board, Chairperson Jonson asked for a roll call vote. Ms. Rice received eight votes (Ms. Fenger, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Welch, Ms. Rice, Ms. Long, Mr. Deighton, Mr. Diamond, and Ms. Wheeler-Brown), and Ms. Bujalski received seven votes (Ms. Gerard, Mr. Bevis, Mr. Barkley, Chairperson Jonson, Ms. Bujalski, Mr. Scott, and Mr. Eggers.) Ms. Rice was elected the 2016 Board Chairperson and Mr. Jonson passed the gavel back to Chairperson Rice.

Mr. Diamond reiterated that the Nominating Committee nominated Ms. Bujalski for Vice-Chairperson and Ms. Long for Secretary/Treasurer. There were no other nominations and no public comment. Ms. Bujalski and Ms. Long were elected unanimously.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Joe Callahan, St. Petersburg, expressed his appreciation for the Care Ride transportation saying that the drivers and staff are very helpful and courteous.

Mr. Newton asked about the pending open-carry policy and how that will affect the buses. Mike Gloss, Superintendent of Safety, Security, & Training (SS&T) responded to his question.

Mr. Rask pointed out PSTA's proposed advertising in the *Tampa Bay Times* and expressed his opinion that it is inappropriate for PSTA to spend money advocating its Legislative agenda. He believes it is the same as lobbying for more tax dollars.

### **NON-BOARD COMMITTEES**

Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) – Elaine Mann, Committee Chair, reported on the January 12th TRAC meeting.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – Ms. Bujalski reported on the MPO/Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) Board meeting that took place on January 13th.

Chairperson Rice introduced and welcomed PSTA's new Board member, Ms. Wheeler-Brown, Councilmember from St. Petersburg.

MPO's Local Coordinating Board (LCB) – Ms. Johnson indicated that the LCB did not meet since the last PSTA Board meeting in December, although she did update the Board on recent events affecting the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program and provided ridership numbers. Mr. Jonson suggested that those numbers be added to the Legislative agenda sheet. She also spoke about upcoming events relating to the LCB.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Deighton requested that item 5B be pulled from the Consent Agenda and stated that the Finance Committee had recommended the contract based on getting cost estimates on the hybrid battery parts and equipment. Mr. Miller said that staff is working on the estimate of how many components will have to be replaced this year adding that this contract would be funded out of the adopted operating budget. Item 5B was pulled and Ms. Gerard made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the remainder of the Consent Agenda. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Barkley reported that the Finance Committee had unanimously recommended approval of the hybrid battery parts and equipment contract. After further discussion, Mr. Scott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to approve the agreement locking in prices but have further discussion on this topic at a future Board meeting. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Eggers reminded the Board of past discussions about whether to put an item on the consent agenda or as an action item. Mr. Miller indicated that the Committees will be addressing this issue during their meetings.

## ACTION ITEMS

Update - 2016 Legislative Priorities – Mr. Diamond reported on the January 6th Legislative Committee meeting which recommended approval of the updated Legislative priorities. Ms. Bujalski suggested that the Legislative Committee have a discussion on how the open-carry policy would affect public transit. Mr. Welch asked Mr. Zimmet to research whether public transit is exempt from an open-carry policy. Ms. Long indicated that there might be an opportunity to partner with major resort hotels on the beach as well as Tampa International Airport (TIA) for the Clearwater Beach to TIA Express Service project. Mr. Scott had a question about the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) surplus funds from the U.S. 19 project which Mr. Miller answered.

Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barkley to approve the updated Legislative priorities. In response to Chairperson Rice's call for public comment, Mr. Rask (also speaking for Mr. Grasso) spoke about lobbying and mentioned that bus ridership was down. There were no further public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

**[Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 11:04 AM and did not return.]**

Revised CEO Performance Evaluation Form – Trish Collins, Staffing and Development Manager, described the new CEO evaluation form. Mr. Jonson said the Personnel

Committee approved presenting the revised form to the Board at the December meeting with final approval today. There was a lengthy discussion about the #1-3 versus #1-5 rating system. Mr. Eggers stated that it is important to use the same evaluation each year for comparison. Ms. Bujalski made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gerard to use the #1-5 rating system. There were no public comments. Motion passed (13:1) with Mr. Eggers dissenting. Mr. Jonson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to approve the evaluation form as amended. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously. In the interest of time, Chairperson Rice suggested the evaluation form go back to the Personnel Committee for their recommendation on the definition of the two additional scoring numbers.

Strategic Communication Plan – Cyndi Raskin-Schmitt, Director of Communications, gave a presentation on PSTA’s Strategic Communication Plan. She explained that this comprehensive plan will outline the situation and goals, identify target audiences and key messaging, outline tools and techniques for communicating PSTA’s messaging with the public, and describe new and ongoing initiatives and activities.

Mr. Jonson stated his opinion that the plan is more about PSTA’s messaging outward to the community instead of seeking input from the community about their needs. Other Board members were in agreement about the need for more community engagement. Mr. Barkley reported that the Finance Committee unanimously recommended Board approval. Ms. Wheeler-Brown spoke about the engaging conversation with the public at a recent Town Hall meeting. Mr. Welch said that the Planning Committee recommended approval of the plan. Mr. Miller indicated that this plan is a living document and can be modified to include public and community input. Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the plan. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Action Plan – Heather Sobush, Planning Manager, reported that FDOT will fund \$500,000 to conduct the project development phase. She presented an action plan for the Central Avenue BRT including entry into project development, public outreach and engagement, and project development phase requirements. She noted that staff is also preparing for a meeting with the Florida Transit Administration (FTA) in early February to review the documentation required to formally ask to enter into the project development phase. Mr. Barkley added that the Finance Committee is very pleased with the way this project is moving forward and Mr. Welch reported the same comments from the Planning Committee.

**[Ms. Long left the meeting at 12:00 PM and did not return.]**

PSTA/MPO/PPC Joint Workshop Post Report – Chairperson Rice gave a recap of the joint meeting that took place on January 22nd.

### **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE**

PSTA Performance Report/Updates – The report was supplied in the Board packet.

### **FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS**

The Board received a schedule of future meeting subjects.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was discussed.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

The Board members welcomed Ms. Wheeler Brown.

Ms. Fenger suggested the Board use an evaluation-type form for selecting Board Officers in the future.

Mr. Barkley thanked everyone for going through the voting process again. He said that he is very excited about the Legislative priorities which will help the County move forward.

Mr. Welch congratulated the new Board Officers and thanked the Planning Committee for electing him and Mr. Deighton as Committee Chair and Committee Vice-Chair respectively. He said he looks forward to the year ahead.

Mr. Jonson congratulated Chairperson Rice and stated he is confident she will be a good leader for PSTA.

Ms. Bujalski thanked former Chairperson Jonson for his service to PSTA and briefly spoke about the succession of Board Officers.

Mr. Deighton commented that Ms. Raskin-Schmitt did a great job on the Strategic Communication Plan.

Mr. Scott stated that he has complete confidence in the Board and the leadership.

Mr. Diamond thanked former Chairperson Jonson and congratulated the new Board Officers.

Mr. Eggers said he would like a Committee to take a look at the concept of lobbying and bring back their recommendation as to whether PSTA's General Counsel needs to provide an opinion letter.

Ms. Wheeler-Brown said she looks forward to working with each Board member and congratulated the new Officers.

Chairperson Rice thanked former Chairperson Jonson for the incredible job he did as Chairperson. She said she is very excited for PSTA in the upcoming year.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Rice adjourned the meeting at 12:25 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2016 at 9:00 AM.

---

Chairperson