



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
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**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TRAC) MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 18, 2019**

Committee Vice-Chair Olden called the June 18, 2019 TRAC meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Members present: Elisabeth Olden, Sue Keating, Edwin Klumpp, Tim Parietti, Camille Soleil, Kenneth Durham, Debra Bjorkquist, Brian Grant, Chelsea Anderson, Jovantee Blair, and Teresa Dunphy. Members absent: Renee Graham and Duncan Kovar. Also present: Brad Miller, CEO, Josh Shulman, PSTA Board member and PSTA staff members.

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Chair Report:

Committee Vice-Chair Olden gave a report from the May 29th Board meeting, which was briefly attended by Committee Chair O'Hara. There was a special presentation by James Bradford, PSTA Chief Operating Officer, on bus operator safety followed by a public hearing attended by dozens of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) officials and members, and bus drivers from PSTA, as well as Pasco County Public Transit (PCPT), Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) and Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) who paid their respects and expressed their concern for their safety after the tragic death of HART bus driver, Thomas Dunn. Committee Vice-Chair Olden added that PSTA officials responded immediately to their concerns and the PSTA Board will vote at the June 26th Board meeting on the proposed bus driver protective barriers.

Forward Pinellas Report:

In Mr. Kovar's absence, Committee Vice-Chair Olden informed members that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is on summer hiatus and there are no meetings in June and July. Mr. Kovar is currently attending the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) Conference in Louisville, Kentucky and plans to give TRAC a brief report on his findings at next month's meeting.

Action Items:

May 14, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Dunphy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Election of Chair – Committee Vice-Chair Olden asked for nominations for Chair from full voting members. Ms. Soleil made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dunphy, to nominate Vice-Chair Olden as Chair. There were no additional nominations and no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Vice-Chair – Committee Chair Olden made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blair, to nominate Ms. Soleil as Vice-Chair. There were no additional nominations and no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

Information Items:

PSTA Hurricane Preparedness – Jeff Thompson, Director of Transportation, and Theo Bakomihalis, Superintendent of Safety, Security and Training, gave a presentation on PSTA's essential role in Pinellas County's Emergency Preparedness for Hurricane Season. Committee members learned that PSTA is designated as one of the primary transportation providers for the evacuation of local citizens to shelters in the event of a hurricane, and provides emergency bus service under the direction of the Pinellas County Director of Emergency Management. Mr. Thompson provided details of PSTA's plan to protect the bus network and assets, communicate emergency information to its employees and customers, re-route buses to take evacuees to and from shelters, and effectively suspend service with sustained winds of over 45 miles per hour.

Mr. Bakomihalis informed Committee members how the PSTA radio communication center informs drivers of detours during local and major weather emergencies, and how long it can take to resume normal service after such emergencies. There were a few questions about the coordination of bus service suspension and how riders are kept informed during emergencies. Mr. Thompson addressed all questions and reiterated that there will be two emergency phone numbers for PSTA (one for employees and one for customers) to call for the latest update of bus service during weather emergencies. He added that in the event of a loss of power, PSTA has a back-up server on the Cloud to continue essential communications with our staff and customers.

Member Comments:

Mr. Shulman informally raised the issue of the proposed bus driver safety barriers to the Committee to get their perspective as regular bus riders. Several members provided feedback and discussed the pros and cons of the protective barriers. TRAC did not take any

formal action, and all agreed how much they appreciate the men and women of PSTA, especially our drivers.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm. The next TRAC meeting will be held on July 16, 2019 at 4:00 pm.