

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES – MEETING OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014**

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, November 12, 2014 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Karen Seel – *Chairman* – Board of County Commissioners
- David Archie – *Vice Chairman* – Mayor, City of Tarpon Springs representing Tarpon Springs/Oldsmar/Safety Harbor
- Harriet Crozier – *Secretary* – Commissioner, City of Largo
- John Morroni – *Treasurer* – Board of County Commissioners
- Doreen Hock-DiPolito – Vice Mayor, Councilmember, City of Clearwater (arrived at 2:26 p.m.)
- Julie Bujalski – Commissioner, City of Dunedin, representing PSTA
- Jim Kennedy – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg
- Cookie Kennedy – Commissioner, City of Indian Rocks Beach, representing the beach communities of Belleair Beach, Belleair Shore, Indian Rocks Beach, Indian Shores, Madeira Beach, North Redington Beach, Treasure Island, Redington Beach, Redington Shores, St. Pete Beach
- Wengay Newton – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg (arrived at 1:35 p.m.)
- Kevin Piccarreto – Commissioner, Town of Belleair, representing the in land communities of Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole, South Pasadena
- Ken Welch – Board of County Commissioners
- Lee Royal, non-voting advisory – (representing the Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7)

MEMBERS ABSENT

- Sandra Bradbury – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park

OTHERS PRESENT

- Sarah Ward – MPO Interim Executive Director
- Al Bartolotta – Pinellas County MPO
- David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office
- Chelsea Hardy – County Attorney's Office
- Lee Royal – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park
- Paul Bertels – City of Clearwater
- Evan Mory – City of St. Petersburg
- Tom Whalen – City of St. Petersburg
- Gina Harvey – Pinellas County DEI
- Heather Sobush – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
- Brad Miller – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
- Brian Smith – BPAC Chairman
- Vivian Peters – Citizen
- Bill Jonson – City of Clearwater
- Beverly Waldron – Pinellas County Human Resources Dept.
- Travis Arnt – St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce
- Fred Kiehl – Pinellas Patriots
- Hamilton Hansen – Resident
- Patrick Wheeler – Resident
- Tom Rask – Resident
- Pete Franko – South Pasadena Resident

Gisela Laubitz – South Pasadena Resident
Debbie Cobb – North Pinellas County Resident
Marcus Harrison – Palm Harbor Resident
Barb Hazelton – St. Petersburg Resident
Sarah Perch – Pinellas County MPO
Chelsea Favero – Pinellas County MPO
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karen Seel called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commissioner Welch performed the invocation and Commissioner Piccarreto led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. PRESENTATION TO SUSAN LATVALA FOR HER SERVICE AS A MEMBER AND CHAIRMAN ON THE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman Seel presented a plaque to outgoing County Commissioner Susan Latvala for her service as a member and Chairman of the School Transportation Safety Committee. Commissioner Latvala briefly described the accomplishments and coordination between the School Board and local governments while she served on that Committee. She thanked staff for their assistance with the Committee and asked that a County Commissioner consider being appointed as her replacement.

III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

The following citizens came forward to speak:

- Hamilton Hansen – supported voters' defeat of Greenlight Pinellas and commented on the movement against additional taxes occurring across the nation and stated that elected officials need to listen to voters
- Patrick Wheeler – supported voters' defeat of Greenlight Pinellas; agree Pinellas County needs transportation but should allow 120 days to determine the type of transportation needed; elected officials should listen to voters (Commissioner Welch corrected an incorrect statement Mr. Wheeler made about Commissioner Welch advocating for a penny tax after the referendum was defeated)
- Tom Rask – has an active public records request from the MPO; asked that the agenda makes it clear the items that are being voted on; 2040 LRTP doesn't include autonomous vehicles, shouldn't contain Greenlight Pinellas, and only include the no new revenue scenario
- Pete Franko of South Pasadena – Greenlight Pinellas parameters should be removed from all planning documents and should never have been included; should look at basic transportation and go from that point
- Gisela Laubitz of South Pasadena – Greenlight Pinellas should never have been included in the 2040 LRTP and needs to be removed; look at transportation needs; financial plan needs to be sustainable; need to determine how to serve residents of Pinellas County
- Debbie Cobb of Palm Harbor, Tarpon Springs, and Dunedin – Greenlight Pinellas should be removed from the 2040 LRTP; Pinellas County 96/97% built out; U.S. 19 deadlocked four times in the last six months; Alternate 19 is congested when there are problems on U.S. 19; need to take care of existing problems
- Marcus Harrison of Palm Harbor – Pinellas County doesn't have the culture for public transportation; need to promote and educate people on the use of public transportation; need park-and-ride lots and a staged and/or targeted approach for public transportation

