

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MINUTES – MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2012**

The Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization, created by the State of Florida in accordance with Title 23 United States Code, Section 134 and Chapter 339.175 Florida Statutes, met in regular session on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

David Eggers – *Chairman* – Mayor, City of Dunedin Commission  
Karen Seel – *Vice Chairman* – Board of County Commissioners (arrived at 1:03 p.m.)  
Jeff Danner – *Secretary/Treasurer* – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg Council  
Sandra Bradbury – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park  
Julie Bujalski – Commissioner, City of Dunedin, representing PSTA (arrived at 1:41 p.m.)  
Harriet Crozier – Commissioner, City of Largo  
Doreen Hock-DiPolito – Councilmember, City of Clearwater  
Jim Kennedy – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg Council  
Susan Latvala – Board of County Commissioners (arrived at 1:19 p.m.)  
Jim Ronecker – Mayor, City of Oldsmar representing Oldsmar/Safety Harbor/Tarpon Springs  
Ken Welch – Board of County Commissioners  
Ming Gao, non-voting advisory – (representing Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sarah Ward – MPO Interim Executive Director  
Al Bartolotta – Pinellas County MPO  
Gina Harvey – Pinellas County MPO  
David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office  
Becky Afonso – Citizens Advisory Committee Member  
Larry Roybal – Citizens Advisory Committee Member  
Lee Royal – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
Wilfred and Carolyn Sergeant – Citizens  
Sue Miller – Pinellas County MPO  
Heather Sobush – Pinellas County MPO  
Chelsea Favero – Pinellas County MPO  
Dave Talhouk – Pinellas County Department of Environment and Infrastructure  
Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park  
David M. Chase – City of Pinellas Park  
Joe Kubicki – City of St. Petersburg  
Tom Whalen – City of St. Petersburg  
Leland Dicus – City of Largo  
Bill Jonson – Clearwater Councilman and PSTA representative  
Brad Miller – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)  
Cassandra Borchers – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)  
Smith Howard – Citizen  
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

**II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Mayor Jim Ronecker performed the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

\*\*Commissioner Seel arrived at 1:03 p.m.\*\*

III. **PRESENTATION OF PLAQUES TO OUTGOING MPO MEMBERS JIM RONECKER AND NEIL BRICKFIELD AND OUTGOING CAC MEMBER WILFRED SERGEANT**

The MPO presented a plaque to outgoing MPO member Jim Ronecker and outgoing Citizens Advisory Committee member Wilfred Sergeant. Each said a few words. Neil Brickfield could not be in attendance.

IV. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

There were no citizens who came forward to speak.

V. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of November 14 , 2012
- B. Election of Officers for 2013
- C. Approval of Invoices – Tindale-Oliver and Associates
- D. Approval of Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom 2012 Subgrantee Agreements
- E. Approval of FDOT as Section 5310 Designated Recipient
- F. Approval of Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Amendment
- G. Approval of Committee Appointments (including MPOAC and BAC)

*Councilman Danner moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented (Vote 9-0), which includes the November 14, 2012 MPO meeting minutes; election of officers for 2013:*

- Karen Seel as Chairman
- Jeff Danner as Vice Chairman
- Harriet Crozier as Secretary/Treasurer;

*invoices from Tindale-Oliver and Associates; JARC and New Freedom subgrantee agreements; FDOT as the Section 53410 designated recipient; and appointment of Jeff Danner as the representative and Karen Seel as the alternate for the MPOAC and appointment of Brian Smith as an At Large representative on the Bicycle Advisory Committee.*

VI. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

A. **Proposed Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Ward indicated there were a modified write-up and modified map in the members' folders.

Brian Beaty, FDOT, reviewed the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment that would lower the funding amount for the design phase from \$479,078 to \$153,163 and move up the design phase to the current fiscal year for the Treasure Island Causeway/Pinellas Trail Connection from Treasure Lane to the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail. This trail project links the Treasure Island Trail to the existing Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail. The funding source for the design phase of this project is from Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) Transportation Alternatives Program.

**\*\*Commissioner Latvala arrived at 1:19 p.m.\*\***

Upon call for public comment, no one came forward to speak.

