

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES – MEETING OF NOVEMBER 12, 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, November 12, 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
David Eggers – City of Dunedin Commission
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
Karen Seel – Board of County Commissioners
Robert Stewart – Board of County Commissioners
Lee Royal – representing the Florida Department of Transportation

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeff Danner – City of St. Petersburg Council
Ronnie Duncan – Board of County Commissioners
Don Skelton, *ex officio* – Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7

OTHERS PRESENT

Sarah Ward – MPO Transportation Planning Division Manager
David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office
Mahshid Arasteh – Pinellas County Public Works
Rob Meador – Pinellas County Public Works
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation
Paul Bertels – City of Clearwater
Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park
Rick Eggers – Cit of Pinellas Park
Joe Kubicki – City of St. Petersburg
Tim Garling – Executive Director, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
Jesus Nino – City of Largo
 – City of Gulfport
Bill Ball – Tindale-Olier
Ken Hartmann – HDR
Jim O'Reilly, Gulfport Interim City Manager
Anne Funicello – MPO Staff Secretary
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hibbard called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commissioner Bob Stewart gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board members introduced themselves.

III. PRESENTATION OF PLAQUES T OUTGOING MPO MEMBERS BOB STEWART AND RONNIE DUNCAN

Chairman Hibbard indicated Bob Stewart was stepping down from the Board of County Commissioners and then presented him with a plaque for his outstanding service and leadership on the MPO and the County Commission. Commissioner Stewart said a few words of appreciation for his colleagues and staff during his time on the MPO and also a few comments and observations.

Chairman Hibbard noted Commissioner Duncan could not be in attendance today because he was attending the Rail Stakeholders Advisory Committee at the CSX Headquarters in Jacksonville but would be receiving his plaque at a future meeting.

IV. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Joe Kubicki, City of St. Petersburg, presented a commemorative spike to the MPO members thanking them for their support and then briefly provided an update on the St. Petersburg Trails Program, noting the accomplishments and pending projects.

Chairman Hibbard recognized Ken Hartmann as a previous FDOT District VII Secretary during Commissioner Stewart's tenure.

Mayor Mischler congratulated Commissioner Seel on her reelection to the Board of County Commissioners.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **Approval of Minutes – Meeting of October 8, 2008**
- B. **Approval of Invoices –**
 - 1. **Tindale-Oliver and Associates**
 - 2. **Renaissance Planning Group**
 - 3. **American Consulting Engineers**
- C. **Approval of Contract With Pride for Crash Reports for 2009**
- D. **Approval of Constrained Roads Map**
- E. **Approval of Amendment 2 for Hillsborough County JARC Agreement**

Commissioner Seel moved, Vice Mayor Crozier seconded, and motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDMENTS TO THE FY 2008/09 – 2012/13 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Brian Beaty, FDOT, briefly described the two proposed amendments: 1) S.R. 693 (66th Street North) from 121st Avenue to 142nd Avenue to fill in sidewalk gaps on both sides of the road using arterial safety contingency funds; and 2) S.R. 60 (Memorial Causeway) from Clearwater Harbor Channel to west end of the Memorial Bridge to upgrade the street lighting to improve night-time visibility using arterial safety contingency funds.

There was no public comment. *Councilman Polson moved and Commissioner Eggers seconded to approve the TIP amendments; and, upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.*

VII. PUBLIC HEARING ON FALL UPDATE OF THE 2008/09 – 2012/13 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Sarah Ward stated this is the fall update of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The fall update incorporates the County's and municipal Capital Improvement

Programs, since they are on a different fiscal year than the State. She briefly highlighted the County's Work Program, noting the differences between the current and the previous programs. The Citizens Advisory Committee raised concern regarding the continual deferral of improvement projects for Haines Road, Keystone Road, and Sunset Point Road. On Page 94, \$64 million is being allocated to 118th Avenue North with funds from the next "Penny" extension in 2012. On Page 96, the County has boxed \$50 million for arterial road improvements subject to prioritization by the County. Page 101 has funding for Ulmerton Road and Page 105 includes funding for ATMS (Advanced Traffic Management System)/ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) projects. **Ms. Ward stated the MPO will receive an update on the ITS Program in early 2009.** Page 115 includes funds allocated for a drainage improvement for Park Boulevard; Pages 116-1107 includes funding allocated for Trail projects; and Page 119 includes funds allocated for Gulf Boulevard improvements. She then highlighted the municipal projects.