- Barb Hazelton of St. Petersburg – the outcome of the referendum is now known and residents don't want rail or the highest sales tax; Greenlight Pinellas should be removed from the 2040 LRTP; work within the PSTA budget

****Councilman Wengay Newton arrived at 1:35 p.m.****

- Travis Arnt, Advocacy Manager for the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce – Chamber supports Greenlight Pinellas and encourages the MPO to not exclude mass transit from the 2040 LRTP; the 2040 LRTP should include all modes of transportation; Howard Frankland Bridge should include a mass transit option;
- Frank Kiehl of Largo – light rail isn't sustainable because it doesn't allow for changing demographics like a bus system; need to make the bus system more efficient utilizing smaller buses and eliminating unproductive routes; railroad tracks create a hazard for motorcycles and scooters.

Chairman Seel stated the MPO will not be voting on the 2040 LRTP at today's meeting. The 2040 LRTP will be advertised for public hearing and adoption at the December MPO meeting.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of October 8, 2014**
- B. Approval of Invoices**
 - 1. Tindale-Oliver and Associates**
 - 2. Cherry Bekaert (MPO Auditors)**
 - 3. Risk Allocation (Pinellas County – October and November)**
- C. Approval of Funds for MPOAC Legislative Advocacy Activities for FY 2014/15**
- D. Approval of Traffic Count Equipment Refurbishment**

Commissioner Welch moved, Commissioner Crozier seconded, and motion carried to approve Items the Consent Agenda (Vote 10-0).

Mr. Rask asked to be recognized to speak regarding the Consent Agenda. Chairman Seel responded that all citizen comments should be made during Citizens to be Heard or public hearing items; however, she allowed him to come forward.

Tom Rask requested the MPO oppose funding for MPOAC legislative advocacy at this time and to table it until the LRTP is adopted and the MPO has a better understanding of what the citizens want. Mr. Rask indicated they want to be part of the solution and that the No Tax for Trax Transportation Subcommittee is meeting on Monday.

None of the MPO members indicated their willingness to reconsider the motion in response to Chairman Seel; therefore, the motion and vote passed as noted above.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

A. Fall Update of the Fiscal Years 2014/15 Through 2018/19 Transportation Improvement Program

Al Bartolotta presented an overview of the Fall Update of the 2014/15 – 2018/19 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that included the County, municipal, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport, Port of St. Petersburg, Clearwater Airpark, and Albert Whitted Airport projects. Mr. Bartolotta highlighted road, intersection, and bridge improvements; and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and trail projects that were completed and those included in the work program. He reviewed the budget allocations for the County Work Program.

****Commissioner Morroni left at 1:39 p.m. and returned at 1:40 p.m.****

Commissioner Welch asked about the status of Hillsborough County on the Friendship Trail/Bridge demolition. Mr. Bartolotta responded he would confirm with Hillsborough County whether they have set aside their share of the funding.

