



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 4, 2015**

The Legislative Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 9:30 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to receive an update from Gray Robinson, to approve the December 3, 2014 meeting minutes, and elect Committee Officers. The following members were present:

Darden Rice, Committee Chairperson
Doug Bevis
Ben Diamond
Pat Gerard

Absent

Wengay Newton

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson (via conference call)
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
PSTA Staff Members

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Rice opened the meeting at 9:35 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Stuart reported on the activities in Tallahassee. He explained that this is the first of three Committee weeks in February with bills starting to be heard. He stated that in the second week in January there were some meetings about the Governor's recommended budget, and reported that next week would be focused on appropriations and what each

sub-committee is responsible for. He indicated the third week of February will be focused on policy and hearing bills. Mr. Stuart reported that Gray Robinson will be back almost full time in Tallahassee on March 3rd for the first session scheduled on the same date.

Mr. Miller indicated that the Pinellas Chambers of Commerce are planning a trip to Tallahassee on March 25-26 for a Pinellas Day and believes PSTA should join them. He announced there would be a dinner on Wednesday night with the Pinellas delegation and a meeting on Thursday with the legislators to discuss the priorities. He reported that the Chambers' top priorities are tourism and manufacturing. Mr. Stuart commented that he believes there is value in going to Tallahassee in a large group with the Chambers. Mr. Diamond expressed his belief that it is also important to set up meetings in Tallahassee with Senators Latvala and Brandes.

Mr. Miller discussed the Legislative priorities including the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Pilot Project on Central Avenue, and the Tampa Bay Regional Fare Collection Support.

[Mr. Stuart exited the meeting at 10:13 AM.]

There was much discussion among the Committee on the Tampa Bay Regional Fare Collection Support. It was suggested that the priorities be split into PSTA priorities and regional priorities. Mr. Diamond mentioned the importance of the other two future BRT routes, especially the route to Clearwater Beach.

Mr. Diamond made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to have the BRT pilot project on Central Avenue as the number one PSTA priority and the Bus Replacement Funds as the number two priority. The Tampa Bay Regional Fare Collection Support would be the Regional priority, and the other seven priorities would be listed on the back of the priority sheet. The other priorities were discussed among the Committee. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Committee Officers – Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gerard to approve Ms. Rice as Committee Chair and Mr. Diamond as Vice-Chair. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

December 3, 2014 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Gerard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Diamond to approve the minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

INFORMATION ITEM

Revised PSTA Financial Forecast Development – Committee Chair Rice commented that since everyone on the Committee had previously heard the financial forecast presentation, she suggested focusing on the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds piece of the presentation. Mr. Miller distributed copies of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) STP project priority list and explained that these are federal funds distributed to the 50 states and then allocated through the local MPO's. Mr. Miller reported that the MPO priority list currently consists of highway projects but no transit projects, and suggested that PSTA try to obtain some STP dollars for transit. He indicated that he has asked Sarah Ward, MPO Interim Executive Director, to allow PSTA to speak at their next meeting.

Washington DC Federal Legislative Update – Mr. Miller indicated that Congressman Jolly has been appointed to the Transportation Appropriations Committee and explained three actions that PSTA could make at the national level: 1) join the Transit Bus Coalition, 2) attend the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Legislative Conference March 8-10th and the National League of Cities Conference at the same time in Washington D.C., and 3) join the National Infrastructure Day events on April 9th.

Mr. Diamond suggested developing a sheet with a couple paragraphs explaining what the Central Avenue BRT is, why PSTA has identified it as a project Legislature should fund, and how it will benefit the community.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on March 7th at 9:30 AM.