Following discussion, *Mayor Bradbury moved, Councilman Kennedy seconded, and motion carried to approve the TIP amendment by roll call vote (Vote 10-0).*

VII. **ACTION ITEMS**

A. **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) FY 2013/14 – 2017/18 Five Year Draft Tentative Work Program**

Brian Beaty, FDOT, highlighted the changes to the updated cycle of the FDOT Five Year Draft Tentative Work Program via a PowerPoint. The federal bill, Moving Ahead with the Progress for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21), was passed; therefore, there were some impacts to the program. One major change is that FDOT will no longer prioritize projects from the Safe Routes to School

Program; instead, the MPO will prioritize these projects under the Transportation Alternatives Program, with input from FDOT.

\*\*Commissioner Welch left at 1:27 p.m.\*\*

\*\*Commissioner Welch returned at 1:29 p.m.\*\*

The capacity projects include the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street North extension from C.R. 296 (118<sup>th</sup> Avenue) to 40<sup>th</sup> Street – construction advanced to FY 2014 from FY 2016; S.R. 688 (Ulmerton Road) from 49<sup>th</sup> Street to 38<sup>th</sup> Street North – construction advanced to FY 2015 from FY 2016; and S.R. 694 (Gandy Boulevard) from U.S. 19 to I-275 – Preliminary Engineering advanced in FY 2014 and added right-of-way in FY 2016/2017.

There was discussion regarding the S.R. 688 (Ulmerton Road) project to clarify that the project includes six lanes and removing the overpass. The Advanced Traffic Management System and Intelligent Transportation System include \$32.5 million worth of projects; \$69.2 million for 23 resurfacing projects, with Florida having the best maintained roads in the Country. Some of the roads that were projected to be resurfaced did not need resurfacing at this time; therefore, FDOT was able to redirect some funds for additional capacity projects.

In response to Commissioner Welch, Mr. Beaty responded that the Tallahassee Office performs a pavement rating annually on State Roads. **Commissioner Welch asked for a copy of the road resurfacing rating.**

Mr. Beaty continued, noting \$13.6 million for transportation alternative projects; \$34.2 million for aviation; \$.1 million for seaports; and \$112.6 million for transit. The public hearing will be held tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. at the FDOT District VII Office and a webinar will be held at the satellite locations at the MPO offices located in District VII. The hearing will be recorded so that it can be replayed. The next step is an executive review by the Central Office in Tallahassee, a statewide public hearing will be held March 4, 2013, and then an adopted Work Program by the Governor on July 1, 2013.

**Commissioner Seel requested an electronic copy of the PowerPoint.**

Ms. Ward added the Work Program is before the MPO for endorsement and comment.

***Councilmember Hock-DiPolito moved and Councilman Kennedy seconded a motion to approve the FDOT Tentative Work Program.***

There was additional discussion regarding the removal of the Ulmerton Road overpass. Upon query by Commissioner Seel regarding the traffic signal at 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Mr. Gao responded there is a concern with that traffic signal which is why FDOT is constructing 43<sup>rd</sup> Street to help with the traffic circulation and emergency responders.

Upon further query by Commissioner Seel regarding Gandy Boulevard, Mr. Gao responded the conceptual plans are for a limited controlled access with an overpass at Grand.

**Commissioner Seel asked that a map be included when the Work Program goes through final adoption. She also requested an update on the Roosevelt Boulevard Connector master project, including the stages.** Mr. Gao responded he would provide an update and a map.

Councilmember Hock-DiPolito had additional questions regarding the overpass proposal for Gandy Boulevard at Grand and asked if there were any plans available. **Mr. Gao responded he would bring back the concept since the design has been programmed.**

Following discussion, ***the motion passed (Vote 10-0).***

**B. Safety Improvements Along Gandy Boulevard (Bicycle and Technical Committee Recommendations)**

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments, noting this is a recommendation from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) regarding a bicycle lane that had been installed on the south side of Gandy Boulevard.

\*\*Commissioner Bujalski arrived at 1:41 p.m.\*\*

Mr. Bartolotta stated the BAC reviewed this at their last meeting and noted FDOT had installed a bicycle lane on the south side between the outside through lane and the turn lane except on one section where there was not adequate right-of-way. Where there was not adequate right-of-way, FDOT installed the bicycle lane on the outside of the shoulder and included Qwik Curb and bollard application. The BAC was concerned this application caused an obstruction for the bicyclists and recommended colorized lane at conflict points and “yield to bicyclists” signage.