Upon query by Commissioner Bujalski regarding the Dunedin Causeway, Mr. Bartolotta responded that the MPO and advisory committees will receive a presentation of the Project Development and Environmental Study at their December meetings. Commissioner Bujalski asked the MPO staff to send an email with the information. Commissioner Bujalski reported that the City has formed a committee to look at the Causeway improvements and assist the County. Mr. Bartolotta responded that he would coordinate with the Dunedin Causeway Project Manager.

Councilman Kennedy asked staff to show the percentages for the funding allocations outside the color graph. Mr. Bartolotta responded that he would make the changes and provide him information.

Upon call for public comment, no one came forward; therefore, the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Piccarreto moved, Councilman Newton seconded, and motion carried to approve the Fall Update of the FY 20/14-15 through 2018/19 TIP amendment by roll call vote (Vote 10-0).

VII. PRESENTATION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

A. 2013 Crash Data Report

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments. Chelsea Favero reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that provided a brief overview of the 2013 Crash Data Report that covered crash data collection, traffic crash statistics, and trends and analyses.

Upon query by Commissioner Cookie Kennedy, Ms. Favero responded she would look up the location of Gulf Boulevard and Gulf Winds Drive and provide that information to her.

Mayor Archie asked whether there were actual numbers associated with the percentages. Ms. Ward responded that the MPO received a copy of the actual report last month. Upon query by Commissioner Welch, Ms. Favero responded the report included 2012 data; however, they are refining the 2013 data and will present that information at a future MPO meeting. Councilman Newton commented on the lag time. Ms. Ward responded that the MPO staff began including an interim report a couple of months ago to present to the advisory committees to deal with the lag time. Ms. Ward indicated that staff will begin providing that interim report to the MPO. Ms. Favero added that MPO staff is updating the map every month with recent crash and fatality information countywide to help spot patterns early on.

Commissioner Bujalski indicated that the intersection of S.R. 580 (Skinner Boulevard) and the Pinellas Trail (Item #31 on the list) is still an issue with the City of Dunedin even with the improvements. Flashing lights have been installed at the intersection but it is a four-lane roadway and motorists don't stop for the Trail users when the lights are flashing. The motorists should be required to stop for the Trail users. She would like FDOT to re-examine this intersection.

Regarding crashes by age group, Chairman Seel asked whether the trend was the same as the previous years. Ms. Favero responded she would check on that information. Councilman Kennedy asked whether red light cameras were included. Ms. Favero responded not currently; however, they could look at it on a case-by-case analysis on an intersection that has a red light camera. Ms. Ward added that the MPO staff will request the information from the local jurisdictions that have red light cameras installed in order to have that data. Councilman Newton asked whether wrong way crashes could be included. Ms. Ward responded that staff would have to check and let them know. Ms. Ward noted the Citizens Advisory Committee had requested a presentation on wrong way drivers; therefore, MPO staff expects to have additional information regarding wrong way drivers.

B. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

1. Safety and Security Elements

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments. Chelsea Favero reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that provided a brief overview of the Safety and Security Elements of the LRTP. She noted the difference between safety and security is that safety is freedom from danger and security is freedom from manmade or natural disaster. She reviewed the emphasis areas, the 4 E's (engineering, education, enforcement, emergency), project safety checklist, resources that facilitate safe planning, special projects, and safety agency partners. She highlighted ways to protect transportation infrastructure, coordinating with partners, site specific focus areas, and analysis of threats and identification of critical transportation facilities.

Commissioner Morroni moved, Councilman Newton seconded, and motion carried to approve the Safety and Security Elements (Vote 10-0).

2. Regional Transportation Plans

Ms. Ward provided lead-in comments. Chelsea Favero reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of Pasco and Hillsborough MPOs Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP). Hillsborough MPO's LRTP includes two scenarios: Scenario 1 assumes existing revenues and existing spending patterns and Scenario 8a assumes a one cent sales tax. The Pasco MPO assumes a charter county surtax in 2025 and developer funded roads.

