



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – OCTOBER 21, 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 September 16, 2015 meeting and the 2016 meeting schedule, view a presentation by the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA), and receive information on the East Lake Transportation Alternatives Pilot, the Community Bus Plan, and the System Redesign Phase 2-Williams Park. The following members were present:

Members Present:

Julie Bujalski, Committee Chair
Mark Deighton
Janet Long
Patricia Johnson
Ken Welch

Members Absent:

Darden Rice, Committee Vice-Chair

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Welch opened the meeting at 10:46 AM, acting as Committee Chair until the arrival of Ms. Bujalski at 11:12 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was received from Phil Compton of the Sierra Club regarding the benefits of electric buses.

TBARTA Presentation – Ray Chiaramonte, Executive Director of TBARTA, presented information on the Master Plan for the seven-county region which includes Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota.

Mr. Chiaramonte updated the Committee on the TBARTA Regional Transportation Master Plan which helps to create a balanced transportation system which is cohesive to all counties in the region. Mr. Chiaramonte discussed top priority projects and future projects which were outlined in detail in his PowerPoint Presentation.

ACTION ITEMS

September 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Welch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2016 Meeting Schedule – A proposed 2016 schedule was presented to the Committee. It was noted that the January meeting was currently tentative and may occur on January 15, 2016. The Committee also decided to remove the December 21st meeting from the schedule. Mr. Welch made a motion, seconded by Mr. Deighton to recommend the revised schedule. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

East Lake Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program – Mr. Miller presented information on alternative transportation options in the East Lake Area in lieu of the discontinued East Lake Connector, one of the lowest performing routes. Due to the fact that the East Lake neighborhood is the largest neighborhood in Pinellas County without public transportation, it has been chosen for a pilot program utilizing options such as taxicabs and transportation network company services.

Committee members received a fact sheet with additional information about the services, such as cost savings to PSTA, provisions for people with disabilities, and future expansion of the program, as well as information regarding background checks, drug screening, fingerprinting and insurance requirements.

There was much discussion among the Committee members about these alternatives. The Committee was concerned about Uber insurance and background check requirements as related to those adopted by PSTA for their drivers. Mr. Miller assured the Committee that Uber's requirements are in line with those of PSTA. He also said

that this alternative program pilot can also be launched in another area of Pinellas County, such as Pinellas Park, as an alternative option for Route 444.

Community Bus Plan Review – Heather Sobush, Planning Manager, presented a review of the Community Bus Plan as requested by the Planning Committee and the Board in previous meetings. The goals of the plan were reviewed as well as the network design concept, a transformation from a Hub to a Grid network. Ms. Sobush also reviewed the “No New Revenue Network Concept” which incorporated more streamlined and efficient service design.

System Redesign Phase 2 – Williams Park – Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, presented proposed route changes to the Williams Park and downtown St. Petersburg area. The City of St. Petersburg plans to make the park more accessible to the community for recreational use and has received a federal earmark to examine other options for a downtown intermodal center. In conjunction with these plans, PSTA recommends changing the county-wide system from a hub to a grid system with transfers occurring on-street as presented in the 2013 Community Bus Plan.

City Council and PSTA Board endorsements are expected in late November, and PSTA is planning for a February 14, 2016 service change. Seven public engagement workshops will be held to inform riders and record their comments and concerns.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Welch suggested plans begin for a 2016 Board Workshop and recommended a workshop be held every year.

Committee Chair Bujalski announced that this would likely be her last Planning Committee meeting. She thanked the Committee and expressed her pleasure in serving.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM. The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on November 18, 2015 at 10:30 AM.