



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716
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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA – NOVEMBER 17, 2015; 9:00 AM
PSTA AUDITORIUM

			<u>TIME</u>
1.	CALL TO ORDER		9:00
2.	PUBLIC COMMENT		9:00
3.	ACTION ITEMS		9:05
	A. September 2, 2015 Meeting Minutes	CHAIR RICE	
	B. 2016 Meeting Schedule	CHAIR RICE	
	C. Central Ave BRT Federal Application	20 min	CASSANDRA BORCHERS
4.	INFORMATION ITEMS		9:25
	A. Federal Lo-No Grant	20 min	BRAD MILLER
	B. Federal/State Legislative Updates	20 min	VAN SCOYOC/G-R
	C. Jan. 22 PSTA-MPO Meeting Agenda	20 min	BRAD MILLER
5.	FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS		10:25
6.	OTHER BUSINESS		10:30
7.	ADJOURNMENT		10:30

THE NEXT MEETING IS DECEMBER 2, 2015 AT 9:30 AM



ACTION ITEM

3A: September 2, 2015 Meeting Minutes



Action: Approve Meeting Minutes

Staff Resource: Clarissa Keresztes, Admin Assistant

LEGISLATIVE

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- Staff recommends approval of the minutes of the September Legislative Committee meeting.
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Attachments:

1. Minutes



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**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2, 2015**

The Legislative Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 9:30 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to receive an update from Gray Robinson and Van Scoyoc, to approve the August 5, 2015 meeting minutes, and recommend the PSTA/HART Joint Legislative Agenda. The following members were present:

Darden Rice, Committee Chairperson
Ben Diamond, Committee Vice-Chair
Pat Gerard
Wengay Newton

Absent

Doug Bevis

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
Patricia Johnson, PSTA Board Member
Harry Glenn, Van Scoyoc (via conference call)
Fred Leonhardt, Gray Robinson (via conference call)
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson (via conference call)
Chris Dawson, Gray Robinson (via conference call)
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Rice opened the meeting at 9:31 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Federal Strategy Update – Mr. Miller remarked that he, Committee Chair Rice, and Board Member Janet Long and he are planning a trip to Washington D.C. on October 6-8. Mr. Glenn indicated that he is trying to finalize a meeting with Chairman Shuster regarding bus funding, and will request a meeting with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to discuss the process of applying for Small Start funding for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Mr. Miller suggested scheduling a meeting with someone regarding the LoNo Emission Bus funding. Mr. Glenn indicated that last year, the FTA awarded ten grants totaling \$55 million and the FTA will announce in September their upcoming funding amount. Mr. Glenn asked if PSTA wanted to amend their federal strategies to include the LoNo Emission Bus funding. He added that the Senate has re-established a competitive bus program for \$180 million per year; however, \$55 million is taken out for the LoNo Emission program.

[Mr. Newton and Ms. Johnson entered the meeting at 9:40 AM.]

Mr. Miller recommended making the LoNo Emission funding a federal legislative priority. Committee Chair Rice suggested having the Florida Public Transit Association (FPTA) also advocate for this funding. It was agreed that the Van Scoyoc team would produce a write-up for the LoNo Emission priority which will be presented to the Board. Mr. Newton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gerard to add the LoNo Emission Bus funding to the federal agenda, and that the funds not be taken out of the competitive bus program. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Glenn stated that he would develop the priority and send to Mr. Miller.

Ms. Gerard mentioned the LoNo Emission grant process and Mr. Miller said he will talk about it during his visit to D.C. Mr. Glenn said that he will pull the prior successful grant applications to help PSTA prepare for the application process.

State Strategy Update – Mr. Stuart spoke about the Central Avenue BRT and the Clearwater Beach to Tampa International Airport (TIA) Express Service and said the strategy has not changed. In October, there will be a meeting in Tallahassee with the Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary on the two priorities, which Senator Brandes requested to be a part of. He reported that the Legislature reconvenes for the first Committee week in September then there are three Committee meeting weeks in October, two of which will be Special Sessions to redraw the Florida Senate maps.

Mr. Miller informed the Committee that he is the Vice-Chair, and soon to be Chair, of the Florida Public Transit Association (FPTA), and stated that the idea of a statewide

advocacy program for the LoNo Emission funding would be great. He said that he spoke with Ed Coven, FDOT's State Transit Manager, to let him know about the meeting with FDOT's Secretary and Senator Brandes. Mr. Miller indicated that Mr. Coven suggested an advance meeting be scheduled locally with Paul Steinman, FDOT's District Secretary, along with Senator Brandes to also show the District's support.