3. Transit Element

Ms. Ward noted, at their November 2013 meeting, the MPO endorsed the Greenlight Plan to be included in the MPO's LRTP for modeling purposes pending the outcome of the referendum. At their September 2014 meeting, the MPO endorsed the Cost Feasible Plan for transmittal to FDOT for preliminary review and to open the public comment period. The Greenlight Plan that was included in the LRTP included increased bus service and the light rail system connecting the major activity centers from downtown Clearwater to the Gateway Center and to downtown St. Petersburg. Based on the outcome of the referendum and discussions with PSTA, the MPO staff is now recommending the MPO include the no new revenue transit alternative in the Cost Feasible Plan for adoption by the MPO at their December meeting. The MPO staff has scheduled public meetings in the next couple of weeks to allow for additional public comment prior to the adoption of the Plan in December. Ms. Ward indicated that, in light of the referendum just occurring last week, PSTA has not yet developed documentation associated with the no new revenue transit alternative; however, they expect to have the documentation available sometime next week. The MPOs are required to include a long-term vision; therefore, Ms. Ward is also recommending that vision reflect the need for additional bus service in Pinellas County. There is still a need

for extended evening and weekend service and a connection to the regional activity centers from downtown Clearwater to the Gateway Center to downtown St. Petersburg and across the Bay to Hillsborough County using some form of premium transit. Ms. Ward added that she has had discussions with FDOT regarding the possibility of amending the 2040 LRTP sometime in 2015 to reflect any additional changes to the planned transit service. By law, MPOs are required to adopt the LRTP within five years of the adoption of their previous Plan; therefore, the MPO cannot delay the adoption of the LRTP since it was last adopted in December of 2009.

Chairman Seel requested that the documentation with no new revenue transit scenario and any other related information be placed on the MPO website and email the information to the MPO members and anyone else that is interested.

Upon query by Councilman Kennedy as to the policy relating to anticipated revenue sources, Ms. Ward responded that the MPOs can use any reasonably available revenue sources. FDOT and the federal agencies look at the track record for that community to see if they have had success with implementing revenue sources for transportation. With the Penny for Pinellas, Pinellas County has had the community's support in additional investments. If the MPO includes a revenue source that has not yet been implemented, the MPO is required to layout in the LRTP the steps that would be necessary for that revenue source to be put in place. Upon further query by Councilman Kennedy regarding timing, Ms. Ward responded the revenue source could be implemented anytime during the 2040 horizon year for the LRTP.

Commissioner Welch asked whether the no new revenue transit alternative included express bus service on FDOT's managed lanes and whether it included a fee for use of those lanes. Lee Royal, FDOT, responded that FDOT has a preliminary study underway looking at premium transit on the express lanes to determine ridership and various alternatives. This study is being coordinated with the MPOs and transit agencies and will engage the public.

Vice Mayor Hock-DiPolito arrived at 2:26 p.m.

Ms. Ward stated there are three public workshops being held prior to adoption of the LRTP in December and that information is posted on the MPO's website and will be emailed to anyone who's interested. Ms. Favero indicated the dates and locations for the meetings: next Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Sunshine Center in St. Petersburg; next Wednesday from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at the Harbor Hall in Palm Harbor, and December 4 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Planning Department Conference Room on the 1st floor of the MPO offices.

Chairman Seel summarized the discussion noting the no new revenue transit alternative will be included in the LRTP for adoption at a public hearing in December, the LRTP will include a long-term vision for transit, any amendments to the LRTP will include a public hearing process.

C. Nominating Committee Report

Chairman Seel indicated the Nominating Committee made up of herself, Commissioner Crozier, and Commissioner Piccarreto, along with Sarah Ward of MPO staff and Mike Crawford of PPC staff, met prior to the MPO meeting and is recommending the following slate of officers for 2015:

- Jim Kennedy as Chairman
- John Morroni as Vice Chairman
- Cookie Kennedy as Secretary
- Doreen Hock-DiPolito as Treasurer

Commissioner Welch moved, Commissioner Bujalski seconded, and motion carried to approve the slate of officers as recommended above for 2015 (Vote 11-0).