Commissioner Saenger indicated the City of Tarpon Springs is very concerned that the Keystone Road project has been deferred again. The project has been in the County Program for over ten years, and carries a significant number of vehicles per day, a two-lane road with a single left-turn lane approaching McMullen-Booth Road, which creates a back-up of traffic during peak travel time. Tarpon Springs doesn't have alternate choices for motorists to use, significant development in the City and in nearby Pasco County, which causes an influx of vehicles. The City's share of the project is to relocate a 20-inch water line; therefore, they have hired the same design firm as the widening project. The relocation of the water line has been approved by the County and the City is ready to proceed forward with the project. She would like the MPO to recommend the County not defer this project but, instead, proceed with this project.

Commissioner Seel agreed the project needs to proceed forward; however, part of the reason for the deferral is the purchase of right-of-way and difficulty working with the property owners. Mahshid Arasteh, Pinellas County Public Works, stated 80 parcels have been purchased but there still needs to be 20 more purchased.

Commissioner Saenger stated the main concern is the single left-turn and the backup of traffic that occurs at the intersection and a solution needs to be determined, whether it's the use of the Sheriff's Office or changing the signalization timing, until the right-of-way issue can be resolved and the project move forward.

Upon query by Commissioner Seel as to when the ATMS will be implemented, Ms. Arasteh responded the construction for the ATMS/ITS for McMullen-Booth Road is going on now and should be completed next year. She will ask staff to see what can be done during the interim. Commissioner Saenger offered the City's assistance.

Commissioner Seel noted the County had considered staging the intersection but it had been more costly; however, she will ask the new County Administrator to relook at staging the intersection project.

Upon query by Councilman Polson as to why Park Street was moved up in the program, Rob Meador, Pinellas County Transportation, responded the design for this segment as well as the segment of Starkey Road from 84th Lane to Bryan Dairy Road is complete, along with the acquisition of right-of-way. Since the funding has been set aside for this project, it was decided to advance the Park Street project. The intent is to start at the south end and move northward, which would leave the two middle sections in Largo to be completed. Councilman Polson noted the citizens are concerned that adding lanes to Park

Street will cause an increase in traffic and wanted to make sure there is a need for the improvement.

Commissioner Seel stated her dismay for the deferral of the project on Bryan Dairy Road because of the bottleneck. Mr. Meador responded that, since the County has received federal funds for this project, they were required to perform additional work as part of the federal requirements. This has caused a 9-month delay to complete a separate public hearing process and a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study. They were able to advance from the design phase into the right-of-way acquisition phase, which is currently underway.

Commissioner Eggers noted the City of Dunedin will be reconstructing Michigan Avenue from Alternate 19 to C.R. 1 during 2012 and 2013 at a cost of \$1.5 million. In addition, they have two sidewalk projects for Roanoke Street and New York Avenue for this coming year at a cost of \$96,000. Ms. Ward responded she would make those additions.

There was no public comment. ***Mayor Mischler moved and Councilman Polson seconded to approve the fall update to the TIP; and, upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.***

VIII. CONSULTANT SELECTION FOR CLEARWATER TO CLEARWATER BEACH STUDY – PMI Recommendation

Ms. Ward indicated the PMI Committee recommendation was included in the members' folders. The PMI Committee met Monday and heard presentations from seven consultants. The ranking of the firms was included in the recommendation, with the following top three ranked firms:

- 1) Tindale-Oliver and Associates
- 2) HDR Engineering
- 3) Kittelson.

The PMI Committee recommended the MPO approve the top three ranked firms and authorize staff to begin negotiations with the top ranked firm and, if not successful, move to the next consultant, etc.

Commissioner Stewart moved, Vice Mayor Crozier seconded, and motion carried to approve the PMI recommendation as outlined above.

IX. TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Ward stated the City of Gulfport request is for an additional \$60,000, which is due to the City asking FDOT to construct the Enhancement project and has resulted in an increase to the design cost. The City of St. Petersburg request is a cost increase of \$198,000 for an approved Enhancement project. Last month, the MPO requested staff bring back a status of the overall Enhancement program, which is included in the MPO members' folders. The information from FDOT indicates \$1.8 million for the current year and shows the amounts up to FY 2014. FDOT has highlighted the chart to indicate projects that could be approved for funding.

