



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSESSION
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a workshop at the EpiCenter Tropic Lab at 9:00 AM on this date. The following members were present:

Bill Jonson, Chairperson
Julie Bujalski, Vice-Chairperson
Janet Long, Secretary/Treasurer
Joseph Barkley
Doug Bevis
Mark Deighton
Ben Diamond
Dave Eggers
Pat Gerard
Curtis Holmes
Patricia Johnson
Wengay "Newt" Newton
Darden Rice
Brian Scott
Ken Welch

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Alan Zimmet, PSTA General Counsel
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Miller opened the workshop session at 9:29 AM.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Miller spoke about the process leading up to the workshop and introduced John Streitmatter, facilitator from the Leadership Research Institute.

SYNTHESIS OF PRE-MEETING INTERVIEW RESULTS

Mr. Streitmatter described the process which included interviews with each Board member to explore what was important to them and to get their perspective on key topics.

[Chairperson Jonson entered the workshop at 9:46 AM.]

Mr. Streitmatter presented a synthesis of the pre-workshop interview results:

- Desire to discuss lessons learned
- Desire to focus on the bus components of the transportation plan
- PSTA should continue to lead the Pinellas transportation conversation
- Desire to rebuild the credibility of PSTA, especially in the area of efficient operations and fiscal management
- PSTA Board should develop a greater understanding of its customers by listening and more in-depth research
- PSTA Board should set policy direction, with input from the staff and other informed sources, and the staff should execute
- Addressing the fiscal cliff is the most important issue, but it must be integrated with a consensus on goals, objectives, and principles

[Mr. Bevis entered the workshop at 9:57 AM.]

There was Board discussion on each of the key topics.

DISCUSSION ON LESSONS LEARNED FROM BALLOT INITIATIVE

Mr. Streitmatter led a discussion of lessons learned from the ballot initiative and presented five topics on the whiteboard:

- PSTA's role in the transportation conversation
- Communicating PSTA's message clearly and to the right people
- Citizens' perception of PSTA and the services
- Citizens' reaction to new tax revenue
- Citizens' reaction to new modes such as rail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

[Mr. Eggers entered the workshop at 10:07 AM.]

The Board was allowed 15 minutes to write their thoughts on each subject in the form of “Based on what we now know about (topic), going forward we should be sure to (lesson learned).” Mr. Streitmatter reviewed each comment and received feedback from the Board. He then consolidated the answers into the following key areas:

Focus on core purpose (transit agency)

- Participate, as appropriate, in broader transportation conversation

Communicating

- Great service is the best communication value
- Record ridership versus empty bus perception
- Different people have different needs – need to match them well
- Credibility is required to be able to communicate
 - Clean audits
- Want versus need

[Ten minute break at 11:10 AM]

Reactions to revenue

- Get very well-grounded and clear in the current situation
 - Financial standing – existing resources
 - Route situation
 - Any incremental service must have very clear and compelling value, including funding source

[Lunch break 12:10 PM – 1:00 PM]

[Mr. Bevis left the workshop during the lunch break and did not return.]

DISCUSSION OF PSTA’S CORE PURPOSE

Mr. Streitmatter presented a vision statement continuum arrow with public service on one end and economic driver on the other end. He asked each Board member to put an “x” along the arrow which reflected their views about PSTA’s core purpose, and there was much discussion among the Board on public service versus economic drivers.

CLARIFY AND “LEVEL SET” THE VARIOUS OPTIONS/SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

Maps of the various scenarios were posted on the whiteboards: No New Revenue Scenario (Core and Coverage), and Service Realignment Option 1. Mr. Miller spoke of incremental improvements, enhanced transit options, and ways to maintain service. The Board was given 15 minutes to examine the maps of each scenario and ask staff questions.

[Mr. Holmes left the workshop at 1:57 PM and did not return.]

Mr. Streitmatter asked what additional information the Board needed after reviewing the different scenarios and charted their responses:

- Political ramifications
- Street numbers
- Additions/takeaways
- Financial assumptions
 - Potential new revenue options
 - Existing revenue options
 - Deficit overall
 - Line item detail (assumption and inputs)
- Ridership intensity
- Walking distance implications
- Articulated and agreed criteria for a successful route
 - What were criteria for Community Bus Plan?
 - What are the criteria we believe should be used?
- Reserves
 - Current status
 - Any drawdowns/transactions
- Legal/regulatory constraints, e.g. w/Core scenario
 - Grant implications
- Input from consumers regarding any changes
- Relevant benchmark data (funding, administration costs, fares)
- If enhancements are considered, what is the full list of potential enhancements so that it can be prioritized.
- Desire for multiple options
 - Combination of levers, e.g., Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) impact
 - Impact to partners, e.g., University of South Florida (USF), others

There was discussion among the Board about the need for another facilitated workshop and some next steps were discussed:

- Policy workshop(s)
 - Route policy
 - Alternative scenarios
- Policy time in Board meetings

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Jonson adjourned the workshop at 3:10 PM.