



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES – MAY 25, 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:

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

Absent:

Darden Rice, Chairperson
Ben Diamond
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

Vice-Chairperson Bujalski called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM and the Board was led in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Rask, unincorporated Pinellas County resident, (also speaking for Sully Grasso), spoke about lobbying and suggested that the Board put this issue on a future agenda. On the sustainability issue, he suggested cutting revenue miles to conserve buses. He spoke about an email he wrote to the Board about the Ulmerton Road Park & Ride demolition. Mr. Rask also commented on statements made to the press by Whit Blanton, Executive Director of Forward Pinellas (MPO).

Walter Slupecki, St. Petersburg resident, spoke about electric buses and thanked the Board for doing the research thus far, but he does not believe enough is being done to explore the possibility of acquiring two battery electric buses and the necessary infrastructure. He said that the electric buses can run on a number of PSTA's routes and urged the Board to allocate the necessary resources for two electric buses and charging station.

Phil Compton, Sierra Club, thanked Mr. Welch and Vice-Chairperson Bujalski for participating in the "Hands Across the Sand" event. He spoke about solar power and oil drilling off Florida's shores. He applauded Mr. Welch's proposal to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to provide PSTA with BP settlement funds for the purpose of acquiring an electric bus charging station. Mr. Compton said the Sierra Club looks forward to working with the Board and staff to help with the shift to the type of buses that passengers are in favor of.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) – Elaine Mann, Committee Chair, reported on the May 17th TRAC meeting.

Forward Pinellas (Metropolitan Planning Organization - MPO) – Vice-Chairperson Bujalski reported on the Forward Pinellas Board meeting that took place on May 11th.

MPO's Local Coordinating Board (LCB) – Ms. Johnson indicated that the MPO's LCB met on May 17th and provided some highlights.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Jonson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the Consent Agenda. There were no public comments. The Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda, which included the approval of the April 27, 2016 Board meeting minutes, the

Ulmerton Road Park & Ride building demolition, the Board Room AV equipment revised contract, the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) contracts, and the TRAC Committee appointments.

ACTION ITEMS

FY 2015 Annual Audit – This item was moved to the end of action items to allow time for the auditors to arrive.

Security Training Services Consultant - Mr. Miller explained that PSTA received a \$435,000 grant from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to perform training on security. He indicated that \$125,000 of the grant will pay the Bus Operators for their time while training, \$305,000 will be allocated to the consultants to design specific employee training and drill exercises, and \$5,000 for related administrative costs. Mr. Miller said that the grant work has to be completed within two years, but it is staff's recommendation that the contract be awarded as three-year contracts so that, with additional Board approval, the consultants may be used for other non-grant funded security related services. Mr. Barkley added that the Finance Committee unanimously recommended approval of the two contracts.

In response to Vice-Chairperson Bujalski's call for public comment, Mr. Rask cautioned the Board to ask some tough questions about these security contracts. He also mentioned PSTA hiring security for the Board meetings. Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Welch to approve three-year contracts with both K & J Safety and Security Consultants, Inc. and Elert & Associates Technology Consultants, Inc. for a total cost not to exceed \$305,000 over the maximum three-year period. There were no further public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

FY 2017 Federal Grant Application – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, stated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires all grantees like PSTA to publish a list of the projects known as the Program of Projects (POP). It also requires a public hearing to provide an opportunity for public comment, which was held on May 18th. One comment was received from Barbara Haselden, Pinellas resident, requesting that PSTA consider purchasing less expensive, smaller shuttle-type vehicles. Ms. Leous pointed out that smaller vehicles are included in the list. She said the POP is consistent with supporting the mission of PSTA and includes money for buses, passenger amenities, workforce training, and technology improvements. Mr. Welch added that the POP does not specify which types of replacement buses will be purchased.

Ms. Long said she is very concerned about ensuring that one of the smaller vehicles will be used in the Lealman area because they have no public transportation. Mr. Jonson mentioned the past maintenance problems with the smaller vehicles and asked if a different vendor would be used for this purchase. Mr. Miller explained that PSTA is purchasing a heavier duty small bus from a different manufacturer. Mr. Scott asked about purchasing cutaways and Mr. Lukasik explained what is being considered.