D. Committee Recommendations

- **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee – BPAC Memo Regarding Bayshore Trail Connection to Courtney Campbell Trail**

Ms. Ward reported the BPAC received a presentation from the City of Clearwater at its last meeting regarding the connection from the Clearwater Trail on Bayshore to the Courtney Campbell Causeway Trail. The City will fund some of the improvements to ensure a connection to the City's trail network once the Courtney Campbell Causeway Trail is complete and open in the spring of 2015. The BPAC would like a formal letter sent to Clearwater acknowledging their commitment to an aggressive schedule and use of local funds for this connection.

Brian Smith, BPAC Chairman, came forward to provide additional information. Mr. Smith indicated the Courtney Campbell Trail is being funded with state money and Clearwater is using local money to fund the connection to the Courtney Campbell Trail. The connection will go from the Ream Wilson Trail on the east side of Bayshore south to connect to the Courtney Campbell Trail. There is a proposal for the future to federally fund an overpass.

Vice Mayor Hock-DiPolito agreed the City is funding the connection and the overpass will use grant funding.

Vice Mayor Hock-DiPolito moved, Commissioner Bujalski seconded, and motion carried to approve the BPAC recommendation (Vote 11-0).

VIII. REPORTS/UPDATE

A. PSTA Activities Report

Brad Miller, PSTA, indicated PSTA has had record ridership days with November 3, 2014 having the second highest ridership. PSTA is developing a listening program to get input regarding the voter referendum. The PSTA Board will meet in December. They have discussed setting a workshop probably in January with a new Chairman. PSTA is working on the Transit Development Plan that is required to reflect the no new revenue transit scenario. FDOT has granted them an extension.

Commissioner Cookie Kennedy thanked Mr. Miller's for his commitment to the Greenlight Plan.

B. Director's Report

Ms. Ward reported that she has been attending meetings of the beach communities along with Commissioner Cookie Kennedy at her request. Treasure Island commented that they were appreciative of learning about what the MPO does and the fact that it was a televised meeting so the community could also learn about the MPO. Ms. Ward noted she is prepared to meet with the inland communities along with Commissioner Piccarreto if there is a desire.

Commissioner Cookie Kennedy noted she sent a letter to Senator Nelson on October 8 regarding the lack of funding and listed as many items as possible that needed funding. In addition, she talked to his legislative assistant, Ms. Anderson, in Tampa. Within two weeks, Senator Nelson assigned a case worker from his office in Orlando to look for any grant funding that might be available. Commissioner Kennedy received a letter from Senator Nelson dated October 23 and she gave Ms. Ward the letter to see whether there are any grants the MPO could take advantage of.

IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Stakeholder and Public Outreach Report

Chairman Seel noted information is included in the agenda packet.

B. Committee Vacancies

Chairman Seel noted the various vacancies on the committees and asked the members to help fill those vacancies.

C. Correspondence

The MPO received a letter from Carol Cook, the School Board Chairman, regarding their involvement in the MPO and PPC meetings and that Peggy O'Shea will attend the meetings.

D. Other

Chairman Seel thanked Commissioner Crozier for her service on the MPO and as Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Pinellas Transportation (ACPT). Commissioner Crozier thanked the MPO and PPC staffs for their work and effort.

Councilman Newton noted the City of St. Petersburg is revising their camera program and asked Evan Mory to come forward to provide an update. Evan Mory, City of St. Petersburg Transportation and Parking, reported the City is changing from a wireless system to a fiber optic system from camera to camera with the signal traveling to the City's headquarters via wireless to avoid ongoing costs. The City is going through the process of procurement and working with the County on installation and getting the necessary permit. The fiber optics will improve the detail and quality of the video. In addition, the City is looking at a higher mega pixel camera from three to five mega pixel.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Karen Seel, Chairman