



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716
WWW.PSTA.NET 727.540.1800 FAX 727.540.1913

**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – MAY 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 10:40 AM on this date. The purpose of this meeting was to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2015 Planning Committee, review the Service Redesign Work Plan, the Budget Assumptions Forecast, and the Route Performance Monitoring System.

Members Present:

Darden Rice, Vice Chair
Mark Deighton
Janet Long
Ken Welch

Members Absent:

Julie Bujalski, Committee Chair
Patricia Johnson (Alternate)

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Chairperson
Vivian Peters, Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) Member
PSTA Staff Members

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Vice-Chair, Darden Rice opened the meeting at 10:50 AM following the Public Hearing on Fiscal Year Projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

May 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Welch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, spoke about the 2016-2020 Capital Improvement Program Five-Year Budget. She said the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) requires all grantees to publish a list of projects it proposes to fund with its annual federal apportionments, called the Program of Projects (POP), and provide an opportunity for public comment. PSTA held a public hearing on May 20, 2015 immediately prior to the Planning Committee meeting.

The POP is part of the CIP, which outlines the proposed capital expenditures for the agency over the next five years. A major focus of the plan is a sustainable bus replacement program. Staff has looked at all of the priority projects and ranked them to focus on immediate need. Savings from various budgets such as: reducing the purchase of financial software, re-building farebox hardware (instead of buying new), and reducing the bus shelter purchases will amount to \$7.5 million and can be used to purchase buses in FY 16.

In response to Mr. Welch's question about the financial software, Ms. Leous indicated that staff is now utilizing all of the features included in the software. He also asked about the elimination of shelters and he was told that PSTA has money in an old grant that will be used to purchase new shelters. Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, added that the shelter plan would be presented at next month's meeting.

PSTA plans to employ several bus replacement strategies; smaller buses, lower cost buses such as clean diesel vs. 100% hybrid, as well as consideration of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and 100% electric buses. They will also consider contracting out some of the bus service to private vendors, where it is cost effective, to reduce the fleet size.

In the future, PSTA will need to replace about 15 buses per year. That includes extending the life of some buses to as much as 15 years. Buses will receive a mid-life major overhaul which will increase maintenance expenses. In addition, PSTA will seek to balance federal funding between operating expenses and capital expenses. Through project reduction and reserves, there will be funding to replace 65 buses through the year 2020. In the year 2021, additional funding opportunities will need to be found. If no additional funding is made available, PSTA may have to initiate further service adjustments.

In addition to focusing on buses, other important projects being considered in the CIP include: Regional Fare Media project, short-range and long-range planning, federally funded employee training, as well as upgrades to PSTA's phone system, software/server and other equipment.

After a brief discussion, it was noted that the Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) recommended approval. With that, Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Welch to approve the CIP. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Explanation of Route Performance Monitoring Tool Methodology – As a follow-up to a presentation made at the March 22, 2015 Board Meeting on the data-driven Route Performance Monitoring System, Chris Cochran, Senior Planner, provided further explanation on the methodology used to evaluate routes. He indicated that the system includes a two-screen process: Screen #1 – Performance Data and Screen #2 – Targeted Analysis.

The system scores routes on passengers per revenue hour and cost recovery. Routes are compared against the entire system and across similar service types (local service, FLEX services, Jolley Trolley services, express services). A combined score is calculated resulting in an overall ranking.

Targeted Analysis takes into consideration data from various sources to help identify appropriate options for lower performing routes and to further improve higher performing routes through streamlining, increasing frequencies and hours of service, and providing more direct service. Target Analysis also includes public outreach and surveys of current riders to identify potential alternatives for affected riders.

Staff is currently conducting the Targeted Analysis and will be presenting initial route redesign recommendations to the Committees and Board in July. The Planning Committee expressed that the methodology was a sound approach to analyzing route performance. Ms. Long suggested sharing this information with Senators Latvala and Brandes.

FY-2016 Budget-Personnel Assumptions – Ms. Leous discussed the FY 2016 Budget-Personnel Assumptions related to PSTA's largest expense, personnel compensation and benefits, which constitute 63% of expenditures. She said that personnel expenditures are made up of salaries and fringe benefits which include health insurance, pension, social security, Medicare and workers' compensation. Bus Operators make up the

largest group of employees at PSTA, followed by fleet maintenance, administration, and facilities maintenance. In addition, labor agreements with the union drive costs up.

Ms. Leous reported that PSTA compares favorably to the public transit industry in percent of personnel to total costs, with PSTA falling in the mid-range on bus operation and mechanic pay comparison. Comparative overhead costs are low.

Mr. Miller said that he is recommending a 3% adjustment for administrative employees based on merit (performance evaluation process), giving department heads discretion. Other government organizations are offering a similar incentive.

Ms. Leous stated that healthcare costs are estimated to increase by 10%. She said that staff has explored three health insurance options: maintain being fully insured, a minimum premium arrangement (a hybrid of being fully insured and self-insured) and being self-insured. Staff believes changing to the minimum premium arrangement is the most cost effective and best option for the employee, without impacting the benefits.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM. The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on June 19, 2015 at 9:30 AM.