

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES – MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2013**

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, January 9, 2013 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Seel– *Chairman* – Board of County Commissioners
Jeff Danner – *Vice Chairman* – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg
Sandra Bradbury – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park
Julie Bujalski – Commissioner, City of Dunedin, representing PSTA
David Eggers – Mayor, City of Dunedin
Doreen Hock-DiPolito – Councilmember, City of Clearwater
Jim Kennedy – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg
David Archie – Mayor, City of Tarpon Springs representing Tarpon Springs/Oldsmar/Safety Harbor
Ken Welch – Board of County Commissioners
Debbie Hunt, non-voting advisory – (representing Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Harriet Crozier – *Secretary/Treasurer* – Commissioner, City of Largo
Charlie Justice – Board of County Commissioners

OTHERS PRESENT

Sarah Ward – MPO Interim Executive Director
Al Bartolotta – Pinellas County MPO
David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office
Ming Gao – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Heather Sobush – Pinellas County MPO
Alicia Parinello – Pinellas County MPO
Rick MacAulay – 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
Ed Mierzejewski – Gannett Fleming
Joe Calabrese – Cleveland Healthline RTA
Dennis Hinebaugh – CUTR
Brad Miller – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
Neil Brickfield – outgoing MPO member
Smith Howard – Citizen
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Seel called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

****Everyone on the dais introduced themselves at this time****

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilmember Hock-DiPolito performed the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. **PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE TO OUTGOING MPO MEMBER NEIL BRICKFIELD**

The MPO presented a plaque to outgoing MPO member Neil Brickfield for his service on the MPO.

IV. **WELCOME NEW MPO MEMBERS, COUNTY COMMISSIONER CHARLIE JUSTICE AND TARPON SPRINGS MAYOR DAVID ARCHIE (representing Tarpon Springs/Safety Harbor/Oldsmar)**

The MPO welcomed Mayor David Archie, who is representing the cities of Tarpon Springs, Oldsmar, and Safety Harbor. It was noted that Commissioner Charlie Justice could not be in attendance at this meeting.

V. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

There were no citizens who came forward to speak.

VI. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. **Approval of Minutes – Meeting of December 12 , 2012**
- B. **Approval of Invoices**
 - 1. **CliftonLarsonAllen (MPO Auditors)**
 - 2. **Laughlin & Associates, Inc. (Auditor Consultant)**
- C. **Approval of Amendment 3 to HART's JARC and New Freedom Agreement**
- D. **Approval of TBARTA Request for Local Funds**
- E. **Approval of Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program**
- F. **Approval of Fiscal Year 2011 New Freedom Program of Projects Amendment**

Ms. Ward stated there were two additional invoices in the folders: an invoice from CliftonLarsonAllen for auditing services and an invoice from the Pinellas Planning Council for shared use of the copier.

Councilman Danner moved, Councilmember Hock-DiPolito seconded, and motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented (Vote 9-0).

VII. **ACTION ITEMS**

A. **City of Oldsmar Request for Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program Funding for Phase II of the Oldsmar Trail**

Ms. Ward reviewed the City of Oldsmar's request for an additional \$151,818 of Transportation Alternatives funds for Phase II of the Oldsmar Trail. The lowest bid came in higher than Oldsmar initially estimated. FDOT indicated this would not impact other projects.

Councilman Danner moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to approve the City of Oldsmar's request for additional funding (Vote 9-0).

VIII. **PRESENTATION ITEMS**

A. **Presentation on the Cleveland Healthline Bus Rapid Transit System**

Ms. Ward provided introductory remarks and then introduced Joe Calabrese, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of the Cleveland Rapid Transit Authority. Mr. Calabrese reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Cleveland Healthline Bus Rapid Transit system.

An in depth general discussion followed about how such a system could work in Pinellas County.

The MPO members requested a copy of the PowerPoint and newspaper articles.

B. **Focus Groups for the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan**

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments and then introduced Ben Kelly of the Kenney Group, consultant under contract with the LRTP consultant team to facilitate focus groups. Mr. Kelly reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the focus group findings. A summary of the findings include: 1) range of transportation problems with a range of solutions; 2) multi-modal

improvements center on core themes (providing mobility options and safety); and 3) some clarity on funding source, in conceptual terms, without specifics on uses (a sales tax is preferred over property tax or gas tax). focus group participants felt that any new funding source should be broad-based and that such funding should be for multiple improvements and modes. Further there should be clear plans and expectations on improvements and accountability is key.

