



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

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
AGENDA – APRIL 15, 2015; 10:30 AM  
PSTA AUDITORIUM

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		<u>TIME</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1.	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	10:30	
2.	<b>PUBLIC COMMENT</b>	10:30	
3.	<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	10:35	
	A. March 20, 2014 Meeting Minutes	5 min	2
	B. Revised MPO Letter	15 min BRAD MILLER	7
4.	<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>	10:55	
	A. Fare Revenue Assumptions	20 min BRAD MILLER	10
	B. Explanation of Route Performance Monitoring Tool Methodology	20 min CHRIS COCHRAN	11
	C. FY-2016 Budget–Personnel Assumptions	20 min BRAD MILLER	12
	D.		
5.	<b>FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS</b>	11:55	
	• FY2016 Capital Improvement Program/Public Hearing		
6.	<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>	11:55	
7.	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	12:00	

THE NEXT MEETING IS MAY 20, 2013 AT 10:30 AM



**ACTION ITEM**

**2A: March 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

**Action: Approve Meeting Minutes**

**Staff Resource:** Terri Rick, Administrative Assistant

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- Staff recommends approval of the minutes of the March 20, 2015 Planning Committee meeting.
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**Attachments:**

1. Minutes



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**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
 MINUTES – MARCH 20, 2015**

The Planning Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 9:45 AM on this date. The purpose of this meeting was to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2015 Planning Committee, review the Service Redesign Work Plan, the Budget Assumptions Forecast, and the Route Performance Monitoring System.

Members Present:

Julie Bujalski  
 Mark Deighton  
 Patricia Johnson (Alternate)  
 Janet Long  
 Darden Rice  
 Ken Welch

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO  
 PSTA Staff Members

**CALL TO ORDER**

Brad Miller, CEO, opened the meeting at 10:00 AM, informing the group that the meeting was being broadcasted on the web via live streaming video.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**ACTION ITEMS**

January 21, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bujalski to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

## INFORMATION ITEMS

Service Redesign Work Plan – Mr. Miller explained that following the November 4, 2014 referendum, there was a need to “redesign” PSTA’s services to be even more focused and customer-oriented. He stated that before the agency develops and seeks public input on various service delivery scenarios or increased revenues, it will be important for the PSTA Board to collaborate on a “Path Forward” to set high-level policy guidance for the future direction of the agency. Mr. Miller indicated that this policy development will be prioritized over the next few months, preceding the required FY-2016 budget review and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Work Plan processes and suggested four key efforts: 1) a path forward, 2) FY-2016 budget approval, 3) service redesign consideration, and 4) public engagement.

Mr. Miller detailed eight guiding principles to help move PSTA forward in the next two to three years.

- Focus on constant improvement of core services
- Redesign current bus according to specific principles:
  - Straighten routes
  - Reduce number of very low ridership buses
  - Concentrate majority of operating funds where public transit works best-core routes
- Avoid major cuts
- Implement a sustainable bus replacement plan
- Use built-up reserves on bus replacements/seek additional resources to maintain what we have
- Seek to incrementally improve service, specifically premium bus rapid transit and express services and regional fare collection project
- Work towards the high-frequency grid network
- Review governance structure by strengthening roles of the Board, Committees, CEO and strengthening coordination with transportation partners.

Mr. Miller explained that the transit service redesign efforts will be analyzed at a staff level but that any changes will rely on the policy direction from the Board. Near-term specific service improvements will be balanced with longer term planning for transit pilot projects and overall system improvements.

Mr. Miller discussed the FY-2016 budget approval calendar and suggested agreeing on the policy process over the next two months, to be adopted by May before budget approval in June. He then presented the four suggested components of the service redesign consideration process: 1) approve "Path Forward" principles, 2) consider targeted areas of redesign, 3) coordinate with capital plan assumptions and revenue assumptions, and 4) public involvement. Mr. Miller indicated that the goal is to implement the first changes by October 1, 2015.

Ms. Long then gave a brief recap of her trip with Mr. Miller to Tallahassee, and suggested that the Committee members write a letter of support for the \$1.25 million for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) pilot project to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development.

In response to Ms. Johnson's question regarding the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program, Mr. Miller said that the PSTA will take the time to work on a high-level policy first before any changes are implemented. Ms. Bujalski suggested reinstating an advisory committee similar to the Advisory Committee for Pinellas Transportation (ACPT). Mr. Welch agreed with the suggestion of a new ACPT-type group. Ms. Long stated her believe that the Board would be more effective at setting high-level policy if additional members were added to the Executive Committee and suggested the outgoing Chairperson for continuity and a new member of the Board.

The Committee was given the opportunity to voice their concerns. Ms. Bujalski suggested that economic development be considered in this process. Mr. Eggers cautioned about rushing into decision-making and to make sure to engage the public at all times. Mr. Welch commented that if routes are eliminated, PSTA must provide the public with transportation alternatives. He also agreed that the expanded Executive Committee is a good idea.

