



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES – JUNE 24, 2015**

The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors met in regular session in the Board Room at PSTA Headquarters at 9:00 AM on this date with the following members present:

Bill Jonson, Chairperson
Janet Long, Secretary/Treasurer
Joseph Barkley
Doug Bevis
Mark Deighton
Dave Eggers
Curtis Holmes
Patricia Johnson
Wengay "Newt" Newton
Darden Rice
Brian Scott
Kenneth Welch

Absent:

Julie Bujalski, Vice-Chairperson
Ben Diamond
Pat Gerard

Also Present:

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

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Jonson called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM and the Board was led in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

[Ms. Long entered the meeting at 9:05 AM.]

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Ann Rostan, Clearwater resident, expressed her concern about her recent experiences with scheduled Demand Response (DART) trips that left her stranded. Mr. Miller asked staff to speak with Ms. Rostan about her concerns.

April Lott, President and CEO of Directions for Living and Chair of the Homeless Leadership Board (HLB) Providers Council, thanked PSTA very much for prioritizing the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program.

Deborah Lekente, Director of Transportation for Neighborly Care Network and the Chairman of the Board for Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger, asked if PSTA would allow teens to ride the bus for free between the hours of 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM in order to help them get to break spots for free meals and activities during the summer. She said that Lakeland Regional implemented this bus program. Mr. Welch asked for something in writing outlining the proposed program with the projected number of children involved and the cost.

Raemone Mae Clark, Largo resident, spoke about the frequency of Route 18 on Sunday's stating that it stops running too early. She also commented on the closure of the Cypress Point shopping center bus stop and added that the bus shelters need maintenance. Chairperson Jonson asked staff to meet with Ms. Clark to address all her concerns.

Ms. Rostan made a follow-up comment about a good incident that she experienced with DART at Countryside Mall.

Barb Haselden, St. Petersburg resident, spoke about the re-worked TD program in March 2014. She stated that the majority of PSTA's riders are now in the TD program because of the reduced qualifications and cost. Ms. Haselden suggested PSTA start using smaller buses. She stated her opinion that the budget is being based on artificially low gas prices and another real estate bubble.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Recognize Retiring Employees – James Bradford, Chief Operating Officer, introduced and recognized Theresa Jablonski and Linda Payne, who work in the DART office, for

their more than 41 years of combined service. He thanked them both for their dedication to PSTA.

PRESENTATIONS

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Presentation – Brian Beaty, FDOT Tampa office, provided a presentation with narrative about the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) and the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan, which FDOT is currently updating. The FTP defines Florida’s future transportation vision and identifies goals, objectives, and strategies to accomplish that vision. The SIS Policy Plan identifies policies for planning and implementing Florida’s SIS, the statewide high-priority network of transportation facilities critical to Florida’s economic competitiveness. After the presentation, Mr. Scott asked if the 2010 Intercity Bus Study will be updated along with these plans. Mr. Beaty responded that he will inquire about that and let Mr. Miller know. Mr. Newton asked if the update affects the managed lane program on the Howard Frankland Bridge. Mr. Beaty responded that the SIS plan does affect the managed lane program. He left an informational handout and a comment form for the Board and the public and directed everyone to the project website www.FloridaTransportationPlan.com which will have additional meetings posted. He said the draft plan will come out in October or November, then a formal public hearing will follow, and both plans are expected to be adopted in December.

