

PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MINUTES – MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 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, November 18, 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
Doreen Hock-DiPolito – *Treasurer* – Councilmember, City of Clearwater
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
Cliff Merz – Commissioner, City of Safety Harbor, representing Safety Harbor/Oldsmar/Tarpon Springs

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
Ming Gao, non-voting advisory – (representing the Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Julie Bujalski – Mayor, City of Dunedin, representing PSTA
Dave Eggers – Board of County Commissioners
Kevin Piccarreto – Deputy Mayor, Town of Belleair, representing the in land communities of Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole, South Pasadena

OTHERS PRESENT

Whit Blanton – MPO Executive Director
Sarah Ward – Pinellas County MPO
Al Bartolotta – Pinellas County MPO
Rodney Chatman – Pinellas County MPO
Chelsea Hardy – County Attorney's Office
Brian Beaty – FDOT
Ed McKinney – FDOT
Brad Miller – PSTA
Cassandra Borchers – PSTA
Ray Chiaramonte – TBARTA
Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park
Patrick Murphy – City of Pinellas Park
Tom Whalen – City of St. Petersburg
Alan Petrillo – City of St. Petersburg
Deborah Lekenta – Neighborly Care Network
Gina Harvey – Pinellas County Public Works, Transportation
Sarah Perch – Pinellas County MPO
Chelsea Favero – Pinellas County MPO
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commissioner Tornga 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 be heard.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **Approval of Minutes – Meeting of October 14, 2015**
- B. **Approval of Agreement With TBARTA for CCC Services (Amendment No 3)**
- C. **Approval of Committee Appointments – Anthony Matonti as the TBARTA representative with alternates of Michael Case and Ramond Chiaramonte, Spencer Curtis as the County Parks and Conservation Resources alternate on the BPAC, Anthony Matonti as the TBARTA representative with alternates of Michael Case and Ramond Chiaramonte, and Michael Schoderbock as the Safety Harbor representative with an alternate of Marcie Stenmark on the TCC**

Commissioner Seel moved, Commissioner Morroni seconded, and motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda (Vote 10-0).

V. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

A. Proposed Amendments to the FY 2015/16 – 2019/20 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Blanton provided a brief description of the four TIP amendments: a bus and bus facilities Section 5339 Program for Pasco County Public Transportation, Dunedin Causeway Bridge replacement study, San Martin Bridge replacement study, and Courtney Campbell Trail pedestrian overpass feasibility study.

Upon call for public comment, no one came forward. Chairman Kennedy closed the public hearing.

Mayor Bradbury moved, Commissioner Seel seconded, and motion carried to approve the TIP amendments by roll call vote (Vote 10-0).

B. Fall Update of the FY 2015/16 Through 2019/20 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Bartolotta presented an overview of the fall update of the FY 2015/16 through 2019/20 TIP that includes the recently-adopted municipal and Pinellas County Work Programs.

Upon call for public comment, no one came forward. Chairman Kennedy closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Kennedy moved, Councilmember Hock-DiPolito seconded, and motion carried to approve the fall update to the TIP by roll call vote (Vote 10-0).

VI. PRESENTATION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

A. I-275 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study – Update

Ming Gao, FDOT, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the PD&E study area, the project purpose, the need for the project, lane continuity improvements, the proposed typical section for each of the three segments, the Tampa Bay Express Master Plan, interchange safety and operational improvements, public hearing and comments received, and project schedule. The purpose of the project is intended to improve existing operational deficiencies on I-275, develop a solution to address present and future traffic congestion, maintain mobility for freight and goods movement along a regionally-significant transportation corridor, satisfy National Environment Policy Act of 1969 and other

applicable policies/regulations/procedures, and obtain local community input and participation in the process.

There was some general discussion regarding noise walls, citizen comments regarding potential impacts to their property (Tampa Heights Neighborhood), and managed toll lane to be included on the Howard Frankland Bridge. Regarding the possibility of allowing buses to use the shoulder, there is an issue with the width of the shoulder in some areas so FDOT is doing an assessment as to where the shoulder would need to be widened. FDOT will bring back information once they have developed a viable solution.

B. FDOT Tentative Work Program – Comment and Action

Brian Beaty, FDOT, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the FDOT Five-Year Tentative Work Program for Fiscal Years 2017 thru 2021 that included the program development and strategies, project phases, Pinellas County Projects (corridor studies, capacity, resurfacing, Transportation Alternatives, safety, and ITS/ATMS projects).