ACTION ITEMS

PSTA/HART Joint Legislative Agenda - Mr. Miller stated that PSTA's goal is to collaborate with HART and speak with one voice. He mentioned a possible joint Legislative priority list and indicated that there was support from HART to jointly present to the Legislative delegations in Pinellas and Hillsborough. Those events have been scheduled for September 22nd and 25th.

Mr. Miller asked for the Committee's guidance on how PSTA can support HART's Legislative agenda. Mr. Newton asked if this would require a Resolution by both Agencies. Committee Chair Rice expressed her concern about approving a Resolution where PSTA might inadvertently approve a project that both Authorities might be competing with. Mr. Miller commented that in speaking with HART about a Resolution, they stated that they will follow PSTA's lead.

Ms. Johnson brought up an issue that PSTA had with the Legislature last year regarding additional funding for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program. Mr. Miller indicated that increased state-wide funding for the TD program is one of PSTA's Legislative priorities. Committee Chair Rice suggested staff create a fact sheet and explore ways to pressure the Legislature for more funding for the program. Mr. Jonson suggested PSTA produce one sheet with all the Legislative priorities listed.

Mr. Newton moved for a Resolution to support HART's 2016 Legislative agenda. Mr. Diamond indicated that he would support a Resolution, but not before the two Agencies discuss and agree on it together, adding that he does; however, like the symbolic gesture of a Resolution.

Since there was no second to Mr. Newton's motion, that motion failed. It was agreed to continue discussions at the next meeting.

August 5, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Gerard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Newton to approve the minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

PSTA 2015-2016 Legislative Timeline – Committee Chair Rice referred to an extensive list of meetings scheduled for the next few months. This list was provided in the Committee packet. Ms. Johnson asked if the TD program will be part of the Legislative agenda and Mr. Miller replied yes, and a one-page fact sheet and strategy will be developed for additional funding for the TD program. Ms. Johnson offered to travel to Tallahassee in support of more funding for the TD program.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on October 9th at 2:00 PM.

ITEM 3B



**PSTA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2016**

JANUARY 6

JANUARY 20 TRIP TO TALLAHASSEE

FEBRUARY 3

FEBRUARY TRIP TO TALLAHASSEE

MARCH 2

MARCH APTA LEG CONF.-DC

APRIL 6

MAY 4

AUGUST 3

SEPTEMBER 7

OCTOBER 5

SEPTEMBER 30

**Legislative Committee meetings begin at 9:30 AM and are held at
PSTA Headquarters, 3201 Scherer Drive,
St. Petersburg, FL 33716**

*Note: meetings are subject to change



ACTION ITEM

3C: Central Ave BRT Federal Application



Action: Recommend Approval of the 2016 Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project to Apply for Entry into Project Development Under the Federal Transit Administration Smalls Starts Program

Staff Resource: Cassandra Borchers, CDO
Heather Sobush, Planning Manager

LEGISLATIVE

Background:

- The Central Avenue corridor was first identified for premium transit in the Major Investment Study completed in 2000. Numerous subsequent plans have reconfirmed the need for premium transit in the corridor and ultimately identified Bus Rapid Transit as the preferred service type.
 - Pinellas Mobility Initiative – 2003
 - Downtown St. Petersburg East-West Transit System Study – 2003
 - Central Avenue Corridor Alternatives Analysis – 2007
 - Countywide BRT Plan – 2009
 - Pinellas Alternatives Analysis (AA) – 2012
 - Community Bus Plan – 2013
 - TBARTA Master Plan – 2009 and future updates
 - 2035 and 2040 Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs)
- BRT service along the Central Avenue corridor is included in the LRTP vision map and on the priority transportation project list for the Tampa Bay urbanized area.
- Additionally, the City of St. Petersburg is investing in the Central Avenue Corridor through its Central Avenue Revitalization Plan, Central Avenue Art in Transit project, and Economic Development Initiatives in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce.
- The Central Avenue BRT Project is currently the number one priority on the PSTA Legislative Agenda to obtain state matching grants to complete environmental clearance and design engineering required prior to an Expedited Grant Agreement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Summary:

- **To advance the Central Avenue BRT project and be eligible to compete for future Federal funding through the Small Starts program, PSTA must request permission from the FTA to enter into Project Development (PD).**
- PSTA staff renewed conversations with City of St. Petersburg transportation staff to discuss project options, where the city staff expressed a willingness to discuss options for exclusive bus lanes on 1st Avenue North and 1st Avenue South based on traffic analysis conducted by the city. These exclusive lanes would allow the project maintain eligibility as a Federal Small Starts BRT project at limited costs.
- PSTA recently revised a PD schedule based on a meeting and comments from FTA staff in Washington in October 2015. The first step of this process is to request permission to enter into PD.
- The technical work to be completed under the PD phase includes:
 - Documentation required to apply to enter the PD process
 - NEPA documentation including alternative and technology element finalization
 - On-street roadway design, including ITS engineering, to minimize/negate traffic impacts
 - Ridership estimates and analysis
 - Community and neighborhood benefit/impact analysis including estimated economic development
 - Determination of vehicle specifications and Buy America options
 - Station/Stop Design and location finalization
 - Operations plans development including run cutting and system integration for seamless connectivity to the rest of the PSTA network
 - Conceptual service branding elements required for BRT projects
 - Public engagement including coordination with local city and private investments in the corridor
 - Preparation and submittal of Federal Small Starts application

