



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – MARCH 17, 2015**

The Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 4:00 PM on this date. The following members were present:

Present:

Lugene Blancher, Mid County
Catherine Baranowski, Alternate South County
Maranda Douglas, Alternate Mid County
Sonny Flynn, Beaches
Elaine Mann, North County, Chair
Lee Ann McIlravey, Mid County
Vivian Peters, Mid County
Jaksa Petrovic, Professional
Kimberly Rankine, DART
G. W. Rolle, South County
Christian Smith, Alternate Student
Demetrius Sullivan, Student
Lori Thomas, South County
David Winchell, North County
Carson Zimmer, Alternate Professional

Absent

Dennis Davis, Alternate North County
Stephanie Lieshman, South County, Vice-Chair

Also Present:

PSTA Staff Members

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:14 PM by Committee Chair, Elaine Mann.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, welcomed the following new TRAC members:

- Dennis Davis representing Alternate North County (not present)
- Maranda Douglas representing Alternate Mid County
- Catherine Baranowski representing Alternate South County
- Carson Zimmer representing Alternate Professional
- Christian Smith representing Alternate Student
- Sonny Flynn representing Beaches

Staff members present introduced themselves to the new members.

Realignment Scenario Work Plan – Brad Miller, Chief Executive Officer, explained the importance of the TRAC to the new members. TRAC members provide input from the rider perspective on various items pertaining to PSTA business. Mr. Miller also encouraged members to contact staff at any time.

Since Greenlight Pinellas did not pass in November of 2014, the Board is attempting to define plans for the future for PSTA. Some Committee members want to immediately cut service, while others are looking for an alternate plan to Greenlight. In an effort to create a plan for moving forward, staff is working with the Board and Committees to develop a two-to-three year plan for moving forward, prior to making any near-term decisions. Mr. Miller is working to get consensus on this plan by early summer, at which point budget decisions can begin to be made. Components of the proposed plan are as follows:

1. Focus on constant improvement of core services
2. Redesign the current bus system according to specific principles:
 - Straighten routes
 - Reduce the number of very low ridership buses
 - Concentrate majority of operating funds where public transit works best (core routes)
3. Avoid major cuts to routes and service
4. Implement a sustainable bus replacement plan among PSTA's 200 buses
5. Use built-up reserves on bus replacements and seek additional resources to maintain buses currently in use.
6. Seek to incrementally improve service, especially in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and

express service, and regional fare collection project.

7. In the future, work toward a high-frequency grid network.
8. Review governance structure by strengthening roles of Board, Committee, CEO and transportation partnerships.

Mr. Miller presented an evaluation process for redesigning lower performing routes and streamlining others. Because of a FY-2016 budget shortfall, it is beneficial to make route structure changes as soon as possible using a scientific method of restructuring the routes. This method will include the following:

- Decisions will be based on data-driven, route performance information
- Entire route network will be reviewed and streamlined
- “Targeted Areas” will receive additional analysis (e.g. downtown St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park, North Pinellas County)

Regardless of what is ultimately decided, public involvement will be very important during the process and will include identification of those who will benefit and will be negatively affected by redesign efforts. PSTA is committed to identify transportation alternatives for all customers who are affected and to engage in pro-active community involvement efforts to explain and justify value in redesign efforts.

The TRAC was favorable toward the ideas presented and felt the details of the plan make sense. Town hall meetings and workshops were suggested to help the public become more involved as the process moves forward.

Service Performance Monitoring System – Chris Cochran, Senior Planner, introduced the Service Performance Monitoring System, a tool that will run parallel with the work program proposed by Mr. Miller for the route realignment, and will drive the priorities of the work plan as the move forward. The tool ranks route performance and will help to make some of the decisions that need to be made in the future.

A methodology was developed with a goal of evaluating all routes to identify targeted areas for redesign. Some of the areas that will be examined are as follows:

- Identify higher performing routes
- Identify lower performing routes for
 - Research and redesign
 - Elimination and reallocation of funding to higher performing routes
 - Improved marketing and monitoring
- Forecast performance of new aligned routes to justify each change.

There are two steps to the monitoring process. In the first step, performance will be examined using data from FY-2014 on ridership, cost and fare revenues. Criteria are developed to help evaluate a route and looks at passengers per revenue hour and cost recovery. A scoring system compares routes and helps to identify areas to address.

The second step addresses a qualitative assessment of PSTA's primary mission as a public service to the community in the following ways:

- Serves a high number of low income households
- Serves a high number of zero car households
- Serves places people need to go
- Support tourism activities

It also looks at performance history and funding streams.

After identifying low-performing routes, the following options will be used to evaluate ways to avoid cutting routes.

- Improve Marketing/Branding and monitor newer routes
- Research and redesign routes
 - Public Engagement and rider surveys
 - Review travel demand and socioeconomic data including origin and destination data, transfer analysis and low income and/or zero car households.
 - Realign or combine with other routes with potential to improve performance
- Eliminate and reallocate resources from low performing routes to better routes

Some examples were presented of possible route eliminations and/or changes that would better serve the community.

- Route 444 – Eliminate current configuration and research other opportunities such as reallocation revenue to higher performing routes and researching potential for community partnerships
- East Lake Connector – Eliminate route and reallocate funds
- Route 1 and 30 – Research and redesign possibly combining the routes
- Route 58 – Eliminate current configuration and research other opportunities such as rerouting Route 18 to serve Saint Petersburg College (SPC) more efficiently
- Coastal – Redesign and improve route service of the Jolley Trolley and possibly combine with Route 66

TRAC members asked many questions regarding route changes and expressed a desire to have input as the changes occur. Members were assured that the TRAC would be an integral part of the process.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

- Rider Code of Conduct
- Driver Training Presentation/Driver Experience
- Customer Service Training

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 PM.

The next meeting of the TRAC will take place on April 14, 2015 at 4:00 PM.