Following FDOT's presentation, the board members asked for information regarding the Tierra Verde bridge design-build project, interim safety options for U.S. 19 at Tampa Road to help alleviate crashes, and completion date for the Ulmerton Road improvements.

Commissioner Kennedy moved, Councilmember Hock-DiPolito seconded, and motion carried to approve the FDOT Tentative Work Program (Vote 10-0).

C. PSTA – Update

In Mayor Bujalski's absence, Councilmember Rice provided a brief update on PSTA activities:

- PSTA set an all-time annual ridership record last year;
- PSTA submitted a Lo-No emissions grant application and PSTA is requesting a letter of support from the MPO;
- PSTA is seeking Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Start grant funding as the first step to be eligible for federal participation in the capital costs for the project. The project cost is \$16 million, with \$8 million from the FTA, \$4 million from the State, and \$4 million from PSTA. PSTA is requesting a letter of support from the MPO;
- Downtown St. Petersburg service changes will begin February 14, 2016 where downtown St. Petersburg will move toward a high frequency grid system and more bus operations from around Williams Park;
- PSTA will host the next Transportation Management Area Leadership Group meeting on December 11 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss a trip to Tallahassee early next year during the legislative session;
- PSTA will host a joint meeting of the PSTA and MPO Boards in early 2016; and
- Whit Blanton attended the recent PSTA Legislative Committee meeting.

During Councilmember Rice's presentation, Commissioner Morroni left at 2:01 p.m.

Chairman Kennedy congratulated Councilmember Rice for being nominated as PSTA Chairman. Councilmember Rice noted election of officers will be on the next PSTA agenda.

Commissioner Kennedy asked whether it would be beneficial to have letters of support from other entities, such as the BIG-C. Councilmember Rice responded yes and that she would have PSTA staff contact her. It was also suggested that PSTA should make a presentation to the Mayors at their next meeting.

D. Letters of Support for PSTA – Action

Brad Miller, PSTA, briefly described the two projects for which PSTA is seeking MPO letters of support: PSTA's Lo-No grant application and the Central Avenue BRT request to the Federal Transit Administration to enter into project development.

Commissioner Morroni returned at 2:07 p.m.

Commissioner Morroni indicated the Board of County Commissioners approved a letter of support for the Central Avenue BRT.

Councilmember Rice moved, Commissioner Seel seconded, and motion carried to approve the two letters of support (Vote 10-0).

E. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Modification – Transit Vision Map – Action

Ms. Ward provided a brief description of the LRTP modification for the transit vision map that would add the alignment for the Central Avenue BRT project to connect to St. Pete Beach, include the regional express routes and location of park-and-ride lots. Ms. Ward indicated that an amendment to the LRTP and TIP will be necessary at a future date if PSTA receives funding for the Central Avenue BRT.

Commissioner Seel moved, Commissioner Morroni seconded, and motion carried to approve the LRTP modification for the transit vision map (Vote 10-0).

F. Downtown St. Petersburg Transit System Redesign – Information

Brad Miller, PSTA, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation for the route redesign that creates a grid system for downtown St. Petersburg that begins February of 2016. He provided information on PSTA plans, the Williams Park Transit Center's history and use and PSTA's desire to relocate from Williams Park, the current downtown bus circulation and the proposal for downtown St. Petersburg grid system, the general schedule, public engagement and comments, public information and outreach, and the plan for park shelters.

Chairman Kennedy commended everyone for working together and their time and effort for this to be accomplished. Chairman Kennedy also expressed the potential impact on the homeless population around Williams Park and that the homeless outreach people are working with the homeless needs. They are also working with the St. Petersburg College and other local groups to utilize the park for community events as much as possible.

Councilmember Rice moved, Commissioner Merz seconded, and motion carried to approve a letter of support for PSTA's redesign for Williams Park (Vote 10-0).

G. Committee Recommendations

1. Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) – Status

• Elfer's Spur Erosion Status Update

Mr. Chatman reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Elfer's Spur erosion issue. The Elfer's Spur of the Pinellas Trail opened in 2004 at a cost of \$551,000 and included a 3/4 mile-long stretch that traverses a 266-foot bridge over the river. It was built on an abandoned railroad corridor and provides accessibility to the Pinellas Trail, the North Anclote Nature Park, and the city of Tarpon Springs' activity cluster. Pinellas County evaluated the erosion control and bank restoration/stabilization in 2014 and identified causes of the erosion and development of preliminary alternatives. The erosion is caused by high river flows and major storm events. The preliminary cost estimates for improvements range from \$600,000 to \$1.2 million. There is a verbal agreement between the city of Tarpon Springs and Pinellas County for maintenance. The interim solution is for

point repair and a bypass and the long-term solution for a possible realignment that requires a realignment study for another alternative to cross the river.

