



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – AUGUST 19, 2015**

The Planning Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 10:30 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2015 Planning Committee Meeting, approve the Phase I Service Redesign, and present information Fare Structure Recommendations and the Municipal Planning Open House. The following members were present:

Members Present:

Julie Bujalski, Committee Chair
Darden Rice, Committee Vice-Chair
Mark Deighton
Janet Long
Ken Welch

Members Absent:

Patricia Johnson (Alternate)

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Bujalski opened the meeting at 10:55 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

August 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Welch to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Phase I Service Redesign –Brad Miller, Chief Executive Officer, introduced the Phase I Service Redesign calling attention to the FY 2016 Budget and reminding the Committee of the Board’s strategic direction to have a sustainable bus capital program and secure financial future. He listed the decisions to be brought forth for board discussion in order to create a 5-year balanced budget inclusive of operating and capital needs.

Heather Sobush, Planning Manager, presented information on the Phase I Redesign as it affects route changes. Per the Committee’s request, a history of Phase I routes and the changes made in past years was presented. Phase I examines the lowest performing routes in the system and includes the following recommendations to be implemented in October upon approval by the Board: 1) discontinue Routes 30, 58, 444, and East Lake Connector, 2) realign Route 18 to replace Route 58 service to St. Petersburg College (Seminole Campus), and 3) redesign Route 1.

The approval of these adjustments will save \$930,000 in the FY 2016 budget. Ms. Sobush also discussed a wheelchair-use analysis which showed that out of 6,000 monthly users only 22 would be affected by these changes. PSTA is working with these riders to find alternative routes.

The technical analysis for these recommendations was presented to the Planning Committee and the Board in July and the proposed changes were communicated to the public through newspaper advertisements, on-board notices, and web/social media. In addition, PSTA provided an opportunity for public comment through several workshops and public meetings throughout the county and also provided information on alternative options. Ms. Sobush gave a brief review of each of these workshops, including the number of participants as well as their comments and concerns.

The Committee asked questions about the number of people affected by various route changes, in particular those employees who use the bus to get to businesses using the Route 58. They were also concerned about the riders living at Crystal Lakes Manor, St. Giles Manor, and other senior low-income housing areas using Route 444. Mr. Miller informed the Committee that Neighborly Care is currently providing transportation to these groups and is willing to increase their service to help accommodate the needs of these residents.

Mr. Deighton introduced the subject of fares (as an upcoming board decision) as well as the use of additional Ad Valorem. After much discussion among the Committee members, Ms. Bujalski recommended focusing on the Phase I Route redesign decision now and waiting to discuss the Ad Valorem and fares during the Fare Structure Recommendations presentation.

Ms. Rice made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the Phase I Service Redesign recommendations for final consideration by the Board. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Fare Structure Recommendations/Upcoming Public Meetings – Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, presented information on recommended fare structure changes. PSTA is projecting long-term budget shortfalls related to rising costs, slow growth in traditional revenues, and needed bus replacements. In order to meet these shortfalls and to utilize policies and plans in accordance with the Path Forward Strategic Plan, PSTA is examining revenue streams from passenger fares, recommending two decisions be made; simplifying the fare products and increasing fares overall.

In simplifying fares, PSTA would consider three categories of fare types: Regular, Reduced, and Regional. The change would include five duration periods: 1-ride, 3-day, 7-day, and 31-day.

Fare increases would affect the base one-ride fare and the multi-ride fares. The current 87% discount currently offered on Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) would be reduced to an 84% discount. Therefore, low-income passengers would see an increase from \$8.25 per month to \$11.00 per month. Low-income passengers would still be able to purchase a 7-day pass for \$5.00.

PSTA is providing opportunities for public comment through newspaper advertisements, on-board notices, web/social media, and public workshops.

Staff relayed comments received to date from the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Local Coordinating Board (LCB) and the Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC). Both groups expressed concern about changing the TD 10-day non-consecutive day pass to a 7-day consecutive pass. Mr. Miller committed to conducting a survey of the ~80 people who now utilize the 7-day pass to assess their needs and potential

impacts of a change to a 7-day consecutive pass. The elimination of the Haul-Pass for students was also of concern of the TRAC.

Mr. Miller reminded the Committee of upcoming hearings, meetings, and workshops and thanked the members of the Committee who have attended meetings regarding route changes.

Municipal Planning Open House – Ms. Sobush told the Committee about PSTA’s Municipal Open House which took place on July 22, 2015. As part of the public outreach for the System Redesign Work Plan, PSTA reached out to engage local jurisdictions and other planning partners. More than 25 participants attended, including such agencies as Pinellas County Health and Human Services, Pinellas County Community Development, Pinellas County Planning, Pinellas County MPO/Pinellas Planning Council (PPC), Pinellas Park, Largo, St. Petersburg, St. Pete Beach, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA).

Staff plans additional Open Houses as the next phases of the route redesign occur.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The Committee was provided with a list of upcoming meeting subjects.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Miller told the Committee that staff is working on a presentation for Demand Response Service (DART) Updates and also a Marketing Plan, both of which will be presented at upcoming meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 PM. The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on September 16, 2015 at 10:30 AM.