



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716
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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA – APRIL 6, 2016; 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. February and March, 2016 Meeting Minutes	CHAIR DIAMOND
4. INFORMATION ITEMS	9:10
A. Legislative Update State/Federal	20 min STATE/FEDERAL TEAMS
B. Lobbyist Request for Proposal	20 min BRAD MILLER
5. FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS	9:50
• Action on Lobbyist RFP	
6. OTHER BUSINESS	9:55
7. ADJOURNMENT	10:00

THE NEXT MEETING IS MAY 4, 2016 AT 9:00 AM



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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 3, 2016

The Legislative Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 9:00 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to approve the January 6, 2016 meeting minutes and receive updates from Van Scoyoc and Gray Robinson. The following members were present:

Ben Diamond, Committee Chair
Doug Bevis
Patricia Johnson
Lisa Wheeler-Brown

Absent

Janet Long, Committee Vice-Chair

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
Alan Zimmet, General Council
Steve Palmer, Van Scoyoc Associates (via phone)
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson (via phone)
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Diamond opened the meeting at 9:00 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

January 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bevis to approve the minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2/10-2/11 Tallahassee Trip Coordination – Mr. Miller informed the Committee that February 10th and 11th is the Pinellas Regional Chamber’s trip to Tallahassee. He said that there will be a coordination meeting on February 5th and a reception on February 10th with planned presentations for February 11th. Mr. Miller mentioned that he would like to schedule PSTA-specific meetings as well and Mr. Stuart indicated that he will try to schedule the meetings.

Clearwater Beach – Tampa International Airport (TIA) Express Strategy – Mr. Stuart reported that Senator Latvala has heard from the Governor’s office that putting this item in the budget would be a prime veto target. He said that Senator Latvala’s suggestion is to model PSTA’s success with the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and to work with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) with Senator Latvala taking the lead. Mr. Stuart explained that if this item was vetoed, PSTA would not be eligible to obtain FDOT funds for the fiscal year. Mr. Bevis agreed and also suggested approaching TIA for funding. Committee Chair Diamond suggested having a meeting with the Governor’s office to message this as a means for people to get to and from jobs and also for tourists to get to the beach. Mr. Stuart will arrange for a meeting.

Mr. Jonson said that this item was also on Clearwater’s agenda. Mr. Miller suggested a joint letter of support with the signatures of the entire Pinellas delegation to the FDOT Secretary or Governor. Committee Chair Diamond mentioned the letters of support that PSTA already has and Mr. Stuart requested copies.

Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Study – Mr. Stuart reported that Senator Latvala wants to put his focus on the TD Study to get as much money as possible for a quality study and also re-purpose some of the TD money to fill the gaps. Mr. Miller said that Senator Latvala put \$200,000 in his budget for the TD Study. Ms. Johnson indicated that she met with Senator Latvala and he was very interested in PSTA’s TD ridership numbers and the fact that the Authority works closely with other agencies such as the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) and PARC to provide TD transportation. Committee Chair Diamond asked if there was a Pinellas representative on the TD Commission and Mr. Jonson suggested approaching them for help and possibly collaborating with other areas/counties that are short on TD funds.

Open-Carry Legislation Impacts on PSTA – Mr. Stuart gave a quick update on the open-carry bill and stated his opinion that the full open-carry bill will not pass this year.

Mr. Zimmet indicated that he will craft a memo on the open-carry issue relating to buses in response to Board member Welch's question. Mr. Miller added that there are signs posted on the buses and the Bus Operators are trained to report anyone displaying a weapon.

2/24 Board Meeting Federal Affairs Presentation – Mr. Palmer reported that Harry Glenn, Van Scoyoc, will be attending the February 24th Board meeting. He provided an update on the federal issues and indicated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is focused on the implementation of the Fast Act, adding that the Formula Funds will continue to flow as usual. Mr. Palmer stated that the President will be submitting his last budget request to Congress on February 9th which does affect PSTA's projects indirectly with the FTA Small Starts program. He will report back on what the budget proposal contains and how it affects PSTA in the coming year.

Legal Opinion on Government Affairs – Committee Chair Diamond indicated that this issue was brought up at the January Board meeting. Mr. Zimmet said that the Board has heard from Tom Rask on a number of occasions about whether PSTA legally can hire a lobbyist. He spoke about PSTA's Special Act which grants the Board permission to enter into contracts and also gives the Board the authority to exercise all powers necessary, pertinent, convenient, or incidental to carry out the purposes of PSTA.

Mr. Zimmet indicated that these are very broad powers that, in his opinion, include contracting with a lobbyist. He added that the Attorney General has said that a county has the authority to hire a lobbyist, under the Constitution which provides, "the governing body of the County shall have the power to carry on County government." The Attorney General interprets that language to say that the County can hire a lobbyist. Therefore, in his opinion, if that broad provision allows the County to hire a lobbyist, PSTA's broad grant of powers permits PSTA to hire a lobbyist.

Mr. Zimmet referred to a detailed memo written by David Smith, General Counsel for HART, stating that he agrees with Mr. Smith's description of the Attorney General opinions. He also spoke about PSTA's answer to Mr. Rask's litigation in 2013 challenging PSTA's contract with Gray Robinson for lobbying services.

At Committee Chair Diamond's request, Mr. Zimmet summarized HART's stance and how that might impact Mr. Zimmet's analysis. Mr. Zimmet explained that HART was created with a general law, which is a statute that allowed for the creation of regional

transit systems. Their statute is slightly different than PSTA's in that PSTA is granted more powers than HART.

