



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
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**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES – AUGUST 3, 2016**

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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 June 6, 2016 meeting minutes and receive information on the status of the FY 2016 grant applications and advocacy initiatives, the FY 2017 draft advocacy plans, and the draft Legislative priority projects. The following members were present:

Ben Diamond, Committee Chair  
Janet Long, Committee Vice-Chair  
Doug Bevis  
Lisa Wheeler-Bowman

Absent

Patricia Johnson

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO  
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member  
Natalie King, RSA Consulting  
Harry Glenn, Van Scoyoc  
Steve Palmer, Van Scoyoc (via telephone)  
Alan Suskey, Suskey Consulting (via telephone)  
PSTA Staff Members  
Members of the Public

**CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Diamond opened the meeting at 9:06 AM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## ACTION ITEMS

June 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Bevis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

## INFORMATION ITEMS

Status of FY 2016 Grant Applications and Advocacy Initiatives – Mr. Glenn reported that the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for the farebox project did not get funded as well as the LoNo electric bus grant. He indicated that there will be a debriefing meeting on each of these applications. Mr. Glenn spoke about two other federal grants being pursued by PSTA – the Bus and Bus Facilities State of Good Repair grant and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sandbox grant for first mile/last mile service.

Ms. Long asked if there is a downside to having so many applications at once and Mr. Palmer responded no and believes it is wise to apply for as many opportunities as possible. Mr. Jonson asked how much money was available through the TIGER grant and Mr. Glenn responded \$500 million, adding that it is a very competitive grant. Mr. Bevis asked if there was a common denominator for what they were looking for and Mr. Glenn replied they were looking for ladders of opportunity - how transportation helps the local economy by getting people to their jobs.

Mr. Miller spoke about the 2016-2017 Legislative timeline from August 2016 to June 2017. He indicated that in August, PSTA will invite Congressman Gus Bilirakis to visit PSTA to learn more about the Authority's activities, the Sandbox proposal, and the North Pinellas Uber initiative. Mr. Miller will schedule a meeting (or Skype call) in August with FTA Acting Administrator Carolyn Flowers and Congressman David Jolly to discuss the FTA Sandbox grant. PSTA will also initiate a Federal regulatory effort to allow Uber/taxi trips to count as Demand Response (DART) transportation for the purpose of FTA mileage/ridership calculations.

Mr. Miller is still moving forward with acquiring BP funds for the electric bus charging stations and indicated that the farebox project continues to move forward. Mr. Bevis asked how the grant applications are rated and Mr. Palmer responded. Ms. Long reiterated that it is important to invite Ms. Flowers to visit PSTA to better expose her to the Tampa Bay region.

Mr. Miller reported that there has been success this year with the state applications. He said that PSTA was awarded a \$300,000 grant from the State Transportation

Disadvantaged (TD) Commission for low income TD riders to ride Uber or a taxi at night when the buses are not running. He said that Senator Brandes is very supportive of this project. Ms. Long asked for an update at the Board meeting on how many people are signed up for the TD night program.

Mr. Miller reported on the state Legislative priorities and said PSTA is working closely with Forward Pinellas, noting that this is the first time Forward Pinellas has set Legislative priorities for transit. He indicated that PSTA will meet with State Senators Latvala and Brandes in September on key transportation issues. The PSTA Board will approve the 2017 Federal and State priorities in October. Mr. Suskey stated that he will be working diligently in August, September, and October to meet with the Pinellas County delegation. He indicated that Representative Latvala has been very supportive of the Clearwater Beach/Tampa International Airport (TIA) express bus project. Mr. Suskey and Ms. King spoke about the importance of having early meetings and follow-up meetings with the delegation. Committee Chair Diamond asked for a schedule of those meetings. Mr. Jonson suggested inviting the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce as well as the Clearwater City Manager to the Clearwater Beach/TIA project meeting.

Ms. Long announced that she has been appointed to Forward Pinellas and would like to be thoroughly briefed on the Clearwater Beach/TIA project. Committee Chair Diamond asked for the status of Senator Latvala's interest in a PSTA and Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) merger. He added that PSTA is open to ideas about regional collaboration. Mr. Suskey said that Senator Latvala still believes that a merger is needed, but does not have specifics as to his vision of a merger. Committee Chair Diamond suggested showing the Senator current collaboration projects with both Agencies.

### **FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS**

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

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was discussed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 AM. The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on September 7th at 9:00 AM.