



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

**PUBLIC HEARING - TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE/  
FY 2017 OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGET  
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 15, 2016**

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The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Board of Directors held a public hearing concerning the Tentative FY 2017 Millage Rate and the Tentative FY 2017 Operating & Capital Budget in the Board Room at PSTA Headquarters at 6:30 PM on this date with the following members present:

Darden Rice, Chairperson  
Janet Long, Secretary/Treasurer  
Joseph Barkley  
Doug Bevis  
Mark Deighton  
Ben Diamond  
Dave Eggers  
Samantha Fenger  
Pat Gerard  
Patricia Johnson  
Janet Long  
Brian Scott  
Lisa Wheeler-Bowman  
Kenneth Welch

Absent

Julie Bujalski, Vice-Chairman  
Bill Jonson

Also Present:

Brad Miller, CEO  
Alan Zimmet, PSTA General Counsel  
PSTA Staff Members  
Members of the Public

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Rice called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and the Board was led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**BOARD CHAIRPERSON INTRODUCTION**

Chairperson Rice read the Chairperson's statement as follows: The purpose of this public hearing is to receive public input and allow the public to ask questions concerning the Authority's proposed millage rate and proposed operating and capital budget for FY 2017. Copies of PSTA's proposed budget are available if you have not already obtained one. The proposed FY 2017 Budget is included herewith, totaling \$90,240.661. (Operating Budget \$70,175,913 and Capital Budget \$20,064,748.) The FY 2017 proposed millage rate is .7500. The FY 2017 rolled-back rate is .6838. The FY 2017 proposed millage rate of .7500 is 9.68 percent greater than the rolled-back rate. PSTA's millage rate limit is .7500. The proposed property tax rate is used to fund the FY 2017 budget.

**STAFF STATEMENT FOR RECORD**

Mr. Miller read the staff statement as follows: This public hearing has been scheduled so that the general public may be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed millage rate and budget for FY 2017.

A paid advertisement concerning this public hearing appeared in the *Tampa Bay Times* on September 1, 2016. Notices were posted at Park Street Terminal, Grand Central Station, Williams Park, Pinellas Park Transit Center, PSTA administrative headquarters, and on all PSTA buses on August 26, 2016. Information fliers were distributed via insertion in all Schedules-By-Mail requests, on the PSTA bus fleet, and at the Customer Service Centers beginning on August 26, 2016. A press release announcing the public hearing was e-mailed or faxed to major media contacts and social service agencies on August 26, 2016. A notice regarding the public hearing was posted on PSTA's website on August 26, 2016.

To date, staff has received no written comments from the public concerning the issue.

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## **TENTATIVE FY 2017 MILLAGE RATE & FY 2017 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET**

Staff Presentation – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, provided a presentation on the FY 2017 budget, including several scenarios which the Board requested. The presentation also included information on how the additional ad valorem could improve service.

Mr. Eggers asked if staff looked at the separate costs for weekday and weekends. Ms. Leous explained that the presentation shows the whole package and is consistent with what riders are looking for. Mr. Miller added that at the August meeting, staff showed improvements totaling \$521,000 one-time revenue, which was mostly all weekday service. Mr. Welch asked about the fuel assumptions and the County Health and Human Services (DHHS) passes to which Ms. Leous responded.

Public Comments on Millage Rate & Budget - Edward Schell, Largo resident, spoke about the need for better service on Route 62, including more shelters along the route. He would also like to see a better schedule on Saturdays and possibly adding routes on Sundays, which it currently does not have.

David Hamilton, Tarpon Springs resident and former County Administrator, said he received his TRIM notice and was disappointed to see that his taxes will be increasing. He applauded staff for the proposed service improvements and asked about a dedicated right-of-way for the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Board Discussion – Mr. Eggers asked about a scenario with electric bus purchases and Ms. Leous responded that the scenarios include the purchase of two electric buses in 2017 and the remainder would be hybrids.

## **ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE FY 2017 MILLAGE RATE & TENTATIVE FY 2017 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET**

Adopt Tentative Millage Rate Resolution – Mr. Zimmet read Resolution #16-12 by title. Ms. Long made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barkley to approve the tentative millage rate of .7500.

Mr. Eggers stated that he will not support the increased millage rate. He believes that the Authority needs to be fiscally responsible to the riders. Mr. Bevis indicated that he will not support the millage increase. Ms. Long said PSTA has to be responsible stewards and keep the buses operating. She will support the increase. Mr. Scott believes that the Agency could be much further ahead in the replacement cycle if diesel buses were

purchased. Mr. Barkley believes PSTA needs to demonstrate to all government agencies and other sources of funding, that the Authority is on the cutting edge of transportation technology. He stated his belief that if there is a delay in the increase, it will speed up the need to use the reserves. He said he will support the increase. Mr. Welch stated that he strongly supports the .7500 tentative millage rate. Ms. Gerard indicated that she supports the increase and believes the electric buses will produce higher ridership. Mr. Diamond said he sees an opportunity to increase service and the procurement of environmentally-sensitive buses without the millage increase due to the \$3 million revenue that the Authority did not anticipate receiving. Ms. Long reminded everyone that Congress and Tallahassee feel very strongly that PSTA should exhaust all its resources before asking them for assistance.

Motion passed (9:4) with Mr. Bevis, Mr. Scott, Mr. Diamond, and Mr. Eggers dissenting.

Announce Percentage, if any, by Which Rate Exceeds Rolled-Back Rate – Chairperson Rice stated that the FY 2017 proposed millage rate is .7500. The FY 2017 rolled-back rate is .6838. The FY 2017 proposed millage rate of .7500 is 9.68 percent greater than the rolled-back rate. PSTA's millage rate limit is .7500.

Adopt Tentative Budget Resolution – Mr. Zimmet read Resolution #16-13 by title. Ms. Gerard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Welch to adopt the tentative budget Resolution #16-13. Motion passed (9:4) with Mr. Bevis, Mr. Scott, Mr. Diamond, and Mr. Eggers dissenting.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT FINAL FY 2017 MILLAGE RATE & BUDGET**

Chairperson Rice announced that the final public hearing to adopt the final FY 2017 millage rate and budget will be held on Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 6:00 PM at PSTA Headquarters, 3201 Scherer Drive, St. Petersburg, FL 33716.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Rice adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.