



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 6, 2016

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 approve the November 17, 2015 meeting minutes, appoint new Committee officers, and recommend the state and federal legislative agendas. The following members were present:

Ben Diamond, Committee Vice-Chair
Doug Bevis
Patricia Johnson
Janet Long

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
Harry Glenn, Van Scoyoc Associates
Steve Palmer, Van Scoyoc Associates
Chris Dawson, Gray Robinson
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson (via phone)
Alan Suskey, Suskey Consulting
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Vice-Chair Diamond opened the meeting at 9:34 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Travis Norton, St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, congratulated PSTA on behalf of the Chamber Board on the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) grant for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. He indicated that this project was also the Chamber's top Legislative priority for transportation.

[Ms. Long entered the meeting at 9:35 AM.]

ACTION ITEMS

November 17, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson to approve the minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Appoint New Committee Officers – Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to appoint Committee Vice-Chair Diamond as Committee Chair. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson to appoint Ms. Long as Committee Vice-Chair. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

2016 State Legislative Agenda – Mr. Miller presented the State Legislative priorities that were adopted by the Board in August 2015 indicating that the funds for the Central Avenue BRT had been received. The remaining priorities are the Clearwater Beach to Tampa International Airport (TIA) Express Route pilot, increased Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) funding for urban counties, and the regional priority; the Tampa Bay Regional Transit Fare Collection.

Mr. Stuart noted that the Legislature will be in session next week and provided a review on what to expect in the weeks to come. Mr. Suskey gave an overview on Pinellas politics and provided information on how PSTA's priorities are doing and which local delegation member is supporting each priority. He indicated that he received confirmation that the TIA project has been submitted to the Appropriations Committee.

After a lengthy question and answer session between the Committee and the State Legislative team, Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson to support the updates to the State Legislative priorities. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

2016 Federal Legislative Agenda – Mr. Palmer provided a summary of the five-year surface transportation bill; Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. He also spoke about the Appropriations Bill, along with an overview of how this affects PSTA.

Mr. Glenn spoke about PSTA's and Van Scoyoc's 2015 Federal Legislative achievements and activities. In addition, he reviewed three items for the 2016 Federal Legislative agenda which are to support funding for Small Starts projects under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Capital Investment Grant program, support funding for the federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program, and continue to monitor implementation of the FAST Act.

Ms. Long commented on the importance that projects have a broad community and regional support. Mr. Glenn concurred and expanded on her comment. Mr. Palmer added that the money received from FDOT for the Central Avenue BRT signals to the FTA that this project is important not only locally but also statewide. Ms. Johnson reiterated her concern about the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program funding. It was suggested that this program also be discussed at the federal level in Washington D.C.

Mr. Miller explained that the amended 2016 Federal Legislative priorities would be the FTA Small Starts application for the Central Avenue BRT, support for TIGER grant funding, and continue to monitor implementation of the FAST Act. Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson to recommend approval of the updated 2016 Federal Legislative priorities as amended. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Miller suggested the federal and state advocacy teams attend the February Board meeting and provide an update.

INFORMATION ITEMS

2016 State and Federal Legislative Trips – Mr. Miller indicated that there will be three trips to Tallahassee in January and February and at least one trip to Washington D.C. in March.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Committee Vice-Chair Diamond mentioned that when the Federal Legislative priorities are brought before the Board, to make it clear that the initial priorities which were adopted in August have been updated to reflect the accomplishments made by the advocacy teams.

The Committee agreed to change the start time of the Legislative Committee meetings to 9:00 AM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on February 3rd at 9:00 AM.