Budget Assumptions/Forecast – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, presented the FY-2016 budget process and key assumptions. She provided the budget calendar overview and the Key Budget Assumptions report which included a multi-year budget forecast, key expenditure assumptions, and a multi-year operating plan. Ms. Leous reported on the reserves and indicated that staff is recommending the use of reserve in the short-term for bus replacement needs. Ms. Leous stated that for FY-2016, there is an anticipated \$1.2 million operating deficit, and outlined five potential strategic changes: 1) increase the property tax to the maximum millage, 2) increase the average fare, 3) increase advertising revenue by outsourcing, 4) implement administrative savings, and 5) service hour adjustments.

There was discussion about the five communities who do not pay into the ad valorem

tax. Committee Chair Barkley suggested reviewing the number of discounts and the way they are operated. Mr. Welch requested a copy of the current advertising policy. There was also discussion about how a possible increase would affect the TD program. Mr. Deighton suggested exploring more grant opportunities.

Route Performance Monitoring System – Chris Cochran, Senior Planner, introduced the Service Performance Monitoring System and explained that this is a tool to use in conjunction with the work plan to assist in providing the data and information that will aid in helping make the best decisions. He described in detail the methodology for the new system using two screens – performance and qualitative assessment. Mr. Cochran described some options for the identified low performing routes: 1) improve marketing/branding; 2) monitor, research and redesign; or eliminate/reduce routes; 3) reallocate resources. Mr. Cochran showed a graph of the highest and lowest scoring routes with route recommendations for the lowest scoring routes: Route 444, East Lake Connector, Routes 1 and 30, Route 58 and the Jolly Trolley Coastal Route. He presented staff recommendations for each of those routes.

There was much discussion regarding this new system. Ms. Long requested a map be added to the presentation of each of the routes being discussed for clarification. Committee Chair Barkley said it would be helpful to know if PSTA is eliminating or dramatically changing a route, and what type of replacement or supplement transportation would be made available to adjust for those people currently being serviced by that route. Mr. Welch asked if PSTA has ever approached the Tourist Development Council (TDC) for support for the Trolleys where there is a connection to tourism.

Regarding the “Path-forward” development, Mr. Deighton believes that many people in the area have no idea how much TD work contributes to the rest of the area, and suggested adding a sign on the side of the buses to remind people that the buses do not just take people from place to place, but are a very big part of the community and the path forward.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 PM.

**The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on April 15, 2015 at 10:30 AM.**



## ACTION ITEM

**3B: Revised MPO Letter**

**Action: Recommend a Revised Letter to the Pinellas MPO**

**Staff Resource:** Brad Miller, Chief Executive Officer

**EXECUTIVE**

**PLANNING**

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### **Background:**

- The PSTA Board decided not to officially submit a request for Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds for PSTA Bus Replacement at its February, 2015 meeting. However, the discussion at prior PSTA, MPO, and MPO Committees has continued.
- In March, I presented a first draft of a recommended “Path Forward” strategic direction for PSTA to be considered further by the full board. One of the specific recommendations in this proposed action plan is to defer any use of STP funds for transit buses until after PSTA has exhausted all possible current PSTA revenues including its built-up reserve funding.
- At the April 10, 2015 PSTA Executive Committee, discussion of whether or not to send a formal letter to the MPO concluded with the suggestion to send a substantially different letter with no specific request for funds.
- A revised draft letter is attached for the Committee’s discussion, revision and decision whether to recommend to the PSTA Board for approval.

### **Recommendation:**

- Staff recommends approval of the attached letter requesting that the STP prioritization process be expanded to consider all potential funding sources and all modes, including transit projects consistent with PSTA’s priorities.

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### **Attachments:**

1. Revised Draft letter

# REVISED DRAFT

April 29, 2015

The Honorable James Kennedy, Chair  
Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization  
310 Court Street  
Clearwater, Florida 33756

RE: Revised Request for Prioritization of Public Transit Capital Projects

Dear Chair Kennedy,

Thank you for recently receiving information regarding PSTA's attempts to sustain its bus replacement plans and the potential for a partnership with the Pinellas MPO to consider adding bus replacement funds to the MPO's Surface Transportation Program (STP) Prioritization list. On behalf of the PSTA Board, **PSTA has revised its position.**

## **Future Collaboration Between PSTA & Pinellas MPO**

We are not recommending an immediate or specific funding request. Instead, we are excited and eager to work with the Pinellas MPO's incoming Executive Director and Board starting next Fall, through a collaborative transportation priority setting process. I am pleased that PSTA CEO Brad Miller and Mr. Witt Blanton have already met and understand it may take some time for these discussions to begin, as not only does Mr. Blanton need to get acclimated to his new position, but Florida Department of Transportation, and other planning processes must be considered as well.

