



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716
WWW.PSTA.NET 727.540.1800 FAX 727.540.1913

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – APRIL 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 9:00 AM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to approve the February 3, 2016 and March 2, 2016 meeting minutes, receive updates from Gray Robinson and Van Scoyoc, and receive information on the lobbyist Request for Proposal (RFP). 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
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
Harry Glenn, Van Scoyoc
Steve Palmer, Van Scoyoc (via phone)
Robert Stuart, Gray Robinson
Alan Suskey, Suskey Consulting
Chandra Price, Price's Writing and Editing Services
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Diamond opened the meeting at 9:04 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

February 3, 2016 and March 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve both meeting minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Legislative Update State/Federal – Mr. Glenn introduced Ms. Price who gave a brief introduction about her background and company. Mr. Glenn provided a federal Legislative update and presented details on the March 14-15 Washington, D.C. trip. Mr. Palmer spoke about the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) meeting with Beth Day, Director of Planning, who is responsible for the Small Starts grant. He reported that she was very positive about PSTA's revised schedule for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Mr. Miller added that the next step will be for the FTA to approve PSTA entering into the Project Development stage. Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, indicated that FTA had questioned the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) \$500,000 contribution, adding that PSTA has since received confirmation from FDOT for the \$500,000 funding.

Mr. Glenn spoke about the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant stating that there was a great deal of interest among the delegation for HART's TIGER grant application, which encompasses eight counties. He said that he will be getting a letter of support signed by all the members of Congress from the eight counties.

Mr. Glenn and Mr. Palmer provided updates on the LoNo grant program and what criteria the FTA is looking for in the grant application. He indicated that the FTA is putting emphasis on how the buses are going to help the riders get to their jobs, school, and healthcare. Mr. Palmer also spoke briefly about FTA's Rides to Wellness initiative utilizing public transportation for getting people to healthcare services. Mr. Miller stated that staff will look into the program. Mr. Glenn provided a Congressional appropriations and budget update and indicated that he will keep PSTA apprised on the progress.

Mr. Stuart provided a post-session state Legislative update. Mr. Suskey indicated that the Clearwater to Tampa International Airport (TIA) Express Bus project was discussed at length throughout the session. He reported that Senator Latvala asked that this project not be part of the budget for fear of it being vetoed. Mr. Suskey indicated that Senator Latvala has asked to lead the effort with the House delegation to gather signatures for a letter of support for the Clearwater Express bus project.

Mr. Stuart spoke about the \$200,000 study for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program. He said that this is a priority with the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and that they will take the initiative and speak to the TD Commission regarding this study. Mr. Suskey said the study will be implemented by an independent contractor and the results will then be presented to the Legislature.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion regarding the TD allocation, the Clearwater Beach Express project, Senator Latvala's ongoing desire for a PSTA-HART merger, as well as ideas for next year's Legislative agenda. The Committee also mentioned meetings with St. Pete Beach, Madeira Beach, and Treasure Island regarding the Central Avenue BRT project.

Lobbyist RFP – Mr. Miller noted that the state lobbyist contract with Gray Robinson is ending and an RFP will be issued next week with proposals due on May 12th. He indicated that Alan Zimmet, PSTA's General Counsel, prepared a lobbying interaction feedback document for use by the Board to provide their input and comments for the selection process. Ms. Long requested to review the RFP. Committee Chair Diamond suggested a reminder be sent to the Board about the RFP process and the cone of silence.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The Committee was provided with a list of upcoming meeting subjects. Ms. Long mentioned a conflict with the April 27th Board meeting with the County Employees Appreciation Day, which will affect four Commissioners. Mr. Miller said that the Board meeting is expected to end by 11:00 AM.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on May 4th at 9:00 AM.