Mr. Welch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the POP. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Zimmet read Resolution #16-05 by title and Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jonson to approve the Resolution. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Succession Planning Policy – Trish Collins, Staffing and Development Manager, indicated that at the direction of the Board, staff drafted a Succession Planning Policy. She said the Policy was presented to the Executive Committee at their May 11th meeting and they unanimously recommended approval. Ms. Long stated that the Executive Committee was pleasantly surprised at how thorough the plan is. Mr. Barkley indicated that he is very pleased with the plan which will provide the opportunity to train and prepare employees to move up at all levels. Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jonson to approve PSTA’s Succession Planning Policy. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

[Mr. Deighton entered the meeting at 10:08 AM.]

Sustainable Approach to Bus Replacements - Mr. Miller delivered the presentation on sustainability as it relates to bus purchases. He explained that the recommendation is not to focus on the type of buses but rather the triple bottom line sustainability approach – environmental, economic, and social. Mr. Miller noted that PSTA operates and/or funds 454 vehicles around the County, not just the Authority’s 210 buses. He pointed out that PSTA must be both environmentally sustainable as well as financially sustainable and cannot afford to commit to a single vehicle technology. Mr. Miller presented an analysis of each bus type which included the initial capital costs and the life cycle costs including maintenance and fuel. He also provided an analysis of the number of bus replacements in the next five years.

Ms. Long asked if PSTA had approached Duke Energy to possibly partner on the electric charging station. Mr. Miller said there have been meetings and will follow-up again with them.

Mr. Miller said staff is recommending the Board not commit to any one technology but rather commit to a goal of improving fuel economy over time and continue to apply for every possible grant available. He also suggested having one vote a year on the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), instead of multiple votes each year on the replacement bus purchase.

Mr. Welch indicated that the BOCC met last week and identified transportation as the number one project category on which to spend the BP oil spill funds. He added that PSTA has to make an ask to be considered for funding for the electric charging stations. Mr. Miller will send a letter to BOCC Chairman Justice. Mr. Barkley stated that even with the improved emission diesel buses and improved mileage, they still are diesel and diesel is old technology. He said it provides a bad image for a PSTA as a social organization. Mr. Jonson asked if the old diesel buses could be fitted with a newer, lower emission diesel engine. Mr. Lukasik answered that could have many challenges and be cost prohibitive.

Mr. Bevis asked if there is a universal charging station and Mr. Miller answered not yet. Ms. Long believes that there needs to be a strong stance on partnering with entities that currently fund transportation and think in a regional way. Mr. Deighton stated that transit could be more positive if it were more frequent and believes we need as many buses as possible. Mr. Scott pointed out that PSTA has to replace 70 buses over the next five years. This amounts to \$33 million for the diesel, \$49 million for hybrids, and \$100 million for all electric. He indicated that diesel technology is not going away and it is not old technology. Mr. Eggers talked about bus frequency and the need to preserve the cash resources as much as possible over the next five years. He said that pilot programs are critically important to investigate. Vice-Chairperson Bujalski asked about funding for the add-ons for the buses and Mr. Miller responded that they are eligible for the federal grant.

In response to Vice-Chairperson Bujalski's call for public comments, Mr. Rask talked about the ridership numbers being down. Ms. Haselden commented on the bus study and the recommendation for using smaller vehicles. Mr. Compton believes Mr. Miller's analysis needs some more tweaking before a decision is made.

Mr. Barkley would like an analysis on the cutaway buses. Ms. Long asked Mr. Miller to schedule a follow-up meeting with Duke Energy. Mr. Scott offered clarification on the cutaway buses and mentioned the smaller Gillig buses. Mr. Jonson spoke of the changing technology and said PSTA will have to make the bus purchase decision each year based on new technology. Mr. Bevis said to bring back the best plan that fits the

three components of sustainability. Mr. Welch suggested making an ask of \$400,000 to the BOCC for the charging station.

[Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 11:25 AM and did not return.]