## **Change in PSTA's Plans**

For your information, let me explain some changes in PSTA's plans for bus capital funding that give us time to consider regional transportation funding decisions.

The PSTA Board has agreed to a new deliberative process to provide the needed leadership for a sustainable "path forward" for public transportation services in Pinellas County. One of the principals of this planning effort is for PSTA to first consider all cost reduction and revenue options within its own authority. This includes using built-up transit funding reserves, set aside previously for the Greenlight Pinellas implementation and other purposes, for the next several years of needed bus replacement needs. Using



reserves eliminates the immediate need for federal STP funds for bus replacements as was previously thought. This more deliberate strategy will allow planning time for both the MPO and Florida DOT to set new priorities and coordinate funding needs for existing transportation projects in the DOT's Work Program.

### **PSTA's Priorities**

PSTA maintains its position that public transportation improvement is a critical component to Pinellas County's overall transportation priorities. Our own priority list of projects includes many that are already known to the MPO and in your existing plans:

1. **Central Avenue Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Capital Funding**
2. **Sustainable Annual Bus Replacement Funding**
3. **Clearwater Beach to Tampa Airport Express Bus Service.**
4. **I-275 Express Lane Express Bus Service – St. Petersburg to TIA/Tampa**
5. **Tampa Bay Regional Fare Collection Technology**
6. **Clearwater Transit Center Replacement**

The PSTA Board sincerely appreciates the decades-long coordination we have enjoyed with the Pinellas MPO and looks forward to an even closer relationship as we move our County's transportation system ahead together.

Sincerely,

William C. Jonson  
PSTA Board Chairperson

cc: PSTA Board  
Pinellas MPO Board  
Pinellas County Commission  
Witt Blanton, Pinellas MPO Incoming Executive Director  
Paul Steinman, District Secretary, FDOT District Seven  
Debbie Hunt, Director of Transportation, FDOT District Seven



## INFORMATION ITEM

**4A: Fare Revenue Assumptions**

**Action: Information Item**

**Staff Resource:** Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer

**PLANNING**

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### **Summary:**

- Over the past year, the majority of PSTA growing customer base have been able to get their destinations at significantly lower cost to them, not only through PSTA's innovative technology and partnership programs like our UPASS program, but also through streamlining and expansion of PSTA's low-income-based Transportation Disadvantaged program.
- One of the many options suggested by PSTA staff recently as part of its "Path Forward" strategic direction for the agency will be to consider generating more revenue through all its fare programs in deliberate way.
- A presentation will be provided on current fare revenue trends to allow for a discussion about the key FY-2016 Fare Revenue Assumptions related to PSTA's second largest revenue source.
- The Draft FY-2016 Budget will be based upon key assumptions in these areas and will be presented to the Planning Committee in June prior to the full PSTA Board at the end of June.

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### **Attachments:**

1. PowerPoint (to follow)



## INFORMATION ITEM

**4B: Explanation of Route Performance Monitoring Tool Methodology**

**Action: Information Item**

**Staff Resource:** Chris Cochran, Senior Planner

**PLANNING**

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### **Background:**

- At the March 22, 2015 Board Meeting, staff presented the data-driven performance model, or Route Performance Monitoring System.
- The system includes a two-screen process as follows:
  - Screen #1 – the latest full fiscal year ridership, revenue, and cost data is used to score route performance based on a balanced evaluation of ridership and revenue metrics.
  - Screen #2 – low performing routes are reviewed based on a set of more qualitative criteria to identify route redesign recommendations. These criteria may include socioeconomic data, major trip attractors, travel demand in the corridor, boarding's by stop, service characteristics, role of the route in the community, etc.
- From this Staff presentation, Board members asked that Staff provide more explanation of the methodology used in Screen #1 and the factors considered in Screen #2.

### **Summary:**

- A presentation will be provided to provide more detailed information the Route Performance Monitoring System

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### **Attachments:**

1. PowerPoint (to follow)



## INFORMATION ITEM

**4C: FY-2016 Budget-Personnel Assumptions**

**Action: Information Item**

**PLANNING**

**Staff Resource:** Brad Miller, Chief Executive Officer

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### **Summary:**

- A PowerPoint will be shown to allow for discussion about the key FY-2016 Personnel Budget Assumptions related to PSTA's largest expense, personnel compensation and benefits. Key areas to be discussed are:
  - Personnel Salary Assumptions and industry compensation
  - Florida Retirement System (FRS)
  - Health Insurance
  
- The Draft FY-2016 Budget will be based upon key assumptions in these areas and will be presented to the Planning Committee in June prior to the full PSTA Board at the end of June.

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### **Attachments:**

1. PowerPoint (to follow)