



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – MAY 19, 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:

Catherine Baranowski, Alternate South County
Sonny Flynn, Beaches
Stephanie Lieshman, South County, Vice-Chair
Vivian Peters, Mid County
Jaksa Petrovic, Professional
Christian Smith, Alternate Student
Demetrius Sullivan, Student
Carson Zimmer, Alternate Professional

Absent:

Lugene Blancher, Mid County
Maranda Douglas, Alternate Mid County
Elaine Mann, North County, Chair
Lee Ann McIlravey, Mid County
Kimberly Rankine, DART
G.W. Rolle, South County
Lori Thomas, South County

Also Present:

PSTA Staff Members
Bill Jonson, Chair, PSTA Board of Directors

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Vice-Chair, Stephanie Leishman, opened the meeting at 4:07 PM. Ms. Leishman welcomed new North County representative, Gloria Lepik-Corrigan to the Committee. Ms. Lepik replaced David Winchell who resigned.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Baranowski made a motion, seconded by Ms. Flynn to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Bus Advertising Contract/Policy - Cyndi Raskin-Schmitt, Director of Communications, discussed the proposed contract for bus advertising with Advertising Vehicles, Inc. Additionally, staff recommends revising the current advertising policy to allow advertising from other governmental bodies in addition to advertisements containing alcoholic beverages. This would require the repeal of the existing Resolution #99-01 relating to bus advertising.

A. Bus Advertising Contract - PSTA's Procurement Division, along with the Marketing Department, developed and released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for bus advertising services. The proposal was sent to 15 companies and was also posted on PSTA's procurement website. Formal proposals were received from Advertising Vehicles, Inc.; Direct Media, USA; and Signal Outdoor Advertising, LLC.

After evaluating each of the proposals and presentations, a selection committee comprised of PSTA staff members selected Advertising Vehicles, Inc., the highest ranked supplier. Advertising Vehicles, Inc. will provide service under contractual terms of three years with the option to extend for two one-year periods.

Advertising Vehicles, Inc. has agreed to a minimum guarantee of \$350,000 in advertising revenue for the first year, which will be included in PSTA's operating budget. Subsequent years will require quarterly payments of the guarantee. PSTA will also receive 58% of revenues for sales exceeding the minimum guarantee. Ms. Flynn made a motion, seconded by Ms. Baranowski, to recommend approval of awarding the contract to Advertising Vehicles, Inc. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Repeal of Existing PSTA Advertising Policy - PSTA's bus advertising program is currently governed by Board Resolution #99-01. The new Resolution #15-04 repeals Resolution #99-01 and replaces it with the new Bus Advertising Policy. The Bus Advertising Policy would be maintained by the PSTA Marketing Department, but any future changes would be subject to Board review and approval. Ms. Flynn

made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lepik-Corrigan, to recommend approval of Resolution #15-04. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Revised Bus Advertising Policy – Bus Advertising Resolution #99-01 restricts bus advertising to commercial messages and prohibits several categories of advertising content, including governmental entity advertisement and alcoholic beverage advertisement. The proposed revisions to PSTA’s Bus Advertising Policy will allow advertising by governmental entities for the purpose of furthering their functions, objectives and/or public responsibilities, and it will also eliminate the prohibition against alcoholic beverage advertisements. Ms. Flynn made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lepik-Corrigan, to recommend approval of the Bus Advertising Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, spoke about the 2016-2020 CIP Five-Year Budget. She said the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) requires all grantees to publish a list of projects it proposes to fund with federal dollars, called the Program of Projects (POP), and provide an opportunity for public comment. PSTA will hold a public hearing on May 20, 2015 immediately prior to the Planning Committee meeting.

The POP is part of the CIP, which outlines the proposed capital expenditures for the agency over the next five years. A major focus of the plan is sustainable bus replacement program. Staff has looked at all of the priority projects and ranked them to focus on immediate need. Savings from various budgets such as: reducing the purchase of financial software, re-building farebox hardware (instead of buying new), and reducing the bus shelter purchases will amount to \$7.5 million and can be used to purchase buses in FY 16.

PSTA plans to employ several bus replacement strategies; smaller buses, lower cost buses such as clean diesel vs. 100% hybrid, as well as consideration of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and 100% electric buses. They will also consider contracting out some of the bus service to private vendors to reduce the fleet size.

In the future, PSTA will need to replace about 15 buses per year. That includes extending the life of some buses to as much as 15 years. Buses will receive a mid-life major overhaul and plan for increased maintenance expenses. In addition, PSTA will seek to balance federal funding between operating expenses and capital expenses. Through project reduction and reserves, there will be funding to replace 65 buses through the year 2020. In the year 2021, additional funding opportunities will need to be found. If no additional funding is made available, PSTA may have to initiate further service adjustments.

In addition to focusing on buses, other important projects being considered in the CIP include: Regional Fare Media Project, short-range and long-range planning, federally funded employee training, as well as upgrades to PSTA's Phone System, software/server, and other equipment.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Flynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petrovic, to recommend approval of the CIP. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Bay News Nine News Feature – A video was presented of a Bay News 9 news feature which discussed the Stingray Program, a University of South Florida (USF) based program for challenged students and their involvement the PSTA bus system. In the news feature, TRAC member, Demetrius Sullivan was prominently featured.

Comparable Codes of Conduct – Jeff Thompson, Director of Transportation, continued the discussion that began at the April 14, 2015 meeting on Customer Code of Conduct. In an effort to develop an updated Customer Code of Conduct for PSTA riders, Mr. Thompson compared Codes of Conduct from other transit properties including: Star Metro in Tallahassee, DART in Dallas, CATS in Charlotte, and MARTA in Atlanta. A chart was distributed which compared the rules of the various transit organizations.

Committee members asked questions regarding the posting of the Code of Conduct and how to best enforce it. Riders who will not follow the Code are ejected from the bus through the help of law enforcement. Riders are prohibited from riding the bus for repeat offenses but they can appeal the decision through an appeals process. TRAC express interest in being part of that appeals process. A revised PSTA Code of Conduct utilizing stronger language will be presented at the next TRAC meeting.

Path Forward Plan/FY16 Budget – Ms. Leous presented the “Path Forward” Plan and how it relates with the FY 2016 budget. In June, the Board will receive the first draft of the FY 2016 Operating Budget for review. In advance of that review, the Board will meet for a workshop in May and look at six areas that will be discussed and reviewed in an effort to generate more revenue.

After asking the Committee for additional suggestions, members mentioned an interest in interactive transit stations which use technology to get information rather than printed paper schedules, etc. Another suggestion was to partner with such technological applications as “Google Transit.”

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 5:10 PM. The next TRAC meeting will be held on June 16, 2015 at 4:00 PM.