Mr. Miller indicated that the Legislative Committee is designed to provide assistance to the PSTA Board. He said the question is whether to ask Mr. Zimmet for a memo similar to Mr. Smith's and ask for guidance for further action. Committee Chair Diamond suggested that Mr. Zimmet give a summary of Mr. Smith's opinion at the Board meeting or refer the Board to today's meetings minutes and the documents so they can read them and follow up directly with Mr. Zimmet if they require additional information.

Mr. Miller said that he will put together a memo that would include Mr. Smith's memo, the 2013 lawsuit response, and a summary from this meeting. Committee Chair Diamond stated his belief that Mr. Eggers' request was fulfilled by today's discussion with Mr. Zimmet.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

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

Mr. Miller responded to Committee Chair Diamond's question on the timeline for the State Government Affairs procurement. There was discussion about Senator Latvala's wish that HART and PSTA work more closely together as a region, and Mr. Miller suggested more joint meetings with HART and the MPO with the possibility of developing a Tampa Bay region state priority list. The Committee requested copies of the past two merger studies that were conducted.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on March 2nd at 9:00 AM.



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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 2, 2016

The Legislative Committee of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 9:00 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to approve the February 3, 2016 meeting minutes, receive an update from Gray Robinson, and discuss the state government affairs procurement. The following members were present:

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

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson (via phone)
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Diamond opened the meeting at 9:00 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

February 3, 2016 Meeting Minutes – Committee Chair Diamond asked that approval of the February meeting minutes be deferred until the April meeting so that additional language could be added to fully reflect Alan Zimmet's (PSTA General Counsel) comments regarding the hiring of lobbyists. The Committee agreed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

2016 Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant Application – Mr. Miller stated that Darden Rice, PSTA Chairperson, Ms. Long, and Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, will be joining him on a trip to Washington, D.C. for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference. He indicated that Van Scoyoc, PSTA’s federal government affairs consultant, is setting up meetings with Legislative staff.

Mr. Miller reviewed PSTA’s 2016 federal legislative agenda, noting that Van Scoyoc has advised PSTA to wait another year for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) New Start funding. He said there will be a meeting in Washington with the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) lead staff to ensure the correct process is being followed.

Mr. Miller indicated that PSTA and the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) will be jointly submitting an application for a TIGER grant for the regional fare box collection project. He suggested meeting jointly with HART to make a pitch to the Hillsborough delegation for the TIGER grant.

Committee Chair Diamond suggested bringing a sheet of talking points outlining PSTA statistics to the meetings with Senate staff. He asked if PSTA has also shared its thoughts with Congressman Jolly on the TIGER grant and Mr. Miller responded that the Congressman is personally aware that the Agencies will be applying for this regional grant. Ms. Johnson requested staff add information about the population of elderly in Pinellas County and how many rides the Agency has provided them in the past year.

State Government Affairs Procurement – Mr. Miller stated that PSTA has a five-year contract with Gray Robinson for the state government affairs consultant. He said that the Legislative Committee agreed to launch a new Request for Proposal (RFP) after the end of this Legislative session. Mr. Miller indicated that a draft has been drawn up and is ready to be published. He noted that the RFP will include performance metrics. Mr. Miller asked if there is some formal way for Board members to provide some insight and knowledge on the firms that they have worked with. Committee Chair Diamond suggested that Mr. Miller speak with Mr. Zimmet about this issue. He also suggested that Mr. Zimmet remind Board members that the bidders are not supposed to approach them during the procurement process.

State Legislative Priorities – Mr. Stuart provided a summary on PSTA’s priorities. He said that in an effort to avoid a veto on the Clearwater Beach to Tampa International Airport (TIA) project, it was decided to go through the same process as the BRT project by having

the delegation sign a joint letter of support urging the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to fund this project.

[Ms. Long entered the meeting at 9:30 AM.]

Mr. Stuart indicated that \$8 million in Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) funding was returned to the state. The Senate wanted to re-allocate the entire amount and the House did not, so they agreed to allocate \$4 million this year and \$4 million next year with half going to rural counties. He said there also was agreement to conduct a \$200,000 TD study to look at the TD funding for urban versus rural areas. He noted that this was a victory for PSTA.

Mr. Miller provided an email from Lisa Bacot, Executive Director of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), which provided details on the TD issue. Mr. Miller indicated that there is a coalition of the urban systems including Orlando Lynx, HART, Miami-Dade, Broward, and Jacksonville which have all agreed on the study.

There was discussion about the Executive Director of the TD Commission possibly meeting with PSTA regarding the allocation of funds. It was noted that there is not a TD Board member from the Tampa Bay region and Ms. Long suggested that staff research the process of how people are appointed to the TD Board. She also mentioned that Senators Latvala or Brandes may be able to help get someone appointed from the Tampa Bay region. Ms. Johnson mentioned that most of the kids at the St. Petersburg Boys & Girls Club do not know how to ride the bus nor are they or their families knowledgeable about the TD program.

Committee Chair Diamond asked if a separate letter was going to be written for Senators Latvala and Brandes' signatures supporting the Clearwater Beach Express Bus project and Mr. Miller responded that the strategy is for them to make phone calls. He added that according to FDOT, the Agency has to get this project approved on the Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) priority list and the next steps on how to get on the priority list were discussed.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Miller mentioned that the Legislative Committee usually does not meet in the summer. It was decided to wait and see if a summer meeting is needed. Ms. Long suggested that Mr. Suskey and Mr. Stuart give a Legislative wrap-up talk at the April meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on April 6th at 9:00 AM.