Some general discussion followed.

Commissioner Bujalski asked that a copy of the PowerPoint be provided to Brad Miller of PSTA so it can be provided to the PSTA members.

C. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Update Planning Assumptions Technical Memorandum

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments. Mr. Bartolotta reviewed a PowerPoint presentation. MPO staff conducted interviews with the local governments to gauge the transportation issues most important to their communities and the necessary improvements to achieve their future vision. The Technical Memorandum documents the Planning Assumptions and provides an overview of the agency interviews and surveys and covers public transportation, revenue projections, bicycle and pedestrian travel, socioeconomic data, and constrained road corridors and basic assumptions for the development of the LRTP.

IX. REPORTS/UPDATE

A. Committee Vacancies

Chairman Seel reviewed the various committee vacancies. She noted several citizens interested in serving on the Citizens Advisory Committee will be attending their next meeting. She encouraged the members to fill the vacancies.

B. Legislative Report

Ms. Ward noted the legislative session begins in early March and some of the committees have begun to meet. There will be more information once the session starts. Ms. Ward mentioned discussion during the PSTA legislative committee meeting yesterday regarding cell phone usage as it relates to transit operators and the fact that cell phones are used as business processes for some of the service providers.

C. PSTA Activities Report

Brad Miller, PSTA, clarified that PSTA has a policy that bus operators cannot use cell phones, including paratransit operators. Drivers are not allowed to have a cell phone at all and this is a firing offense. The discussion yesterday was that potential legislation could be interpreted broadly to include a ban on mobile data terminal that cabs, vans, etc., use that lets them know which passengers to pick up next. He appreciated Mr. Calibrese's presentation and noted he is interested in the comments regarding franchise fees. There was discussion earlier today at PSTA regarding the deadline for submitting a report to the Legislature by February 1 regarding the potential benefits of merging PSTA and HART. The HART Board recently passed a resolution changing their position regarding a resolution that both PSTA and HART had previously approved a month ago requesting the Legislature to fund a more detailed study. He will schedule a PSTA Board meeting to discuss HART's new position and arrange for another meeting with PSTA and HART. PSTA has been supportive of looking at the benefits of a formal consolidation with HART and is moving forward with the resolution to ask the Legislature to fund another study to move forward. Both boards are supportive of continued dialogue on collaborative projects. There was a PSTA workshop this morning with the consultants to discuss the Community Bus Plan currently underway that looks at the current bus network and how it could be changed to accommodate the future needs. This effort will tie into the long range planning effort currently underway by the MPO. The Community Bus Plan will be a major component for approaching the Board of County Commissioners regarding the establishment of a date for a transit surtax referendum. Setting a target date of November 2014 for the referendum will provide a focal point for the ongoing discussions regarding transit. The Advisory

Committee for Pinellas Transportation (ACPT) will meet on February 4 and will be discussing all modes of transportation, reviewing the entire transportation package and receive information regarding the Community Bus Plan. The North County Flex Service started December 10 and has had good ridership, especially the route that connects to Hillsborough County. December was the 14th month in a row for record ridership. He provided a brief summary of the flex routes and some potential changes. Two of the top productive bus routes are Route 60 across Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard in Clearwater and Route 78 from Clearwater to Dunedin to Clearwater Mall. They are getting close to a return of 50% farebox recovery rate. The U.S. 19 route has the highest ridership.

X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee Meeting of December 14, 2012

Ms. Ward noted a summary report was included in the agenda packet.

B. Correspondence

C. Other

Ming Gao, FDOT, provided an update regarding the Ulmerton Road and 118th Avenue Corridor and the Roosevelt Boulevard Connector. He provided maps for the corridor phasing plan. All Ulmerton Road phases will have funding by 2015 for six lanes. Regarding the Roosevelt Boulevard Connector, right-of-way has been completely funded. Several of the stages are underway and funding goes out to 2021 for some of the stages. Some discussion followed.

Chairman Seel indicated she would not be able to attend the January 24 MPOAC meeting in Orlando from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and asked the members to check their calendars and contact her if they can make it.

Councilmember Kennedy asked if there was an update regarding the evaluation of the signal at Eckerd College. Ms. Ward responded that FDOT indicated they are still analyzing the data but they have not made a final decision yet.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Karen Seel, Chairman