- North Bay Trail Project in St. Petersburg
- East Avenue safety improvements in Clearwater
- Bicycle facilities in St. Petersburg
- Traffic control for the Pinellas Trail in St. Petersburg
- Pedestrian crosswalk Enhancement in St. Petersburg
- Rehabilitation of the Pinellas Trail.

These projects are in the queue and ready for construction and could be impacted if the increases are approved.

Upon query by Commissioner Seel as to the Grand Central project, Joe Kubicki, City of St. Petersburg, responded the project includes traffic calming and pedestrian improvements, three traffic signals, crosswalks, striping, count down signals, and handicapped ramps. The street furniture and sidewalk portion of the project has been completed by the City. The increase in the cost for the mast arm signals is the reason for the request.

Jim O'Reilly, Gulfport Interim City Manager, appeared and indicated they will tie 49th Street to the Waterfront Redevelopment District, which will help revitalize 49th Street. Gulfport is not LPA (Local Agency Program) certified due to their size; therefore, FDOT is constructing the project, which is why there has been an increase of \$60,000. Gulfport has a Florida Recreations Development Assistance Program grant that has to be used within the next two years and they would like the projects coincide to maximize use of funds.

Lee Royal, FDOT, noted Gulfport is not approved as a Local Agency Program so they cannot administer the project. Based on FDOT's estimates, there is an increase. FDOT is looking at programming the project during this gaming cycle of their Work Program but the project could not be programmed during this fiscal year.

Considerable discussion followed regarding other prioritized projects; fairness of all Enhancement project increases; how increases were approved in the past; how the St. Petersburg project compared to the earlier Tarpon Springs project; the impact to other projects if the cost increases are approved; previous MPO action to give the 2006 Enhancement project list a higher priority than the 2007 Enhancement project list; the other three projects on the 2006 list (Safety Harbor, Treasure Island, and Oldsmar) all have issues as to why they are not moving forward at this time and the Grand Central Park project is the remaining project from the 2006 Enhancement list; the fact this is the first time projects have been waiting on a candidate list that would be impacted due to cost increases; the MPO requested the local governments a year ago to update their costs, which should have included this project; discussion whether Pinellas Trail rehabilitation is a maintenance project or an enhancement project, although it was deemed eligible for Enhancement funding by the Federal Highway Administration and others, and what would be involved in that project and the fact that the Trail is a countywide project and goes through various local jurisdictions; and the need to look at developing a policy for future cost increases.

Commissioner Seel moved approval of the cost increase for both the Gulfport (including that Gulfport be programmed for FY 2011) and St. Petersburg projects and develop a policy for the future to deal with cost increases to be placed on next month's MPO agenda. Commissioner Eggers seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

X. BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Motion Regarding Safety Messages for Vulnerable Road Users on State Highway System

Ms. Ward indicated the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) discussed the Dynamic Message Signs being permanently installed on the State Highway System, including the State's policy for placing approved safety messages on the signs. The BAC is aware of the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan and the need to advance that Plan

has recommended the MPO ask FDOT to consider the following messages (approved by State law) be also approved for display on the signs:

- Share the Road/Bicycles are Vehicles
- Stop for Pedestrians/at Signalized Crossings
- It's the Law/Give Bicycles 3-FT when passing.

Mayor Mischler moved and Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion to approve the BAC recommendation for forwarding to FDOT.

Mayor Arbutine cautioned the use of these messages where they would not be appropriate, such as the Interstate. Mayor Hibbard responded they would be used where appropriate.

Following discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

B. Position Statement Regarding 102nd Avenue North at the Pinellas Trail Crossing

Ms. Ward noted the Bicycle Advisory Committee reviewed the improvements to 102nd Avenue, including the two options. The BAC is recommending the MPO support Scenario 1, which is the less costly and includes a signal for the Trail crossing.

Commissioner Seel accepted the recommendation but only as a pedestrian-activated signal, Mayor Mischler seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

XI. REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF ROLE OF TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Paul Bertels, TCC Chairman, indicated the idea is to streamline the process where items of a technical nature recommended for one of the other advisory committees that come before the MPO would be reviewed by the TCC with a member from that committee being invited to attend the TCC and then it would go to the MPO. Mayor Hibbard concurred with this suggestion.

Vice Mayor Crozier suggested a notation be included on the cover sheet as to whether the TCC has reviewed the item or not. Ms. Ward responded, typically, the TCC drafts a memo with their recommendation, which is included as an attachment to the MPO agenda item.