***Councilman Kennedy moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to approve the recommendation (Vote 11-0).***

**C. Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project – Follow-up From November Meeting**

Ms. Ward indicated the MPO reviewed the updated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at their November meeting and that document included the county and municipal Capital Improvement Programs (CIP). In reviewing the document, the MPO had questions regarding the Dunedin Causeway Project and took action to approve the updated TIP with the exclusion of the Dunedin Causeway Project to allow for additional information. Staff provided follow-up information and included that information in the agenda packet. The final version of the county’s CIP that the MPO reviewed in November includes a replacement study scheduled for FY 2015/16 and no repair work. The replacement study was originally scheduled for FY 2016/17; therefore, the schedule is moved forward a year to FY 2015/16. The MPO staff is requesting the MPO approve the Dunedin Causeway Project to be included in the updated TIP so the document can be published.

Commissioner Bujalski noted her concern is that the bridge is considered functionally obsolete and requested Dunedin be given an opportunity for input at the appropriate time.

***Commissioner Bujalski moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to approve the Dunedin Causeway Project for inclusion in the updated TIP (Vote 11-0).***

**D. Citizens Advisory Committee Motion Regarding Banning Texting While Driving**

Ms. Ward indicated that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) raised the topic of texting while driving at their last meeting. They recognize the Legislature will be in session; therefore, the CAC voted to send a follow-up recommendation to the MPO reiterating its concerns about texting while driving. They noted the Legislature has failed to pass laws against texting in prior years and feels it is important as the new legislative session begins to go on record supporting such legislation. The MPO has previously taken action to send a letter to the Legislature requesting they ban texting while driving. The CAC noted that there are new members on the Delegation and that it would be good to re-iterate this position; therefore, the CAC encourages the MPO to send a follow-up letter to the 2013 Florida Legislature urging them to pass legislation that bans texting while driving.

***Commissioner Welch moved and Commissioner Bujalski seconded a motion to approve the CAC recommendation.*** Commissioner Welch noted distracted driving in total is a concern.

There was discussion regarding the inclusion of other distractions that should be banned and the CAC wanted to focus on texting but recognized there are other distractions as well. Ms. Ward indicated the MPO’s previous letter included other distractions as well. It was requested that staff reference the prior letter when forwarding the concern to the Legislature.

*The maker and seconder of the motion were okay with referencing the prior letter and the motion carried (Vote 11-0).*

**E. Authorization for Additional Cost for Pinellas/Pasco Trail Study**

Ms. Ward indicated that she requested the MPO's approval in September to work with the Pasco County MPO on a joint effort to look at alignment options to connect the Pinellas Trail from Keystone Road to Brooker Creek and from Brooker Creek to the Starkey Wilderness Park. Since a Scope of Service was not available at the time, MPO staff estimated the cost that would be split with the Pasco MPO, which was estimated to be \$35,000. This cost was based on previous studies the MPO had done. This effort will include some environmental lands as well as additional community engagement; therefore, the cost estimate is \$60,000. Pasco County recently approved the "Penny for Pasco" and this project is included in that funding source. The Pinellas MPO has funds in the Unified Planning Work Program under the bicycle and pedestrian planning task.

*Commissioner Seel moved, Commissioner Bujalski seconded, and motion carried to approve the additional cost estimate (Vote 11-0).*

**VIII. PRESENTATION ITEMS**

**A. Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Update – Crash Report**

Ms. Ward provided lead-in remarks noting staff is working with one of the General Planning Consultants to update the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. A presentation to summarize the technical memo that analyzes the crash data, as well as recommended countermeasures will be provided by the consultant.

Theo Petridge, Sprinkle Consulting – subconsultant to URS, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, where crashes were analyzed including statistical analysis and contributing factors and then the countermeasures on a corridor-by-corridor basis. This document was reviewed by the advisory committees.

**\*\*During the presentation, Commissioner Latvala left at 2:20 p.m.\*\***

**Councilmember Hock-DiPolito requested a copy of the PowerPoint.**

There was discussion regarding the presentation, including the use of overpasses versus underpasses for pedestrians, use of porkchop islands, walls or barriers in front of neighborhoods that block visibility, use of long form or short form crash reports, comparative data between Pinellas County and other communities, and general study of Court and Chestnut Streets.