Mr. Blanton noted the importance of the Elfer's Spur for a regional connection and tying into the trails in Pasco County. This issue was brought up at the joint Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting and brought forward to the Pinellas MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

2. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) – Status

• Proposed Road Narrowing and Bicycle Lane Widening of Gulf Boulevard

Mr. Blanton indicated there is a continuity issue along Gulf Boulevard. There is currently a resurfacing project on the segment in St. Pete Beach and includes widening the bike lane.

Mr. Beaty, FDOT, indicated their traffic operations division is aware of the issue. He provided information on the status of the improvements underway for Gulf Boulevard in St. Pete Beach. Noting that the MPO is setting up a meeting to discuss beach access with its partners, Mr. Beaty indicated that they prefer to wait until after the meeting before providing a response back to the CAC. He indicated they are planning to conduct a comprehensive study of Gulf Boulevard since there are other areas that communities have asked be addressed. A follow-up report will be provided at a future meeting.

**At this point in the meeting, Mr. Beaty provided information on the scheduled completion dates for the three Ulmerton Road projects that are underway.

- Lake Seminole Bypass Canal to Rancho Boulevard – scheduled for completion in the summer of 2016;
- 38th Street North to I-275 – scheduled for completion during the spring of 2016; and
- 49th Street North to 38th Street North – scheduled for completion during the summer of 2017.

VII. PPC/MPO JOINT ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

A. Establishment of Nominating Committee for 2016 Election of Officers – Action

Upon Chairman Kennedy's call for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee, Commissioner Seel, Councilmember Rice, and Commissioner Tornga volunteered. It was announced the Nominating Committee would meet after the PPC meeting adjourns in the small conference room in the back.

Commissioner Morroni moved, Commissioner Kennedy seconded, and motion carried for Commissioner Seel, Councilmember Rice, and Commissioner Tornga to serve on the Nominating Committee (Vote 10-0).

VIII. REPORTS/UPDATE

A. Executive Director Report

Mr. Blanton reported on a BPAC subcommittee that is looking at a countywide bike share program, noting that preliminary recommendations will be brought to the MPO next year. He announced that the next board workshop is December 4, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in the County's Extension building and the PSTA/MPO joint meeting is January 22, 2016 at the PSTA building that will include FDOT. Staff plans to bring back an amendment to the CAC bylaws that elected officials shall not serve. Mr. Blanton reported there have been weekly MPO blogs and he encouraged any board member to contact him if they were interested in writing a blog. He provided information regarding the Transportation Leadership Academy and agreed to forward information to the board members.

Regarding a countywide bike share program, it was suggested all 24 municipalities request a presentation on the bike share program. Staff was asked to look into grant programs such as through US EPA and look for resources for start-up capital costs for the bikes for a

countywide bike program. Staff will look at other programs such as Broward County and will encourage the chambers of commerce and other private entities to assist with funding a bike share program for a regional approach.

IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Tampa Bay TMA Meeting of November 6, 2015

Mr. Blanton, Commissioner Seel, Councilmember Hock-DiPolito, and Commissioner Tornga provided highlights of the November 6 TMA meeting, noting there is a special meeting set for December 11 at the PSTA building for further discussions of the two CSX rail lines. FDOT and the MPOs agreed to look at the possibility of being able to fund a system locally without federal funds and the use of federal funds when necessary.

B. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee Meeting of November 13, 2015

Upon the request of Councilmember Hock-DiPolito, Ray Chiaramonte, TBARTA, provided a brief summary of the recent CCC meeting, highlighting the proposed legislation to add FDOT District 1, incorporation of the CCC into TBARTA and the proposed name change, proposal to change the cycle for TBARTA's Master Plan from every two years to every five years to match the MPOs' LRTP cycle.

C. Alternate U.S. 19 Workshop Follow-Up

It was announced the next workshop for Alternate U.S. 19 in the Palm Harbor area is December 8 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Palm Harbor University High School to discuss residents' comments.

D. Committee Vacancies

There are vacancies on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

E. Correspondence

The fatalities map is included in the agenda packet.

F. Other

Commissioner Kennedy reported on three meetings she recently attended: a symposium in Ft. Myers that included complete streets, a workshop at USF regarding a connection between cancer research and small businesses, and St. Pete Beach last week.

Commissioner Merz provided additional information on the workshops held at USF and indicated he would forward future announcements to the board members.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

Jim Kennedy, Chairman