



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716  
[WWW.PSTA.NET](http://WWW.PSTA.NET) 727.540.1800 FAX 727.540.1913

**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES – JANUARY 20, 2015**

---

The Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 4:00 PM on this date. The following members were present:

Present:

Lugene Blancher, Mid County  
Stephanie Lieshman, South County, Vice-Chair  
Elaine Mann, North County, Chair  
Lee Ann McIlravey, Mid County  
Vivian Peters, Mid County  
Kimberly Rankine, DART  
G. W. Rolle, South County  
Demetrius Sullivan, Student  
Lori Thomas, South County  
David Winchell, North County

Absent:

Susan Dargusch, Beaches  
Jaksa Petrovic, Professional

Also Present:

PSTA Staff Members

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Committee Chair, Elaine Mann. Ms. Mann welcomed new members Vivian Peters representing Mid County, and David Winchell representing North County. Both members moved from their alternate positions to permanent positions on the Committee. PSTA is currently accepting applications for new members. The application is posted on the PSTA web site.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Rolle made a motion, seconded by Ms. Leishman to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

## ACTION ITEMS

Bus Seating Options for Customers - PSTA has purchased 13 Gillig 40-foot hybrid buses which are due to be delivered in September. PSTA is considering installing on these buses, non-upholstered fiberglass inserts on the seats instead of the standard pre-formed, fire-resistant fabric seat inserts now being used on PSTA fleets.

Henry Lukasik, Director of Maintenance, brought a pair of seats to the TRAC meeting (one with an upholstered seat insert and one with a fiberglass seat insert). Before the meeting began, members had the opportunity to sit in each seat. Later, Mr. Lukasik debated the benefits of the fiberglass insert with Jeff Thompson, Director of Transportation.

Mr. Lukasik explained that non-upholstered seat inserts allow for faster and more thorough cleaning and disinfecting of seating, thereby reducing maintenance time. These inserts will last the life of the bus without fading, rotting, or deteriorating.

Mr. Thompson countered that the upholstered seats were more comfortable and that the fiberglass seats can be slippery and may cause a passenger to slip from the seat if the bus stops suddenly. He also pointed out that the fiberglass insert contained a hole in the middle of the seat to allow spillage to drain from the seat bottom. Such drainage would create a mess on the floors where the drained liquid may pool around passengers' feet. Finally he stated that the upholstered seats were more attractive to the overall appearance of the bus interior.

Mr. Lukasik clarified that there is no cost difference between the non-upholstered and the upholstered seat insert and that the hole in the seat is an optional feature.

The Committee asked several questions and made observations pertaining to the two seat inserts. Afterward, Stephanie Leishman made a motion to recommend to the Board to keep the current upholstered seat inserts, seconded by Lugene Blancher. The

motion passed 8:2 with David Winchell and Stephanie Leishman dissenting.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

TRAC Membership Terms - When the TRAC was originally defined, staff recommended to the PSTA Board that the membership terms be staggered as to ensure continuity of membership and knowledge base from year to year. Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, reminded the Committee that now that the first year was complete, it was time to decide which members would serve two and which would serve three-year terms. Two-year terms will expire in December 2015 and three-year terms will expire in December of 2016. Members can reapply for another two-year term when their initial term expires.

Ms. Borchers asked if any member wanted to volunteer to end their term at the end of 2015 and Lori Thomas chose to do so. All remaining term assignments were put in a bowl and each member was asked to withdraw a paper printed with a term assignment. The terms were assigned as follows:

#### 2015

Lori Thomas  
Demetrius Sullivan  
Lugene Blancher  
Vivian Peters  
Jaksa Petrovic

#### 2016

Dave Winchell  
Kim Rankine  
Stephanie Leishman  
G. W. Rolle  
Elaine Mann  
Lee Ann McIlravey

In addition, the currently vacant Beach representative seat will carry a three-year term expiring in 2016. The three vacant alternate positions, which will be filled within the next month, will carry a two year term, expiring in December 2016.

By-Law Clarification – Ms. Borchers outlined clarifications to the By-Laws which will be recommended to the PSTA Executive Committee and to the Board. The recommended changes include better defined attendance requirements, including how bus passes are distributed for participation and maximum absences per calendar year. The changes are as follows:

- TRAC members must attend the monthly TRAC meeting in order to receive the monthly bus pass. Passes will no longer be mailed to members who miss meetings.
- TRAC members may miss only two meetings in each calendar year, regardless of

whether staff is notified of a planned absence or if the absence is without notice.

Fare Collection Survey Results – Chris Cochran, Senior Planner, presented the results of the Fare Collection Survey conducted from December 1 to December 7, 2014 to determine the types of passes and fare collection technology riders are interested in using. Almost 2,600 surveys were collected. Questions were separated based on whether riders were visitors or permanent residents, with some questions being common to both users. Some results of the survey are as follows:

- 90% of the respondents were permanent residents.
- 65% of those permanent residents ride five or more days per week.
- 40% of permanent residents use bus passes with the 31-day being the most popular.
- 50% of the respondents used bus passes as opposed to cash.
- 64% of visitor respondents showed interest in a 3-day pass and 42% were interested in a family pass.
- 93% of the respondents said they were likely to use a Smart Card.
- 86% would consider using a Smart Phone application.

The survey invited riders to make comments and some riders asked about offering on-board change. While this is not a practical option from an operations perspective, the Smart Card and mobile application may reduce the use of cash on the bus. Riders also asked about using credit or debit cards on board. While this technology will be available, there may be issues with security as well as transaction time which can be mitigated by using a purchased card or mobile application. Apple Pay and Google Wallet were also suggested.

Conclusions drawn from the survey are as follows:

- Riders are interested in new fare payment technologies.
- Current multi-day pass types are meeting the needs of the riders.
- A 3-day pass targeted to seasonal residents and tourists could be a valid addition to the collection of pass types.

Homeless Initiative – Ross Silvers, Mobility Manager, addressed the Committee regarding the final steps taken on the homeless initiative project begun by the TRAC in September of 2014.

PSTA staff has created an interactive map showing where vital services are located and which bus routes serve these services. This map is now located on the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board's web site.

In addition, PSTA is using available grant funds to cover the cost of a printed version of the map. A mock-up will be produced for approval and once the map is final and printed, it will be posted on line to be downloaded, and printed copies will be distributed by the various homeless resources agencies and PSTA Customer Service Centers. The TRAC wants to include the location of public restrooms on the maps.

Mr. Ross also told the Committee that PSTA is assisting the Homeless Leadership Board again this year with their annual count of the homeless by providing bus passes to those who complete the survey.

### **FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS**

- Board Workshop – February 18, 2015

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 PM.

The next meeting of the TRAC will take place on February 17, 2015 at 4:00 PM.