



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES JUNE 20, 2018

Committee Chair Gerard called the June 20, 2018 Planning Committee meeting to order at 10:31 AM. Members present: Pat Gerard, Joe Barkley, Joshua Shulman, John Tornga, and Samantha Fenger. Members absent: Charlie Justice. Also present were: Cassandra Borchers, CDO, PSTA staff members, and members of the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

May 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Barkley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tornga, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Letter to Secretary Gwynn, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) – Ms. Borchers and staff recommended to the Committee approval of a letter to be sent by PSTA Chairperson Janet Long to FDOT requesting safe bicycle and pedestrian access be incorporated into major U.S. 19 projects. Ms. Borchers explained that the FDOT presented an update on these projects to the Forward Pinellas Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) in April and the Board in May. She reiterated that members of the TCC raised concerns over the need for pedestrian crossings and safer design of the frontage roads. Ms. Borchers reminded the Committee that former PSTA Board member and Clearwater City Councilman, Bill Jonson, made public comment at PSTA's Board meeting on May 23rd, requesting the PSTA Board consider formal support of the TCC and Forward Pinellas recommendations. Mr. Barkley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tornga, to recommend approving the letter be sent to FDOT District Secretary Gwynn. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Strategic Public Engagement Plan - Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, presented an overview of the Strategic Outreach Plan. Mr. Lasher explained how he and the Public Engagement team of Juan Luvian, Community Engagement Liaison, and Nicole Dufva,

Public Engagement Specialist, interface with the Planning and Marketing departments to implement outreach campaigns. He informed the Committee that their outreach not only generates awareness of special programs and promotions, but it also gathers community and rider input through extensive surveys. Mr. Lasher stressed the outreach target market for the 2018 outreach plan includes seniors, students, PSTA riders, stakeholders, government partners, local businesses, chambers of commerce, community and civic groups and non-riders. He stated the major projects for the 2018 strategic outreach campaign are the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the Community Bus Plan and the Spring Break service enhancements.

Community Bus Plan Update – Heather Sobush, Planning Director, presented the schedule for the Community Bus Plan, including the public engagement plan. The Community Bus Plan will utilize on-board surveys, ridership, on-time performance, farebox data, and information collected from public outreach to make specific recommendations. She explained the goal of the plan is to improve the efficiency and performance of PSTA's fixed route network, with a focus on streamlining routes and incrementally improving the fixed route network within multiple funding scenarios. Ms. Sobush emphasized the bus plan recommendations will be incorporated in PSTA's Transit Development Plan (TDP) and Forward Pinellas' 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

FY2019 Budget – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the following discussion points during her presentation to the Committee: FY 2018 forecast, FY 2019 draft budget highlights, long term projections, challenges ahead and suggested solutions. Ms. Leous summarized the financial health of PSTA, and assured the Committee that despite challenges, such as rising fuel costs, the 20% increase in Demand Response Transportation Services (DART) ridership, and a shortage of bus drivers, PSTA has a forecasted surplus of \$935,551, which will be put into reserves. There was a lengthy discussion about the effect on PSTA's operating budget, as well as suggestions on how to mitigate the rising fuel costs. Committee Chair Gerard suggested using Career Source Pinellas to help find qualified bus drivers. Ms. Leous confidently assured the Committee that despite the challenges facing PSTA in the 2018/19 fiscal year, the authority is in solid financial shape through 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 AM. The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on July 18th at 10:30 AM.