



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

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – DECEMBER 23, 2015**

The Nominating 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 nominate Board officers for 2016. The following members were present:

Wengay Newton, Committee Chair
Ben Diamond, Committee Vice-Chair
Patricia Johnson
Janet Long
Kenneth Welch (via conference call)

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Member
Julie Bujalski, PSTA Board Member
Dave Eggers, PSTA Board Member
Alan Zimmet, General Counsel
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Newton opened the meeting at 9:03 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tom Rask, Pinellas County resident, stated that he looks forward to the Committee "curing the deficiency."

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Zimmet advised the Committee to take a vote to allow Mr. Welch to participate and vote via conference call. Staff conducted a roll call. Mr. Diamond made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson to permit Mr. Welch to participate in the meeting via phone. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

October 28, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Diamond made a motion, seconded by Ms. Long to approve the minutes. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

2016 Board Officers – Mr. Zimmet stated that a lawsuit had been filed by Mr. Rask who alleges that the Sunshine Law was violated. He said that it is his opinion that any alleged violation was adequately cured by discussions that took place at the October Nominating Committee and the December Board meeting. To avoid the cost of litigation and in an abundance of caution, it is his recommendation that the whole process start over. He indicated that Mr. Miller submitted a survey to all the Board members to find out if they were interested in serving as an officer.

Ms. Long noted that there is a perception that Board Officers have an automatic succession into a higher position and asked Mr. Zimmet if there is any reference of this in the bylaws. Mr. Zimmet responded that there is no succession requirement in the Rules & Regulations.

Mr. Zimmet asked Ms. Johnson to relay her communication that she had with Ms. Rice regarding the nomination. She complied by stating that she asked Ms. Rice at another meeting if she would be interested in serving as Chair, if nominated.

Mr. Miller presented the results of the survey that he sent out to all 15 Board members asking about their interest in being an officer. Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Diamond to nominate Ms. Rice for Chairperson.

Mr. Zimmet responded to Mr. Welch's question about voting on multiple nominations. Mr. Eggers had a question about nullifying the Board's previous decision which Mr. Zimmet answered. In response to Committee Chair Newton's call for public comment, Mr. Rask pointed out that Ms. Rice's account and Ms. Johnson's account of their conversation differed. He also spoke about the voting process, which he voiced his concerns about.

After a lengthy discussion relating to the voting process, Ms. Long withdrew her motion and it was decided that each Committee member would be asked individually to nominate a Chairperson. In response to Committee Chair Newton's call for public comment, Mr. Rask stated his belief that this was a fair procedure. Mr. Welch nominated Ms. Bujalski and Ms. Long nominated Ms. Rice. A roll call vote was taken with Ms. Rice receiving four votes (Mr. Diamond, Ms. Long, Ms. Johnson, Committee Chair Newton) and Ms. Bujalski receiving one (Mr. Welch).

Ms. Long nominated Ms. Bujalski for Vice-Chairperson. In response to Committee Chair Newton's call for public comment, Mr. Rask asked Ms. Bujalski if she was interested in serving as Vice-Chairperson and she stated that she had put her name on the list. Nomination passed unanimously.

Mr. Diamond nominated Ms. Long for Secretary/Treasurer. There were no public comments. Nomination passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Diamond stated that he is pleased that all members of the PSTA Board are very engaged and care about the Agency. He expressed how important it is that each member play a role in the work that PSTA is doing, regardless of their title. He added his belief that there is room for improvement in terms of the nominating process.

In response to Ms. Long's request for an update on the lawsuit, Mr. Zimmet briefly commented about communications he has had with Mr. Rask's attorney.

Mr. Zimmet asked Mr. Welch to state for the record whether or not he had any interruptions in service and if he was able to fully participate in the meeting via telephone. Mr. Welch indicated that he had no interruptions and was able to participate fully in the meeting.

Mr. Rask read from an email that he had sent to the Committee before the meeting and said that the process today, in his opinion, still concerns him.

Committee Chair Newton mentioned his experience over eight years of service on the St. Petersburg City Council and the fact that he was never Council Chair. He commented that hierarchy is not automatic and people need to be flexible to move a Board forward.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 AM.