ACTION ITEM

FY 2015 Annual Audit – Ms. Leous introduced Andrew Laflin, Principal with CliftonLarsonAllen, PSTA’s independent audit firm. Mr. Laflin delivered a presentation on the FY 2015 audit which included the audit services performed, the reports that were delivered, and the results of the procedures. He informed the Board that the independent auditors’ report on internal controls reported no material weaknesses, as well as the single audit report which had no material weaknesses. Mr. Laflin said a management letter was issued to PSTA which reflected no findings to report. He also explained the changes in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and the new accounting standards for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Mr. Barkley reported that the Finance Committee unanimously recommended acceptance of the audit. There was a question on why the bank confirmation letters were not included in the final report and Ms. Leous explained that they are included in the audit work papers. The confirmation letters were sent directly from the bank to the auditors for verification of balances. In response to Vice-Chairperson Bujalski’s call for public comment, Mr. Rask said great report and suggested including the bank letters in the final audit. He also suggested reducing the pension liability by cutting bus service and decreasing the number of bus drivers. Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gerard to accept the audit. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM

June/October Service Improvements - Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, said that some minor service changes would occur in June and then more extensive changes in October. She presented the June service changes for Routes 11, 444, and 52. Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, spoke about the public engagement for these service changes. Ms. Borchers presented the October system-wide service changes. Mr. Lasher spoke about the early internal outreach and public engagement for these changes and also the feedback received from the public workshops to date. In addition, he outlined the final public outreach planned for July through October 4th leading up to the service changes.

Ms. Borchers answered Ms. Long's earlier question about the Lealman community. She indicated that staff is investigating opportunities for funding to implement community circulators. In response to Vice-Chairperson Bujalski's call for public comment, Mr. Rask stated that he believes the public outreach effort is marketing PSTA. He suggested the Board reconsider having evening Board meetings and questioned the revenue miles with these service changes. He said he will work toward a cut in the millage rate since PSTA did not cut service as they stated in 2014. Ms. Borchers responded that the revenue miles are neutral in this plan.

Vice-Chairperson Bujalski stated that North County is very excited about the seven day trolley service. She urged staff to get creative on the route by the Fenway and the ballpark.

REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

2017 Budget Personnel Assumptions – Mr. Miller indicated that next month, the Board will receive a draft FY 2017 budget. The Planning Committee will review the draft first and receive an update on PSTA's biggest single expense which is the personnel assumptions.

PSTA Performance Report/Updates – The report was supplied in the Board packet. Mr. Miller indicated that ridership has declined substantially from last year. He said that he is developing a detailed analysis which will be presented at a future meeting. He noted that the Agency is still on budget for this year.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The Board was provided with a list of upcoming meeting subjects. Mr. Miller said there will be a Rider Town Hall on June 3rd at the Countryside Mall. He also informed the Board that Senator Brandes will speak at the Legislative Committee meeting on June 6th.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Miller said Shelbie Harris, who is retiring after 35 years with PSTA, will be recognized at next month's meeting.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Scott wished everyone a great Memorial Day weekend.

Mr. Deighton said he and Mr. Miller spoke with St. Pete Beach regarding the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. He stated that the problem is the cost which the city will have further discussion about. Some Board members mentioned a city referendum and suggested the Legislative Committee further explore this subject.

[Ms. Gerard left the meeting at 12:35 PM and did not return.]

Mr. Bevis referred to comments made about PSTA's need to cut service. He pointed out that when the Agency has service changes, there are some cuts being made.

Mr. Barkley thanked Mr. Miller for the analysis on the different costs per mile. He mentioned the negative comments made to the Board today, adding that those folks make up a very small segment of the population. He urged his fellow Commissioners not to be overly reactive to comments, both pro and con. He wished everyone a nice holiday weekend.

Mr. Welch stated that the Community Bus Plan is integral to everything PSTA has done. He echoed his colleagues that service changes are being made in the right way and used Crystal Lakes Manor as an example. He said he is looking forward to next month's discussion on vehicles.

Mr. Jonson reminded the Board that the City of Clearwater is implementing a pilot to supplement the Trolley service going to and from Clearwater Beach. The ferry is also an option through July 4th. He said the challenge for the Board is to provide an understanding of how transit serves the existing customers and how it could serve the community better.

Vice-Chairperson Bujalski wished everyone a great holiday. She reminded everybody that school will be out soon and to please be careful of the kids out there on the streets. She said it was her pleasure to serve everyone today.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice-Chairperson Bujalski adjourned the meeting at 12:41 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for June 22nd at 9:00 AM.

Chairperson