Based upon concurrence of the MPO, **Ms. Ward stated she would work with Paul Bertels.**

XII. TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE ORDINANCE UPDATE

Ms. Ward indicated the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance will be reviewed by the Technical Coordinating Committee and then their recommendation will come to the MPO in December.

Commissioner Stewart commented transportation impact fees need to be a continued source of revenue, where the developer pays their fair share for their impacts. He noted there are legislative issues at the State level that might impact the program but requested the MPO consider the value of funds coming from the impact fees that are used for solving some of the major problems in Pinellas County.

XIII. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Hibbard noted there are vacancies in Clearwater and Largo on the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Councilman Polson moved, Commissioner Eggers seconded, and motion carried to approve Tom McGinty as the school representative to the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Mayor Mischler moved, Vice Mayor seconded, and motion carried to approve Steve Fairchild as the school representative to the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Stewart moved, Mayor Mischler seconded, and motion carried to approve Frank Hibbard as the Chairman of the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Steering Committee.

Commissioner Seel moved, Vice Mayor Crozier seconded, and motion carried to approve Mike Burke as the school representative on the Technical Coordinating Committee.

Commissioner Saenger moved, Mayor Arbutine seconded, and motion carried to approve Michael Bessette as the school representative on School Transportation Safety Committee.

XIV. PSTA ACTIVITIES

Tim Garling, Executive Director of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), reported, PSTA had their best year in history, with the fiscal year ending September 30. There were 13 million rides, which is a 10% increase over the prior year. Because of the reduced millage, PSTA had to offset by raising their fares by 25 cents with a base fare of \$1.75 and reduced their service by 5%. The fare increase and service reduction went into effect October 5 and the preliminary results showed a 6% ridership increase for October.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Establishment of Nominating Committee for 2009 Election of Officers

Mayor Hibbard asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee. The following volunteered to serve: Councilman Polson, Mayor Mischler, and Commissioner Eggers. Mayor Mischler indicated they would meet right after this meeting.

B. Press Release From Governor Crist: Accelerate Florida

Mayor Hibbard noted the intent was to move projects forward but this was not additional funding. Ms. Royal noted it was to advance letting dates but it was not new money.

C. MPOAC Meeting of October 23, 2008

Ms. Ward provided a brief update on the last MPOAC meeting. The majority of the discussion concerned the declining gas tax revenues and the need for a sustainable revenue source for transportation. The MPOs are looking at ways to make the Transportation Improvement Programs more user friendly, including a software program used by Volusia County. The MPOAC had CUTR (Center for Urban Transportation Research) review all the MPOs' Long Range Transportation Plan, including best practices with regard to the MPOs' plans and how they could be more friendly to the public.

D. Goals, Objectives, and Policies for the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan

Ms. Ward indicated they are still working on the Goals, Objectives, and Policies. They took these to the various advisory committees and **a final document will be on the next MPO agenda.**

E. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) Meeting of December 12, 2008

Mayor Hibbard indicated the next Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) meeting will be December 12, 2008. Ms. Ward added the meeting will be hosted by Pasco County.

F. Transit Revenue Work Group

Mr. Garling indicated the Work Group met October 27 and Jeff Danner was selected as Chairman. Bob Clifford was in attendance, which helps with the coordination from a regional and local perspective. They will have more to report as the Committee continues to meet.

G Correspondence

Chairman Hibbard noted correspondence was included in the agenda packet.

H Other

Mayor Mischler asked if a date has been set for the joint MPO/PSTA meeting. Ms. Kuntz responded the MPO members could make it February 9 and that date has been forwarded to PSTA for their consideration.

Commissioner Seel noted a sustainable design assessment team is coming to Tampa to look at better planning and connectivity to the cities, with a public workshop being held this evening, with a final presentation on the 14th. She had brochures available for those interested.

Chairman Hibbard indicated TBARTA was holding a public workshop this evening at 5:30 at the Clearwater Public Library and another workshop at the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce November 20 at lunch time. Ms. Ward added the MPOs' are being coordinated with the workshops so there will be information on the MPO plans, as well as TBARTA's plan so the public is aware of transit and transportation for the future.

Mayor Hibbard again thanked Commissioner Stewart for his service to the MPO.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

Frank Hibbard, Chairman