

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MINUTES – MEETING OF MAY 13, 2015**

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, May 13, 2015 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jim Kennedy – *Chairman* – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg  
John Morroni – *Vice Chairman* – Board of County Commissioners  
Cookie Kennedy – *Secretary* – 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  
  
Sandra Bradbury – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park  
Julie Bujalski – Mayor, City of Dunedin, representing PSTA  
Dave Eggers – Board of County Commissioners  
Cliff Merz – Commissioner, City of Safety Harbor, representing Safety Harbor/Oldsmar/Tarpon Springs  
  
Kevin Piccarreto – Commissioner, Town of Belleair, representing the in land communities of Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole, South Pasadena  
  
Darden Rice – Councilmember, City of St. Petersburg  
Karen Seel – Board of County Commissioners  
Michael Smith – Commissioner, City of Largo  
John Tornga – Commissioner, City of Dunedin  
Lee Royal, non-voting advisory – (representing the Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Doreen Hock-DiPolito – *Treasurer* – Councilmember, City of Clearwater

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sarah Ward – MPO Interim Executive Director  
Al Bartolotta – Pinellas County MPO  
Rodney Chatman – Pinellas County MPO  
Chelsea Hardy – County Attorney's Office  
Brian Beaty – FDOT  
Brad Miller – PSTA  
Paul Bertels – City of Clearwater  
Evan Mory – City of St. Petersburg  
Cheryl Stacks – City of St. Petersburg  
Gina Harvey – Pinellas County DEI  
David Talhouk – Pinellas County DEI  
Nancy McKibben – Pinellas County DEI  
Brian Smith – BPAC Chairman  
Whit Blanton – Renaissance Planning Group  
Ray Chiaramonte – TBARTA  
Christina Caputo – TBARTA  
Vivian Peters – TRAC/CAC/LCB  
Marlin Register – HDR, Inc.  
Scott Blaisen – HDR, Inc.  
Ed Turanchik – Akerman LLP

Chelsea Favero – Pinellas County MPO  
Sarah Perch – Pinellas County MPO  
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Councilmember Darden Rice performed the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone on the dais introduced themselves.

**III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

There were no citizens who came forward to speak.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of April 8, 2015**

**B. Approval of Invoices**

**1. Tindale-Oliver and Associates**

**2. PSTA – Section 5305 – Invoice 2**

**3. Risk Allocation (Pinellas County – May)**

**C. Approval of MPO Certification Statement**

**D. Approval of Committee Appointments – Tammy Vrana as an At Large representative and reappointment of Neil McMullen as a Clearwater representative on CAC, Michael Hill as Veterans Services representative on the LCB, and Commissioner John Tornga as MPO Board representative on the Pinellas Trail Security Task Force**

*Commissioner Morroni moved, Mayor Bujalski seconded, and motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda (Vote 12-0).*

**V. PRESENTATION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Hillsborough County Ferry Study (Presentation)**

Ed Turanchik, Akerman LLP, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the ferry study commissioned by Hillsborough County. The Tampa Bay Passenger Ferry Project is a public/private partnership between Hillsborough County, HMS Ferries, Inc. and South Swell Development Group. The route would provide ferry service to MacDill Air Force Base. He described conceptual ferry service that could benefit Pinellas County but more studies would be needed. The St. Petersburg Master Plan includes a conceptual route for ferry service.

A very in depth general discussion followed regarding the presentation and the potential of ferry service for Pinellas County. The MPO directed staff to work with Mr. Turanchik to bring back additional information regarding potential ferry connections to Pinellas County's coastal communities. In addition, the MPO requested that consideration be given to how ferry service could fit into the overall transportation plan for Pinellas County, considering all aspects of transportation and potential impacts to other projects. The MPO asked Mr. Turanchik to work with the MPO staff, PSTA, the BIG-C, and other entities including beach hotels, as appropriate. Upon query by the MPO about MacDill employees who live in Pinellas County and other employment-related travel between Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Mr. Turanchik responded he did not have that type of origin and destination data. He explained that the MPOs and FDOT would be better sources since he only had data on Hillsborough County residents who commute to MacDill Air Force Base.

**B. San Martin Boulevard Over Riviera Bay Bridge Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study (Presentation)**

Marlin Register, HDR Consultant, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for San Martin Boulevard over Riviera Bay Project. His presentation included the location, history, objectives, limits and scope, their approach, public involvement and outreach, key issues, alignment and profile alternatives, North Bay Trail extension evaluation, and schedule that includes a public meeting on June 29.

Some general discussion followed.

**\*\*During discussion, Commissioner Piccarreto left at 2:00 and returned at 2:02 p.m.\*\***

Councilmember Rice indicated she would provide Mr. Register a copy of information regarding sea level rise that should be taken into consideration. Mayor Bradbury wanted to ensure the community was aware of the potential impacts associated with the higher level bridge options. The MPO asked the consultant to consider the width of the bridge to allow for better tidal flow. The MPO requested they be apprised of changes to the scheduled public meeting date, tentatively scheduled for June 29.

**\*\*Commissioner Eggers left at 2:10 p.m.\*\***

There was some concern as to the design and posted speed limits. Mr. Register responded the design speed doesn't dictate the posted speed limit. They use the engineering standards to design the project but the posted speed limit would be coordinated between the City of St. Petersburg and the County. Regarding Chairman Kennedy's question regarding the County's TIGER grant application, Ms. Ward responded that the County is using the funds for this project as a match since the TIGER grant requires a local match.

