



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES MAY 16, 2017

Committee Chair Gloria Lepik-Corrigan called the May 16th, 2017 TRAC meeting to order at 4:03 PM. Members present: Gloria Lepik-Corrigan, John Estok, C. David Schneider, Dave Kovar, Dave Stanton, Teresa Dunphy, Portia Smith, Elisabeth Olden, Richard McDaniel, and Mark O'Hara. Members absent: Alexandra Mesa, Carson Zimmer, Kimberly Rankine, Tanya Pistillo. Also present was: Brad Miller, CEO; and PSTA staff members.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

CHAIR REPORT

Committee Chair Lepik-Corrigan gave a brief report of last month's PSTA Board meeting. Mr. Miller shared that the Board approved writing a letter to our Congressional Delegation. The letter was signed by all PSTA Board members and sent to the Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart, Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing & Urban Development. The letter recommends their continued support for transit funding in general and specifically for our Bus Rapid Transit Project (BRT) project. Mr. Miller explained that the BRT project could be at risk due to possible future budget cuts, however, he remains optimistic that it will be funded.

FORWARD PINELLAS REPORT

In the absence of Mr. Zimmer, Mr. Estok reported that the Forward Pinellas Board voted to add a 27th member to their Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) specifically for a TRAC member. The Forward Pinellas Board also discussed the Complete Streets project and future goals for improvements such as bike lanes, sidewalk widening and greenery to enhance both SR 60 in Clearwater, and West Bay Drive in Largo.

ACTION ITEMS

April 18, 2017 Meeting Minutes – Mr. O'Hara made a motion, seconded by Mr. McDaniel to approve the amended minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Appointment to Forward Pinellas Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) – Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, explained to the Committee that the Forward Pinellas Board approved the addition of a 27th member to the CAC for a TRAC member. The new member will be in addition to Mr. Estok and Mr. Zimmer who already serve on the CAC. Interested TRAC members included Mr. Stanton, Ms. Smith and Mr. Kovar. Mr. McDaniel suggested the TRAC By-Laws be amended to include criteria and rules regarding the appointment of a member to serve on the Forward Pinellas CAC. No vote was taken. This item will be brought back to the Committee in June.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Regional Transit Feasibility Plan – Heather Sobush, Planning Manager, presented an update on the transit study which is being administered by the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) and conducted by the consulting firm of Jacobs Engineering. Ms. Sobush explained the first phase of the study is underway with an evaluation of how well different corridors connect the region's major activity centers.

She said the consultant firm is planning extensive public outreach efforts including: website, social media, workshops, and stakeholder meetings through May. Ms. Sobush added by September, the study will identify three priority projects. She explained that PSTA staff serves on a technical review Committee with HART and Pasco County Public Transportation (PCPT) staff to review and provide feedback to the study team. She encouraged everyone to take the transit study survey at <http://www.tbregionaltransit.com> if they have not already done so. The Committee had questions relating to what defines premium transit, why the airport to Clearwater Beach corridor is not one of the top corridors and what does resiliency mean as it relates to the criteria for a transit corridor.

Public Engagement Outreach – Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, presented an overview of the various outreach activities conducted over the past six months by the public engagement team led by Juan Luvian, Community Engagement Liaison. Mr. Lasher explained that PSTA outreach includes everything from conducting surveys on various routes, publicizing service changes, teaching residents how to ride PSTA buses, to promoting PSTA programs to the public, local neighborhood associations,

Chambers of Commerce and many businesses and community organizations in Pinellas County. The programs promoted by the engagement team include Direct Connect, Free Spring Break Rides, Flamingo Fares, TD Late Shift, the proposed BRT project presentations and the Circulator Study. The Committee had questions and suggestions relating to Direct Connect service stops and enhancing event announcements on PSTA buses, similar to HART buses.

Vision and Mission Statements – Brad Miller, CEO, gave the Committee an overview of why PSTA is revising the Agency’s Mission and Vision statements. Mr. Miller explained that PSTA is adopting a new initiative to develop scorecards whereby the organization can measure their goals and departmental achievements. He indicated each department and individual at PSTA will be evaluated by the new scorecard system starting this summer. Mr. Miller explained the new scorecard initiative led PSTA to develop new Mission and Vision statements that tie into the future goals and evaluation process at the agency. Mr. Miller, along with the PSTA Executive Committee, developed the proposed Mission statement: We connect people to places; and the proposed Vision statement: To be the people’s first choice for transportation and a driving force for social, environmental, and economic vitality in the community through innovation and partnership. After a few comments and questions, the Committee all agreed that the proposed Mission statement makes a great tagline for a marketing campaign, and expressed positive comments about the Vision statement.

TRAC Initiatives Update – Committee Chair Lepik-Corrigan and Ms. Borchers explained that the best process to communicate and move forward the three TRAC initiatives (Safety, Regionalism and Art in Transit) is to prepare letters of concern as a team effort. Ms. Borchers called for volunteers from the Committee to work with Committee Chair Lepik-Corrigan and PSTA staff to draft the letter. Once the letter is approved by the Committee at the next TRAC meeting, it will be sent to the appropriate governmental, municipal and agency representatives that can take action on our behalf. The Committee was enthusiastic about the letter writing campaign and several members volunteered to assist in the effort. It was agreed that the first letter would be on the safety initiative. The draft letter will be presented at the June 20th TRAC meeting as an action item for approval.

REPORTS

June Service Changes – Ms. Borchers briefed the Committee on the minor service changes for June. There will be some running time changes and small schedule changes. Staff is working on the June service change palm card and TRAC will receive an email with the final service changes before the end of the month.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. McDaniel asked for an update on Senator Latvala's regional transit bill. Mr. Miller explained that the bill is known as the TBARTA bill, because it is a fine-tuning of the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority. He explained that the bill passed, but did not provide any funds to the Tampa Bay area. The bill reduced the number of counties represented in the Tampa Bay region from seven to five, and changed the word Transportation to Transit in TBARTA's name. There was a lengthy discussion about regionalism, the legislative bill and a new effort to form an expanded Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that includes Pasco and Hillsborough Counties. Mr. McDaniel reiterated that with Senator Latvala's term limit approaching and his possible gubernatorial run, the Committee should put the TRAC Regionalism initiative letter on the fast track.

Ms. Olden asked for an update on the Breathe Easy zones. Mr. Miller said the Grand Central Terminal zone has been a great success and the zone was recently expanded to Clearwater at the Park Street terminal.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM. The next TRAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 20th at 4:00 PM.