NON-BOARD COMMITTEES

Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) – Elaine Mann, Committee Chair, reported on the June 16th TRAC meeting. She said that Shelbie Harris, Transportation Superintendent, presented the proposed PSTA Customer Code of Conduct and the TRAC voted unanimously to endorse the Code of Conduct as presented. Ms. Mann reported that Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, presented the proposed FY 2016 draft budget. Mr. Miller stated that the budget will most directly affect riders through potential fare and route changes and input from the TRAC will be sought on both subjects in the upcoming months. Chris Cochran, Senior Planner, presented the initial proposed service changes resulting from evaluation of the routes and a work plan to put these changes into action. He also talked about the new Bus Shelter program. Ms. Mann indicated that the next TRAC meeting will be held on July 14th at 4:00 PM.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – Ms. Rice reported on the June 10th MPO Board meeting. She stated that the relevant items discussed were the public hearings for the adoption of the FY2015 – FY2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the priority list. She said the MPO approved the TIP and priority list in order to

submit it to FDOT before the deadline. Ms. Rice noted that all of PSTA's federal and state capital projects and state block grants are included in the TIP which is required by the federal government. She indicated that there was discussion about the MPO priority list to be forwarded to FDOT for the next cycle of the five-year FDOT work program. Ms. Rice reported that the two lists approved were the 1) Transportation Alternatives Program Priority List (trail and bicycle facilities), and 2) the Surface Transportation Program (STP) Project priorities list for state roads/congestion management, operations and safety project priorities for state roads and non-state roads. She noted that neither list mentioned any transit investments, but the MPO did indicate in the STP priority list transmittal letter their plans to consider a revised multi-modal priority list later in the fall. She said that there will be an MPO Board workshop on September 21st with the new Executive Director, Whit Blanton. Chairperson Jonson noted that Mr. Blanton began his new position on June 22nd.

MPO's Local Coordinating Board (LCB) – Ms. Johnson reported that the MPO's LCB had not met since the May PSTA Board meeting, but its TD subcommittee met on May 28th. She indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to create recommendations for the LCB regarding changes to the TD Bus Pass program. Ms. Johnson said the PSTA Farebox Revenue presentation was viewed showing TD ridership increases and farebox revenue decreases. She reported that the subcommittee discussed options for the program including a two-tiered system based on level of poverty, raising fares for all TD customers, and strategies for limiting the number of TD 31-day passes. She noted that the group felt it was important to keep issuing 31-day passes to TD riders and that the current, more efficient system without tiers is a good approach. Ms. Johnson indicated that the next steps will include outreach, an LCB meeting in August, MPO approval, and PSTA committees/Board approval. The goal is to have everything completed by September for implementation in November.

Mr. Welch, referring to Ms. Rostan's earlier comments about the DART program, asked Mr. Miller to issue a memo to the Board as to what happened and how the situation was handled.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Welch to approve the Consent Agenda. There were no public comments. The Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda, which included the approval of the May 22, 2015 Board workshop meeting minutes, the May 27, 2015 Board meeting minutes, and Resolution #15-07 to amend the Rules & Regulations.

ACTION ITEMS

Federal Lobbyist – Mr. Miller stated that the action item was to approve a three-year, plus two optional years contract with Van Scoyoc Associates (VSA) to provide federal lobbyist services. He said the hiring of a federal lobbyist was a priority of the PSTA Legislative Committee for several months and part of the Path Forward strategic plan. Mr. Miller said there were 13 responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) with VSA scoring the highest, with one of the lowest costs of the 13 proposals. He noted that VSA has a combination of both transportation experience in Washington, D.C. plus strong relationships in the Tampa Bay region. He said they also represent Pinellas County, the City of Clearwater, University of South Florida (USF), and Tampa International Airport (TIA).

Mr. Barkley reported that the Finance Committee discussed at length the proposed hiring of PSTA's first federal lobbyist. He said that the Committee unanimously recommended VSA. Mr. Barkley described why PSTA should hire a federal lobbyist and why the agency should hire VSA, in particular. Mr. Barkley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Welch to hire VSA as PSTA's federal lobbyist. There were no public comments. After discussion among the Board, the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM

FY 2016 Draft Budget – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, presented the FY 2016 draft operating budget which reflects PSTA's new Strategic Path Forward. She explained that the focus will now be on a review of the draft budget over the summer months to examine cost reductions and revenue adjustments in order to present a final draft budget to the Board in September. There were no Board questions or comments after the presentation.

REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

PSTA Performance Report/Updates – The report was included in the Board packet. Mr. Miller indicated that ridership continued to be very strong for the month of May.

PSTA/HART Joint Executive Committee Meeting – Chairperson Jonson commented that the Executive Committees met for a general brainstorming session and the committees both agreed that there was great benefit to working together on joint press releases, joint marketing and communications to the community, continuing the partnership on the farebox recovery program, and possibly merging long-range planning. He said there was also discussion on coordinating and synchronizing the Legislative agenda, and possibly including the Pasco system as well. Some Board members commented on

how positive the meeting was and that they look forward to future productive meetings. Mr. Bevis spoke of a joint Board workshop between PSTA and HART, and Chairperson Jonson said that subject will be on the next joint Executive Committee agenda.

[Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 10:35 AM and did not return.]

Capital Projects Update – The Quarterly Capital Projects report was included in the Board packet.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The Board received a schedule of future meeting subjects. Mr. Miller indicated that the calendar of future subjects provides much more detail than in the past.

Mr. Miller reported that PSTA had their Federal Transit Administration (FTA) tri-annual audit recently and the agency performed outstanding with only one finding which has been resolved.

Ms. Long said that the Legislative session in Tallahassee begins in August and voiced her concern that only one PSTA Legislative Committee meeting is scheduled before the session begins. Mr. Miller noted that there will be a meeting in July and August.

Regarding the proposed millage rate item on the July 22nd Board meeting, Mr. Eggers asked staff to come prepared to show the incremental increase in millage, what offsets PSTA could do in lieu of the increase, and what it might cost riders.

Chairperson Jonson noted that the Executive Committee will be looking at the Mission Statement at their next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Bevis stated his belief that Greenlight's failure has forced PSTA to become more efficient. He said the agency now has a Path Forward, a budget that is looking at bus replacements, and is reaching across the bay to HART. He believes that if the agency

ever gets another chance at Greenlight, it will be a much more focused and efficient agency.

Mr. Barkley stated that he is very excited about PSTA's first ever federal lobbyist and believes it is critical to the authority's long-term wellbeing. He said it was great to hear the positive comments about the PSTA-HART meeting.

Mr. Welch said he thinks the work post-Greenlight is exceptional and also the partnership with HART moving forward.

Mr. Holmes wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July and invited everyone to Largo Central Park for the celebration.

Mr. Eggers mentioned the failed referendum adding that this is the essence of what PSTA should be doing and believes resident input is critical as the agency moves forward. He said he is glad to be a part of the process.

Ms. Rice talked about the FY 2016 budget presentation. She noted that next year, PSTA is going to have budget savings of \$486,000 instead of drawing down reserves, which is part of the strategic steps the agency is taking in the Path Forward process. She thanked Ms. Leous and finance staff for their hard work.

Mr. Newton remarked that the funding mechanism failed for Greenlight, but the transportation problem still exists, and said that he is already receiving letters from people who are being affected by the changes. He thanked Ms. Jablonski and Ms. Payne for their years of dedicated service, and also recognized 37 Bus Operators and six Customer Service Representatives (CSR) for passenger commendations and thanked them for their service.

Ms. Long stated that she believes the future is very bright with tremendous opportunities and she is grateful for the Board's leadership. She wished everyone a happy and healthy Fourth of July.

Chairperson Jonson reminded everyone about the Personnel Committee meeting immediately following the Board meeting. He stated the importance of working with FDOT and how their plans integrate with public transit. Chairperson Jonson recognized the Board members for their involvement and improvement in the governance of the Board. He also recognized the staff for their hard work engaging the public about the proposed service changes. Chairperson Jonson also thanked the public for attending and participating in the Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Jonson adjourned the meeting at 11:03 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for July 22nd at 9:00 AM.

Chairperson