**C. TBARTA Master Plan Update (Presentation)**

Ray Chiaramonte, TBARTA Executive Director, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the TBARTA Master Plan Update that provided some background information, organization of the plan, coordination with the MPO Staff Directors, stakeholder and community outreach, schedule, an overview of the Plan, and a summary of the priorities.

**\*\*During the presentation, Commissioner Tornga left at 2:18 and returned at 2:26 p.m.\*\***

Mayor Bujalski asked that the request for inclusion of express lanes in St. Petersburg be included in the feedback. Mr. Chiaramonte responded that segment would be included in future priorities since the number of vehicles doesn't warrant it for the first phase. FDOT is looking at the possibility of reconfiguring the lanes since there is a lot of lane shifting in that area. The MPO expressed their desire that Mr. Chiaramonte bring to the TBARTA Board the desire for express lanes on I-275 into downtown St. Petersburg. Mr. Chiaramonte indicated this could be brought forward at the Chairs Coordinating Committee public hearing at their meeting on Friday.

In response to Commissioner Merz's question about the Gateway Express Project, Ms. Royal, FDOT, indicated she would provide a graphic and then provided brief information. She noted there is an upcoming public workshop on the project and that she would provide the date to the MPO members. Ms. Ward agreed to provide a link to the video.

\*\*Commissioner Morroni left at 2:37 p.m.\*\*

**D. Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) Grant Agreement (Action)**

Rodney Chatman, MPO staff, reviewed a brief PowerPoint that provided information on the Partnerships to Improve Community Health Grant Agreement. He explained the purpose, the context, project locations and scope, and timeline.

***Commissioner Seel moved, Councilmember Rice seconded, and motion carried to approve the Partnerships to Improve Community Health Grant Agreement (Vote 10-0).***

**E. Support of TIGER VII Grant Applications (Action)**

**1. Pinellas County Trail (Duke Energy) Loop Completion**

Ms. Ward briefly described the TIGER VII grant application to complete the Pinellas Trail loop, which is the eastern portion. The MPO is a joint applicant with Pinellas County.

\*\*Commissioner Morroni returned at 2:43 p.m.\*\*

***Commissioner Seel moved, Commissioner Morroni seconded, and motion carried to support the Pinellas County Trail (Duke Energy) Loop Completion TIGER VII grant application (Vote 11-0).***

**2. HART – Regional Fare Collection**

Ms. Ward explained that the MPO was asked to approve a letter of support for the HART Regional Fare Collection TIGER VII grant application.

There was an in depth discussion about whether supporting the regional fare collection grant application would impact the chances to receive TIGER VII grant funding for the Pinellas County Trail (Duke Energy) loop completion. It was noted that the Pinellas Trail loop application received a “highly recommended” last time and the MPO felt it had a good chance of being approved this year.

Brad Miller, PSTA, came forward and noted that PSTA discussed the regional fare collection grant at length and it was felt HART should apply so it didn’t conflict with the Pinellas Trail loop completion application.

Councilmember Rice indicated she would like more information regarding the requirements of the TIGER grant so she had a clear understanding of the parameters. Ms. Ward responded she would forward the “Notice of Funding Availability”.

Chairman Kennedy noted that a date is being set to meet with U.S. DOT staff in Washington, D.C. Ms. Ward noted the County sent information regarding the date to Chairman Kennedy and Commissioner Hock-DiPolito yesterday.

The MPO voiced their support but did not take action to approve a letter of support for the TIGER application for the HART regional fare collection. The MPO noted that regional fare collection system is a good project but, in light of the fact that the Trail Loop received a highly recommended rating during the last TIGER grant submittal, the MPO felt it should put its support behind that project only.

**F. Transportation Alternatives Program – Project Ranking Criteria and Completion of Current Applications (Follow-Up and Action)**

Ms. Ward reported the Technical Coordinating Committee established a subcommittee to review the project ranking criteria and the completion of current applications. The subcommittee recently met and recommended the MPO approve setting a May 31 deadline for completion of outstanding TA Program applications, allow additional time for jurisdictions to continue to work with FDOT in good faith to provide the required documentation; rank the 2014 TA Program applications when the next group of applications are reviewed and evaluated by the MPO advisory committees (none of the 2014 projects shall be ranked ahead of those with applications submitted in prior years); and not to allow the substitution of TA Program priority projects by sponsoring jurisdictions for completion of the TA project applications.

***Mayor Bujalski moved, Councilmember Rice seconded, and motion carried to approve the TCC recommendations (Vote 11-0).***

**VI. REPORTS/UPDATE**

**A. Legislative Report**

Ms. Ward reported the legislative session will reconvene in June. MPO staff agreed to forward an email from Senator Nelson's office with a letter attached that supports bicycle and pedestrian projects as part of the Reauthorization Bill. The MPO requested the letter be included in the TIGER VII grant submittal package for the Pinellas Trail loop completion, if appropriate.

**B. PSTA Activities Report**

Brad Miller, PSTA CEO, indicated the PSTA revised the request to the MPO seeking Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

**C. Director's Report**

Ms. Ward reported the MPO staff is working on the earlier request by the MPO for data on traffic counts for Hillsborough and Pasco Counties and that the August MPO meeting will be cancelled.

Chairman Kennedy announced the MPO Board workshop is scheduled for Monday, September 21, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon with the new Executive Director

**VII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Committee Vacancies**

There are vacancies on the Citizens and Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committees. Please let staff know if anyone is interested in serving.

**B. Correspondence**

The fatalities map is included in the agenda packet.

**C. Other**

Go Bolts!

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

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Jim Kennedy, Chairman