Fiscal Impact:

- PSTA has set aside funding for long range planning related to the Central Avenue BRT project through its Federal formula grants and has met with FDOT officials to request the balance of funding required to complete environmental and design work prior to construction.

- Local capital commitments required for this project (estimated at a total cost of \$16.5 million) are approved in the FY 2016 budget under the capital reserve (\$4 million).

Recommendation:

- Staff recommends the PSTA committee and Board approve the creation and submittal of an application to the FTA to enter PD.
-

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint (to follow)

INFORMATION ITEMS



4A: Federal Lo-No Grant



Action: Information Item

Staff Resource: Brad Miller, CEO

LEGISLATIVE

Background:

- At PSTA's October 28, 2015 Meeting, the Board unanimously supported submitting an application for Federal Transit Administration's Low or No Emission, "Lo-No" grant program to invest in a demonstration electric bus program in Pinellas County.
- PSTA Commissioner Ben Diamond, a member of the Legislative Committee, requested the Committee get a chance to review the application prior to its submission by the November 23, 2015 deadline to the Federal government.

Application

- PSTA staff has been developing the application in concert with the Proterra Electric Bus Company and the Center for Transportation and the Environment, an Atlanta-based non-profit organization which has successfully partnered with a number of transit systems to implement their Lo-No grant funded electric bus programs.
- More than 10 letters of support of the application have been requested from congressional delegation members, environmental groups, and St. Petersburg officials.
- Staff will present a PowerPoint outlining the details of the application to the Legislative Committee.

Description of Application and Pilot Electric Bus Program

- Nine Proterra Electric Buses (four replacements of existing diesel buses and five expansion buses).
- To be used on two routes: An expanded Downtown St. Petersburg circulator system and PSTA's 28th Street route, Route #11.
- Two on-route quick charging stations and five slow-charging stations for PSTA's facility.
- Total Cost: \$7,275,000 (Lo-No Grant: \$4,875,000 (66%), PSTA Match: \$2,400,000 (33%).

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint (to follow)

INFORMATION ITEMS



4B: Jan. 22 PSTA-MPO Meeting Agenda



Action: Information Item

LEGISLATIVE

Staff Resource: Brad Miller, CEO

Background:

- In accordance with the Path Forward strategic plan to increase collaboration and partnerships to improve resources available to support public transportation in Pinellas County, there will be one of the first joint meetings of the Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and PSTA Board's in several years on Friday, January 22, 2016.
- In advance of the meeting, staff from the two agencies has discussed what the focus of the agenda should be but it is hoped that the Legislative and Planning Committees might expand this discussion to maximize this Board-member-level coordination.

Suggested Agenda Emphasis Areas:

- Primary Objective of the Meeting: Ensuring transportation priorities of Pinellas MPO and PSTA Board match closely.
 - How do we better capture state and federal discretionary dollars?
 - How do we talk about what we need rather than what can we fund?
- How should PSTA and the MPO adapt their priority setting processes?
 - Should the criteria be evaluated or modified?
 - How do we better integrate our plan development?

Possible Agenda Flow:

- MPO Strategy Review: Emphasis Areas: US19, Gateway, Enhanced Beach Access
 - Work Plan: Complete Streets, Transfer Area Analysis (Land Use Connection)
- PSTA Path Forward and Priority Projects
- Prioritization process for Transportation Projects
 - Current Pinellas process.

- How do other areas capture more dollars for transit/transportation?
- Effective Coordinated Planning Examples
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Engagement – FDOT speaker.
 - Will tell us how they would like to receive our priorities (MPO-focused).
 - What has Pinellas done well/can we do better?
 - How can we make it easy for FDOT to give us discretionary dollars at the District and Central Office?

Example Advance Questions for Board Members to Prepare for Joint Meeting

- Is transit an important part of our future?
 - How should transit be integrated into our MPO project lists?
 - Are we setting priorities in an effective way?
 - What would you like to know from FDOT on these topics?
 - Should we fund what we need or choose our needs based on available funding?
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Attachments: None