



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES July 16, 2019

Committee Chairperson Olden called the July 16, 2019 TRAC meeting to order at 4:04 PM. Members present: Elisabeth Olden, Sue Keating, Edwin Klumpp, Tim Parietti, Camille Soleil, Kenneth Durham, Debra Bjorkquist, Brian Grant, Chelsea Anderson, Jovantee Blair, Teresa Dunphy, Kim Rankine and Duncan Kovar. Member absent: Renee Graham. Also present: Brad Miller, CEO; PSTA staff members; and members of the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Kovar presented his findings from attending the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) last month in Louisville, Kentucky. He compared his experience as a bus rider with the service provided by the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) to PSTA's drivers and service. Mr. Kovar expressed how proud he is of PSTA, and the outstanding service and helpful, friendly bus drivers we have as compared to TARC. He shared details of the sessions he attended on zoning, affordable housing, curbs, and citizen activism in urban and transportation planning. He announced that the CNU TampaBay conference will be at Armature Works on October 3rd and 4th.

ACTION ITEMS

Approve June 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Bjorkquist made a motion, seconded by Mr. Klumpp, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

TRAC STAR Award Nomination – Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, presented the latest TRAC STAR Award nomination submitted by the City of St. Petersburg's Transportation Planning department for recommended approval. Mr. Lasher described the City's Complete Streets project along Dr. M.L. King Jr. Street North from 4th Avenue North to 30th

Avenue North, which was resurfaced late last year in collaboration with Forward Pinellas and PSTA's Planning Department. He explained that in their effort to reduce excessive speeding and provide improved pedestrian access to the area, one travel lane was converted to 7' buffered bike lanes and five enhanced crosswalks (with yellow warning lights, a median refuge island, and wider ramps for people using mobility devices) were added. Committee members all agreed that this project resulted in safer and more comfortable sidewalks, bike lanes and pedestrian crossings for transit riders. Mr. Kovar made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to approve the City of St. Petersburg be presented with a TRAC STAR Award. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

FY20 Draft Budget – Debbie Leous, Chief Financial Officer, presented a summary of a draft FY 2020 PSTA operating budget of \$86 million, which will be finalized next month and presented to the PSTA Board for approval at the August 28th Board meeting. Ms. Leous said PSTA's focus in FY 2020 will be on continued collaboration and on funding for the future and maintaining the strategy to use only a small portion of built up reserves. She highlighted the benefits that PSTA's extensive fleet, routes, bus stops, shelters, customer service centers, and paratransit service provide the residents and visitors in Pinellas County. She also reviewed the extensive list of FY 2019 accomplishments that PSTA has achieved.

Ms. Leous was pleased to report that over the course of FY 19 each PSTA division has focused on tightening the budget and reducing spending, which resulted in significant savings. She summarized the itemized areas that make up the \$86 million in operating expenses, the largest of which are union wages and purchased transportation. The Committee had questions related to the increased value of property in Pinellas County and if that will help fund PSTA. Ms. Leous explained the ad valorem tax and percentage that funds public transit is set by the Pinellas Property Appraiser and not PSTA. Mr. Miller added that other states, such as Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey fully fund public transit through the state, and no cities or counties contribute funds, as in the case of all public transit agencies in the State of Florida.

[Ms. Soleil left the meeting at 4:35 PM]

MEMBER COMMENTS

Several Committee members raised the following issues and concerns: PSTA buses not stopping at designated shelters at the layby, no sidewalks or bike lanes on 71st Street west of 54th Avenue North, the discontinuation of the pilot test for Flamingo Fares,

consideration for bus stop consolidation on Route 75 between 54th Avenue and 78th Street, consideration to add bus service for the community of Lakewood Estates at 31st Street South and 26th Avenue South.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM. The next TRAC meeting is scheduled for August 20th at 4:00 PM.