

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES – MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2008**

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, July 9, 2008 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Frank Hibbard, *Chairman* – Mayor, City of Clearwater
Chris Arbutine, *Vice Chairman* – Mayor, City of Belleair Bluffs, representing PSTA
Harriet Crozier – Vice Mayor, City of Largo
Jeff Danner – City of St. Petersburg Council
Ronnie Duncan – Board of County Commissioners
William Mischler – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park
Herbert Polson – City of St. Petersburg Council
Robin Saenger – Vice Mayor, City of Tarpon Springs, representing Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, and Tarpon Springs
Robert Stewart – Board of County Commissioners
Don Skelton, *ex officio* – Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

David Eggers – City of Dunedin Commission
Karen Seel – Board of County Commissioners

OTHERS PRESENT

Brian Smith – MPO Executive Director
Sarah Ward – MPO Transportation Planning Division Manager
Mahshid Arasteh – Pinellas County Public Works
Al Bartolotta – MPO
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation
Paul Bertels – City of Clearwater
Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park
Bob Clifford – Florida Department of Transportation
Scott Collister - Florida Department of Transportation
Anne Funicello – MPO
Tim Garling – Executive Director, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
Gina Harvey –MPO
Joe Kubicki – City of St. Petersburg
Bob Lasher – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
Rob Meador – Pinellas County Public Works
Sandi Moody - Bay Area Commuter Services
David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office
Wilfred Sergeant – Transportation consultant
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder
Harriet McKay – MPO Staff Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hibbard called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Vice Mayor Crozier gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The board members introduced themselves.

III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

John Wiser of Clearwater addressed the board about the medians on Curlew Road at the intersections of Landmark and Countryside Boulevard. The medians have become "ashtrays" and need to be cleaned up. Despite the intervention of a County Commissioner, nothing has been done thus far. He asked for the MPO's help in this matter. It was noted that the road is a State road.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of July 9, 2008**
- B. Approval of Invoices –**
 - 1. Tindale-Oliver and Associates**
 - 2. Renaissance Planning Group**
 - 3. American Consulting Engineers**
- C. Approval of Resolution Authorizing the MPO Executive Director to Sign Minor Revisions and Amendments to MPO Plans and Programs Due to State or Federal Time Constraints**
- D. Approval of Printing of Brochures for Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day**
- E. Approval of Resolution for Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day as November 3, 2008**
- F. Approval of Amendment to the Center for Independence Contract (New Freedom)**
- G. Approval of JARC and New Freedom Sub-grantee Agreements**
- H. Approval of MPO Sponsorship of Pro Bike/Pro Walk Conference**
- I. Approval of 2035 Population and Employment Forecast**
- J. Approval of Printing of Decals for Transportation Disadvantaged Program Provider and Coordination Contractor Vehicles**
- K. Approval of Request for Local Funds for MPOAC Legislative Advocacy Activities for FY 2008/09**

Regarding Item K, staff explained how dues are assessed. Staff will ensure that the MPO Board receives copies of the MPOAC legislative agenda as it moves forward.

Regarding Item C, the following action was taken:

ACTION: Councilmember Polson moved that the resolution be amended to require that the MPO's Executive Director shall consult with the MPO Chairman prior to the performance and to make a report to the MPO Board at its next meeting regarding any actions. Mayor Arbutine seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

ACTION: Councilmember Danner moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARING—TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PRIORITY LISTS

The MPO is scheduled for its annual adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project priority lists for transmittal to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in September. Staff reviewed the priority lists for the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the

Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program, and the Congestion Management Process (CMP) list. Several modifications were noted.

The Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee reviewed the priority lists and recommended their approval. The Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Advisory Committee reviewed the Congestion Management Process projects and recommended they be listed historically as presented by staff.

