



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 17, 2019

Committee Chairperson Gerard called the July 17, 2019 Planning Committee meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Members present: Pat Gerard, Joshua Shulman, Dave Allbritton and Vince Cocks. Members absent: Joe Barkley and Samantha Fenger. Also present: Brad Miller, CEO; PSTA staff members; and members of the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

June 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Shulman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Allbritton, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

FY20 TRIM Notice – Debbie Leous, PSTA Chief Financial Officer, recommended approval of the proposed millage rate of 0.7500, which is the maximum rate set by Florida state statute that PSTA can levy for next year. Ms. Leous explained that maintaining the property tax rate at the current rate of 0.7500 will result in a \$3,881.050 increase in property tax revenues budgeted in FY 2020 over FY 2019. Mr. Cocks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shulman, to approve the proposed millage rate of 0.7500 to be transmitted to the Property Appraiser. There were no public comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Premium Transit Vehicles Analysis – Abhishek Dayal, Director of the Project Management Office, presented the results of the proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project ridership forecast using FTA's Simplified Trips on Projects (STOPS) model. He explained the purpose of the analysis is to estimate the anticipated passenger loads on the proposed BRT buses to determine a recommended bus size, either a 40-foot or a 60-foot articulated premium bus. He stated in order to stay on schedule for the project, which is approaching 60% design phase completed, nine premium buses will have to be ordered by August for arrival in late 2020. Mr. Dayal said the data indicated that passenger loads are expected

to be in the range of 31-36 passengers during peak periods, and during the off-peak times, loads are expected to average approximately 24 passengers. He explained that based on the total capacity offered by both bus sizes, as well as expected peak loads, either option would be feasible, and hold 4 bicycles inside the bus. However, in consideration of St. Pete Beach Commission concerns and the additional cost of \$2 million for 60-foot buses, staff is recommending 40-foot hybrid electric buses for the BRT project. There were a few questions raised about bike racks, standing room capacity, and a suggestion that PSTA include City of St. Petersburg officials in the decision-making process for the bus size before the next PSTA Board meeting. Mr. Allbritton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shulman to approve 40-foot buses for the BRT project. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

October Service Changes - Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, presented staff recommendations for service adjustments for October. He explained that the current North County connector routes will be transitioned to fixed-route service, because the duration of the past “flex” deviations were preventing the routes from operating on a reliable schedule. Mr. Lasher showed the maps for the proposed route realignments for the Dunedin/Palm Harbor Connector (which will be the proposed Route 813), the Countryside/Oldsmar/Tampa Connector (which will be the proposed Route 812), and the Safety Harbor Connector (which will be the proposed Route 814). In addition, Mr. Lasher informed the Committee that at the request of the City of St. Pete Beach, the Central Avenue Trolley will no longer serve Pass-a-Grille and the Don Cesar. He explained the service will end at the county beach access park as part of the October service change. Mr. Shulman suggested the proposed route maps include the location of Direct Connect stops for the Board meeting, and that PSTA should consider adding an additional Direct Connect stop on the northern end of the Dunedin/Palm Harbor route to accommodate riders. There was a brief discussion about terminating trolley service to Pass-a-Grille, and a suggestion from Mr. Shulman for permanent signage at the county beach access stop to inform riders that the City of St. Pete Beach made the decision to end the service. Mr. Shulman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Allbritton to approve the October service changes. There were no public comments. The motion passed 3:1, with Mr. Cocks dissenting.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The Committee was provided with a list of upcoming meeting subjects.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Allbritton brought up the proposed Clearwater Intermodal Center and wanted to make it clear that the City of Clearwater would like to partner and help fund the center

to make it a multi-use center for both PSTA and the City. Mr. Miller and Mr. Dayal assured Mr. Allbritton that the City of Clearwater's Planning department has already been contacted and will be included in all aspects of the design stage.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 AM. The next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for August 21st at 10:30 AM.