



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 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 purpose of the meeting was to approve the October 20, 2015 minutes, the Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program, the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Federal Application, the Service Redesign Phase 2: Williams Park and Budgeted Service Enhancements and to elect new officers. The following members were present:

Present:

Elaine Mann, Committee Chair
Catherine Baranowski, Alt. South
Lugene Blancher, Mid County
Gloria Lepik-Corrigan, North County
Vivian Peters, Mid County
Kimberly Rankine, DART
G.W. Rolle, South County
Christian Smith, Alt. Student
Lori Thomas, South County

Absent:

Jaksa Petrovic, Professional
Demetrius Sullivan, South County
Carson Zimmer, Alt. Professional

Also Present:

Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Chair
Brad Miller, CEO
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Elaine Mann opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

Outgoing TRAC Members – Mr. Miller presented commemorative plaques to outgoing TRAC members Lugene Blancher and Lori Thomas and thanked them for their service on the Committee. Demetrius Sullivan and Jaksa Petrovic who were not at the meeting, will also receive plaques.

Ms. Mann expressed her thanks as well and gave a brief report to the Committee on the items discussed at the September Board meeting, telling the Committee how important their work is to the Board.

Ms. Mann also reviewed a list of accomplishments by the TRAC in the last two years, in particular the Homeless Initiative and Interactive Guide, the Rider Code of Conduct and the Appeals Process.

Approval of Minutes – Ms. Lepik-Corrigan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blancher to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of 2016 Officers – The Committee nominated new Chair and Vice Chair for the upcoming year. Elaine Mann was nominated as Chair and Gloria Lepik Corrigan as Vice Chair. Both nominees accepted the positions.

Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program – Mr. Miller presented information on a proposed pilot program for alternative transportation options utilizing taxicabs and transportation network company services. The pilot program will run in East Lake and Pinellas Park.

In the process of developing the pilot program, PSTA reviewed insurance, background checks, and other requirements to ensure that PSTA requirements match other providers of these services. Final approval for the pilot program is expected at the December Board meeting.

Mr. Blancher made a motion, seconded by Ms. Baranowski to recommend the Transportation Alternatives to the Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Central Avenue BRT Federal Application – Ms. Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, presented information pertaining to the Central Avenue BRT, an expansion project that has been planned for some time and is a component of the Path Forward Initiative. The proposed route would connect downtown St. Petersburg to the beaches using a 15 minute frequency from 5:00 AM to midnight, travelling down the Central Avenue corridor.

The plan is supported by the City of St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, the St. Petersburg Chamber, the Central Avenue Council, the Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber and the Tampa Bay Rays.

The program is expected to cost approximately \$16.5 million. To fund the program, PSTA is hoping to obtain 50% of the required budget from the the Federal New Starts Grant and 25% from the state New Starts Grant. PSTA will provide the remaining 25%. Ms. Borchers provided a proposed schedule and reviewed the New Starts and Small Starts process. PSTA will have two years to complete the project, but the project can most likely be completed within one year.

Ms. Baranowski made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lepik-Corrigan to recommend the project to the Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Service Redesign Phase 2: Williams Park and Budgeted Enhancements – Ms. Borchers discussed the service redesign which affects Williams Park. Since 1952, Williams Park has served as a hub for 16 routes in the PSTA System, but due to the City of St. Petersburg’s desire to make the park more accessible to the community for recreational use, PSTA is looking at a new system for Williams Park which will incorporate a county-wide grid system with most transfers occurring on-street. The proposed service redesign removes most bus service from Williams Park and redistributes it along the downtown grid network.

PSTA has conducted seven public workshops and has also presented the plan to the St. Petersburg City Council. The service change will officially take place on February 14, 2015. In addition to the route changes, route enhancements are planned for the downtown area, within the FY 2016 PSTA Budget. Based on public recommendations, PSTA is looking at implementing improvements to Routes 5, 7, and 22.

Some concerns were expressed by the Committee regarding the homeless population in Williams Park, and that the removal of the bus shelters could be detrimental to their well-being.

Ms. Baranowski made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, to endorse the Williams Park Service Redesign to the Board. The motion passed with a vote of eight to one, with Mr. Rolle dissenting.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Mann recognized PSTA Board Chairperson, Bill Jonson, for his continued support at the TRAC meetings. Mr. Jonson thanked the Committee for their service as ambassadors for PSTA on behalf of the riders.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 PM. The next meeting will be held on January 12, 2016 at 4:00 PM.