The chairman opened the public hearing. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Councilmember Danner moved approval of the TIP Priority Lists, and Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion. The roll was called, and the board voted as follows: Commissioner Stewart—Yes; Councilmember Danner—Yes; Councilmember Polson—Yes; Mayor Arbutine—Yes; Commissioner Duncan—Yes; Vice Mayor Crozier—Yes; Mayor Mischler—Yes; Vice Mayor Saenger—Yes; Mayor Hibbard—Yes. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. U.S. 19 SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN SUNSET POINT ROAD AND COUNTRYSIDE BOULEVARD

Scott Collister of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) gave a PowerPoint presentation on the safety improvements being planned for U.S. 19 at Sunset Point Road and Countryside Boulevard as U.S. 19 transitions to a controlled access facility with no traffic signals from the Countryside area to south of 118th Avenue. Concerns have been expressed about the safety of U.S. 19 at Enterprise Road.

A project team examined two alternatives for improvements for the Enterprise Road area. One was a frontage road alternative and the other was a continuous right-turn-lane alternative. Both alternatives included closing all five medians in the subject area. Mr. Collister reviewed the current traffic situation and explained the design alternatives.

The project team believes the better alternative is Alternative #1, the frontage road alternative. The total cost would be approximately \$5.6 million.

In October and November, a public outreach program will be conducted. At the end of this fall, financing will be determined in order to schedule the project in the Tentative Work Program. One year is needed for the design. During the design period, the medians would be closed.

VII. ROLL FORWARD TIP AMENDMENTS

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) presented a roll-forward amendment to the FY 2008/09-2012/13 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the following projects:

- 406063-1, a sidewalk on 49th St. N. from 38th Avenue N. to Lake Blvd.
- 418869-1, to add lanes and reconstruct on S.R. 694 (Gandy Blvd.) from MLK Jr. St. (9th St.) to 28th St.
- 421758-1, to install name signs on C.R. 611 (McMullen Booth Road) on north and south approaches to intersections from the Pinellas/Pasco Co. line to Bayside Bridge.

The total cost of these projects is approximately \$13.7 million.

Mayor Mischler questioned the cost of the sidewalk project. This would be a 64-block project. However, considering both sides of the street, all but 12-1/2 blocks have sidewalks. Rob Meador

of Pinellas County Public Works responded that there is a significant gap within the sidewalk network in the area of U.S. 19 and 49th Street. The project is in final design and the final cost has not been determined. It has been in the TIP and the Capital Improvement Program for several years.

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved approval of the roll-forward amendments to the TIP, Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

VIII. CONGESTION MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES—FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

This item was deferred until staff from the Federal Highway Administration can be present.

IX. CITY OF GULFPORT REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL ENHANCEMENT FUNDS

This item was deferred until staff from the City of Gulfport can be present.

X. REVIEW OF STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM COST FEASIBLE PLAN

Bob Clifford of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) reviewed the highway component of the Strategic Intermodal System.

Currently in the five-year adopted work program for the SIS in Pinellas County, there is \$253 million, all on U.S. 19.

In the second five years, there is another U.S. 19 project for a long-term solution at Enterprise Road in the amount of \$62 million.

In the Cost Feasible Plan, covering the years 2019 to 2035, there are four projects:

- 118th Avenue: \$100 million for right-of-way or construction as needed. Staff noted that the County expects to have \$70 million in Penny funds available for this project;
- I-275 from the Sunshine Skyway to the Howard Frankland Bridge: \$15 million for PD&E and design;
- U.S. 19 from S.R. 580 to the north for controlled-access facilities: \$95 million for right-of-way and construction;
- Gandy Blvd./4th/9th Street interchange: \$125 million for construction.

The grand total for SIS facilities within the County is \$650 million. It was noted that there are fewer projects and they cost more. There are lower revenues. Over the past two years, \$2.5 billion has been removed from the SIS.

The comment period for MPOs is open until the end of October. The DOT Executive Board is looking to adopt the State-wide SIS plan in November for transmission to the MPOs so they can use it in their Long Range Transportation Plans.

XI. COMMUTER CHOICES WEEK

Sandi Moody, Executive Director of Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS), announced that Commuter Choices Week (CCW) will take place during the week of October 6-10, 2008. This is an annual event that promotes choices other than the single-occupant vehicle (SOV) for commuting. The program has been extended throughout the five-county region.

