



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

**TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17, 2019**

Committee member Anderson called the September 17, 2019 TRAC meeting to order at 4:01 pm. Members present: Elisabeth Olden, Sue Keating, Tim Parietti, Kenneth Durham, Debra Bjorkquist, Brian Grant, Chelsea Anderson, Jovantee Blair, Teresa Dunphy, Kim Rankine and Renee Graham. Members absent: Duncan Kovar, Camille Soleil and Edwin Klumpp. Also present: PSTA staff members.

Presentation:

Car Free St. Pete - Nicole Roberts, Community Outreach Coordinator of the St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership, gave a presentation about Car-Free St. Pete. She explained the campaign is a collaboration with PSTA, the Cross Bay Ferry, Coast Bike Share and the Downtown Looper to encourage residents and visitors to use alternative forms of transportation to get around downtown St. Pete and the beaches. Ms. Roberts detailed the advantages to going "Car-Free", which include energy saving sustainability benefits, better individual health and wellness, boosting the local economy and a less car-centric workforce. She stressed our roads will be less congested and more pedestrian and bike-friendly. In addition, she encouraged TRAC members to attend or volunteer at the World Car-Free Day event being held at Green Bench Brewing on Sunday, September 22nd.

[Committee Chair Olden arrived at 4:05 pm.]

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Action Items:

Approve August 20, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dunphy, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Information Item:

October Service Change Outreach – Juan Luvian, PSTA’s Public Engagement Planner, reviewed the following October Service Changes which will take effect October 20, 2019: the former North County Connectors are becoming fixed routes 812, 813 and 814; Route 59 will have reduced service through the Largo Mall parking lot; Route 18 will have reduced service through the Largo Mall parking lot, and no service through the Heritage Apartment loop; however, he explained there will be a new Direct Connect location at Walsingham Road and Seminole Boulevard to accommodate the residents of Heritage Apartments; and the Central Avenue Trolley (CAT) will end its route just south of the Don Cesar Resort, with no service to Pass-a-Grille at the request of the City of St. Pete Beach, which plans to implement micro-transit service in this area.

In addition to the October service changes, Mr. Luvian announced PSTA will be adding new Direct Connect locations at the Largo Transit Center, Grand Central Station, Walsingham Road, and Seminole Boulevard, and Pasadena Avenue South and Sun Island Drive South.

Mr. Luvian encouraged TRAC members to assist the Public Engagement team with public outreach in advance of the October 20th service change by volunteering to ride the CAT from September 20th through October 4th, or at the Park Street and Grand Central Transit Centers from October 16th through October 23rd.

Member Comments:

Mr. Blair shared his concern about a recent experience with fellow transit riders with a very late bus on Route 7 on a Sunday at 6:30 pm. He said Transit App showed the bus coming and did not indicate a problem. He said the bus eventually arrived more than 30 minutes late, and it was very frustrating for the passengers. Since it was after hours for PSTA customer service, Mr. Blair sent a Facebook Messenger text about the issue and never received a reply. Mr. Lasher made note of the issues and will investigate how to improve Transit App to accurately reflect delays on a route, and improve staff response time to rider inquiries through our social media sites.

Mr. Grant raised an issue in his Largo neighborhood of a bus stop on Belcher Road between East Bay Drive and Ulmerton Road that used to have a concrete and wooden bench, and now it’s gone, leaving a concrete slab. Public Engagement staff asked him to provide the bus stop number, and then they can submit the request to PSTA Amenities for consideration for a Simme-seat, or if necessary, a shelter in its place.

Other Business:

Bob Lasher, External Affairs Officer, encouraged TRAC members to be on the look-out for potential TRAC STAR Award nominations. Mr. Lasher is waiting for confirmation of a date from the City of St. Petersburg to present the latest TRAC STAR Award to the City for the Complete Streets improvements along Dr. M.L. King Jr. Street North from 4th Avenue North to 30th Avenue North.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm. The next TRAC meeting is scheduled for October 15th at 4:00 pm.