*Commissioner Seel moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to approve the report (Vote 10-0).*

**B. Public Involvement Plan for the Long Range Transportation Plan**

Mr. Bartolotta reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the status of the public involvement efforts and initial responses and results received to date.

There was some general discussion regarding the "Tell Us Pinellas" mindmixer, Twitter, and web site to engage the public for interactive discussions.

*Commissioner Welch moved, Councilmember Hock-DiPolito seconded, and motion carried for approval (Vote 10-0).*

**C. Urban Area Boundary Adjustment**

Mr. Bartolotta indicated that urban area boundary adjustments are required every ten years following the Decennial Census. The urban area is used to tabulate population and

socioeconomic data. Since Pinellas County’s growth has remained stable, staff expects there will only be minor changes to the boundary.

Ms. Ward added that action is not required at this time, although the MPO staff has been working with its partner agencies for review and comment. At some point, the MPO chairman will be asked to sign the final Urban Area Boundary Map.

**IX. REPORTS/UPDATE**

**A. FDOT Re-Evaluation of Warrants for Traffic Signal at Eckerd College Entrance – Follow-up From November Meeting**

Ms. Ward reported that the response from FDOT is that the study for a traffic signal is still underway and they have nothing significant to report at this time. FDOT will come before the MPO when they have something to report.

**B. FDOT Response on Madonna Pedestrian Improvements – Follow-up From November Meeting**

Ms. Ward reported that FDOT is looking at the recommendation regarding the intersection of Madonna Boulevard and the Pinellas Bayway in Tierra Verde. FDOT will send a response when available.

**C. Advisory Committee for Pinellas Transportation Report**

Ms. Ward indicated the Alternatives Analysis summary report is included in the members’ folders. PSTA staff met with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) staff in November and distributed the report. PSTA has received positive feedback from FTA. The Alternatives Analysis has received several awards over the last several months being recognized for the partnership of the MPO, PSTA, TBARTA, and FDOT.

Commissioner Crozier, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Pinellas Transportation (ACPT), indicated that part of the discussion concerned the future of the Committee. PSTA presented a “laundry list of due diligence” to prepare for PSTA for a funding initiative and they unanimously agreed to do the due diligence process since there are already several agencies on the ACPT. They will be providing regular updates to the MPO. The Sierra Club was in attendance at that meeting and they rate the Alternatives Analysis as one of the top 50 best practices.

**D. Legislative Report**

Ms. Ward noted there is nothing new on legislative matters.

**E. PSTA Activities Report**

Cassandra Borchers, PSTA, indicated the ridership report for last year shows there were 14.1 million rides, which is up 900,000 from the prior year; farebox recovery is up to 27%; 1.3 million rides in October; record rides in November; the North County Connector service started Monday and rides are free during the month of December and passengers can call 727-540-1900 to reserve a ride; a referendum has been discussed for 2014; the next meeting of the HART and PSTA regarding the coordination study is scheduled for January 14 and they will discuss how to move that project forward with the report going to the State Legislature in February; PSTA will hold a workshop on the bus plan on January 9 and a stakeholders meeting on January 10 and will have significant public engagement on the Plan.

Councilmember Hock-DiPolito thanked PSTA for working with the City of Clearwater to provide a bus route to the Farmers Market that will begin in January on Saturdays. She complimented PSTA on the commercial for the north county commuter service.

**X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Correspondence**

Ms. Ward noted the letter to the MPO Chairman regarding the upcoming certification of the MPOs by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration that will

see how we carry out transportation planning in this area and will include a regional component looking at Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco Counties since they are part of the same Transportation Management Area. The MPO had previously requested the Pinellas MPO meet with the Hillsborough and Pasco MPOs. Staff contacted staff for the other two MPOs and they requested to wait until after the elections. They are looking at setting up a meeting later in February. She will work with in-coming Chairman Seel on setting up this meeting.

**B. Other**

Commissioner Welch commented that it was an honor to work with Mayor Ronecker and wished him well.

Ms. Ward reminded everyone they are invited to attend an informal reception by the Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) at the MPO/PPC office across the street.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

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Karen Seel, Chairman