Participants will be asked to complete an online commitment form promising to use a different mode of transportation during this one week of the year. Those completing the form will be eligible to win prizes. The form is available at BACS' website, www.TampaBayRideshare.org.

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved approval of MPO Resolution #08-8 to endorse and sponsor Commuter Choices Week. Vice Mayor Saenger seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XII. CONGESTION MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Whit Blanton of the Renaissance Planning Group gave a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the congestion management process. This process focuses on short-term, cost-affordable projects that can relieve congestion and improve safety.

A State of the System Report is prepared every several years that tracks trends and examines conditions on all functionally classified roadways in the County. This is used as the basis for weighting, identifying and ranking areas to study in more detail where the County can focus on congestion and safety issues.

For the congestion management process, Renaissance targeted several priority segments and identified hot spots that can be addressed with near-term, low-cost strategies. Five locations were chosen for further study. They are:

- Belleair Road at Belcher Road
- Drew Street from Myrtle Avenue at Betty Lane
- NE Coachman at Old Coachman Road
- East Bay Drive at Belcher Road
- East Lake Road from Tarpon Woods Boulevard to Keystone Road

Recommendations for operational improvements at each location have been made. The recommendations were reviewed by both the Traffic Signal and Median Control Committee and the Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee. The recommended improvements have been added to the MPO's Congestion Management Priority List for funding consideration, but the projects are not ranked.

ACTION: Mayor Mischler moved to accept the consultant's report, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XIII. MPO LEVEL OF SERVICE REPORT

Staff presented the Level of Service Facilities Table and several maps.

ACTION: Vice Mayor Crozier moved to approve the Level of Service Facilities Table and maps. Councilmember Polson seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XIV. PINELLAS COUNTY CRASH DATA REPORT

Staff presented the Crash Data Report. They noted that the report will need some updating. Then, it will be re-released.

ACTION: Vice Mayor Saenger moved approval of the Crash Data Report, Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XV. MODEL LIVABLE COMMUNITIES LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

Staff presented the finalized Model Livable Communities Land Development Code. They will begin to incorporate this into the County's land development code. Cities will be given technical assistance to incorporate this code into their own codes.

Commissioner Stewart recognized several people who participated on the Livable Communities Task Force over the past years. Chairman Hibbard thanked Commissioner Stewart for his leadership of the Task Force. Staff was thanked for their hard work on this effort.

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved approval of the Model Livable Communities Code. Councilmember Polson seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XVI. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Bicycle Advisory Committee

1. The BAC recommended that the MPO endorse BAC Motion #08-2, which supports the acquisition of land, known as the Weaver property, in the City of Dunedin. It is adjacent to the Pinellas Trail and would provide trail-related amenities. Mayor Hibbard said that he could not support the endorsement because this was the business of a local jurisdiction.

ACTION: Commissioner Stewart moved endorsement of BAC Motion #08-2, and Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mayor Hibbard dissenting.

2. The BAC recommended that the MPO ensure that when signalization is installed at the intersection of Curlew Road/Alternate 19/Pinellas Trail that sensors are included to ensure the safety of pedestrians and trail users. Secretary Skelton responded that this issue had been addressed. With the trail, timing is difficult. There are false calls. When someone presses the button, signal timings are altered.

ACTION: By consensus, the board received the memo regarding signalization from the BAC.

3. The BAC supports the use of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the intersection of Tarpon Avenue and the Pinellas Trail in Tarpon Springs, considered a dangerous intersection. They requested that the FDOT install such a signal. Secretary Skelton responded that the proposed signal is not in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as an officially approved product. The DOT is still establishing criteria for where it's appropriate to install such a device. The DOT's current position is that this intersection does not warrant the installation.

Vice Mayor Saenger said that this is an extremely active part of the Pinellas Trail and is a busy road despite traffic-slowing measures. The crossing is downtown and is treacherous. Residents regularly request a four-way stop. She requested that some

solution be found to provide safety for a pedestrian crossing. Secretary Skelton said that FDOT staff would meet with City staff to work toward a solution.

Councilmember Polson asked why these signals could be installed in St. Petersburg but not in Tarpon Springs. St. Petersburg has been using them as part of a pilot project. Joe Kubicki of the City of St. Petersburg said that the device has been incorporated by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices Committee as an approved product on an interim basis. It takes many years to incorporate a product into the manual. Many have been installed in the City of St. Petersburg. On State roads, which have a higher volume and speeds, its use has been more conservative and no devices have been implemented.

B. Citizens Advisory Committee

The CAC recommended that the MPO encourage the PSTA and FDOT to work together on more adequate provisions for bus shelters on priority corridors such as U.S. 19.

Tim Garling, Executive Director of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), said the cantilevered shelters now in use are being used because of the constrained footprint available. However, the PSTA will take up the challenge to do a better job.

ACTION: Mayor Mischler moved to approve the CAC's motion. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. School Transportation Safety Committee

The School Transportation Safety Committee recommended that a school zone be installed on Belcher Road at Sutherland Elementary School. There would be a 15 mph speed limit during school hours.

ACTION: Mayor Mischler moved to approve the STSC's recommendation, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XVII. REPORT ON PINELLAS MOBILITY INITIATIVE

A report on the latest activities of the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Committee was included with meeting materials. The committee submitted several recommendations to the MPO:

- To approve the final report from Corven Engineering
- To approve the PMI Steering Committee recommendations concerning the Long Range Transportation Plan projections
- To approve the Scope of Work for the Countywide BRT Plan follow-up to the adopted Transit Development Plan

ACTION: Councilmember Danner moved to approve the recommendations of the PMI Committee, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

A. Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved to appoint Wendy Loomas to the PTAC as the representative of the Health Department. Vice Mayor Saenger seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Transit Revenue Work Group

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved to appoint Councilmember Polson to the Transit Revenue Work Group. Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

XIX. PSTA ACTIVITIES

Tim Garling, Executive Director of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), reported that the PSTA continues to see record ridership. July saw a 17% increase.

The PSTA has been able to balance next year's budget without increasing the millage rate by purchasing fuel futures.

XX. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Pedestrian Safety

Staff reviewed activities regarding a pedestrian safety plan.

B. Agreement Between MPO and PSTA re Provision of Transit Services for Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program Clients

At the June 25 PSTA Board meeting, fare increases were approved. The fare increases will be effective October 1. At the July MPO meeting, the MPO authorized staff to work with PSTA staff to develop an agreement that would minimize the impact of fare increases to the TD Program and maintain or improve mobility for transportation disadvantaged persons in Pinellas County.

PSTA and MPO staffs have negotiated a draft agreement. Staff recommended approval of the draft agreement. Mr. Garling will present the draft agreement to the PSTA Board for approval.

Commissioner Stewart presented comments from Emily Rogers Coeyman, who made suggestions for improving TD service and DART service. These concerns will be forwarded to the LCB and to the PSTA for their information.

ACTION: Mayor Arbutine moved approval of the draft agreement between the MPO and the PSTA. Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Recommended TRIP Priorities for 2009

The West Central Florida MPOs Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) will conduct a public hearing on the recommended priorities for the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) on September 12, 2008. The TRIP provides funds for projects of regional significance. A proposed priority list was included with meeting materials.

D. MPO Bayway Bridges Task Force Update

The task force has met three times to consider potential revenue sources for the bridges. They are in agreement that both bridges (Structure C and Structure E) should be funded and need a long-term solution.

E. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee and Central Florida MPO Alliance

On July 18, the Joint CCC met at 11:00 a.m., and the Central Florida MPO Alliance met at 12:30 p.m. Agendas were included with meeting materials.

F. Correspondence

The Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Fund balance as of July 2008 is \$689,729.24.

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business. The meeting adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Frank Hibbard, Chairman