

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES – MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2005**

The Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization, created by the State of Florida in accordance with Title 23 Section 134 United States Code and Chapter 339 Florida Statutes, met in regular session on Wednesday, September 14, 2005 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Members Present

Karen Seel, Chair – Board of County Commissioners
Richard Kriseman, Vice Chair – City of St. Petersburg Council
Chris Arbutine – Mayor, City of Belleair Bluffs, representing Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
Ronnie Duncan – Board of County Commissioners
David Eggers – City of Dunedin Commission
Pat Gerard – City of Largo Commission
Frank Hibbard – Mayor, City of Clearwater
Jay Lasita – City of St. Petersburg Council
Robert Stewart – Board of County Commissioners
Bob Clifford, *ex officio* – Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

Members Absent

William Mischler – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park
Jim Ronecker – City of Oldsmar Council, representing Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, Tarpon Springs

Others Present

Brian Smith – MPO Executive Director
Sarah Ward – MPO Transportation Planning Administrator
Kara Bauer – City of Safety Harbor Commission
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Kathy Durham – St. Petersburg
Gabor Farkasfalvy – Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Gail Fessler – Fessler Center
Jack Fessler – Fessler Center
Gina Harvey – MPO Staff
Jana Hicks – Fessler Center
Ken Jacobs – Pinellas County Traffic Engineering
Joe Kubicki – City of St. Petersburg
Wayne Logan, Jr. – City Manager, City of Safety Harbor
Rob Meador – Pinellas County Public Works
Gerri Moerseburg – Fessler Center
Jeff Novotny – American Consulting Engineers of Florida
Lee Royal – Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
David Sadowsky – Pinellas County Attorney's Office
Wilfred Sergeant – Sky Train Corp.
Andy Steingold – City of Safety Harbor Commission
Kim Tracy – City of Safety Harbor
Tom Whalen – City of St. Petersburg

Peter Yauch – Pinellas County Public Works
Keith Zayac – Vice Mayor, City of Safety Harbor
71 Residents of Briar Creek Mobile Home Community
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder
Harriet McKay – MPO Staff Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commissioner Stewart gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

On behalf of the MPO, Chair Seel recognized Captain Teresa “Teri” Dioquino of the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office. American Legion Posts in Florida unanimously chose Captain Dioquino as Florida’s 2005 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and praised her for “extraordinary performance” including “superior community service.” Captain Dioquino joined the Sheriff’s Office in 1983. In February 2005, she became that agency’s first female captain in law enforcement.

IV. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There was no citizen comment.

V. CONFIRMATION OF REAPPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR MPO MEMBERS

By state statute, the MPO member term of office is four years. Terms of office for most of the board members were due to expire. Therefore, staff contacted the cities and the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) to obtain reappointment action as those agencies deemed appropriate.

Chair Seel reported that the City of Clearwater, the City of Largo, the City of Pinellas Park, the City of St. Petersburg, and the PSTA had reappointed their representatives to the MPO. The City of Dunediin has appointed Commissioner David Eggers to serve as its representative for the next four years, replacing Mayor John Doglione.

ACTION: Councilmember Kriseman moved that the MPO recognize the appointments to the board. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of July 13, 2005
- B. Approval of Invoices
 - 1. Renaissance Planning Group
 - 2. Tindale/Oliver & Associates
 - 3. TEI
- C. Approval of Purchase of T-Shirts for Greenways and Trails Month (October)
- D. Approval of Purchase of MPO Imprinted Specialty Items

- E. Approval of Section 5303 Grant
- F. Approval of MPO Resolution Endorsing October as Florida Greenways and Trails Month
- G. Acceptance of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal
- H. Approval of Request for Local Funds for MPOAC Legislative Advocacy Activities
- I. Approval of Printing Brochures for Pedestrian Awareness Day
- J. Approval of Updated Level of Service Report
- K. Approval of Printing TD Decals

ACTION: Councilmember Lasita moved to approve the consent agenda, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Proposal from City of Safety Harbor for Traffic Signal at McMullen-Booth Road and Briar Creek Boulevard

Peter Yauch of Pinellas County Public Works, and vice chair of the Traffic Signal and Median Control Committee (TS&MCC), reported that in a letter dated June 21, 2005 to the MPO, the City of Safety Harbor requested that a traffic signal be installed at the intersection of Briar Creek Boulevard and McMullen Booth Road. It is 800' south of the signalized intersection at Mease Drive. Farther to the south is the intersection with S.R. 580. Supporting documentation was reviewed at the meeting of the TS&MCC on August 24, 2005. The TS&MCC recommended that the MPO deny the city's request.

Mr. Yauch said that the criteria used to evaluate the proposed signal was developed over 20 years. The criteria are: 1) the signal must meet one or more of the signal warrants; 2) the anticipated benefits to side street traffic must outweigh the projected disruption to traffic on the primary highway; 3) there must be a projected reduction in quantity and severity of accidents at the proposed signal location; and 4) traffic control measures other than traffic signals would not adequately resolve identified problems.

Mr. Yauch said that the city had hired a consultant to perform a traffic signal warrant analysis. Based on the results of the traffic signal warrant summaries, the consultant concluded that a traffic signal is not warranted. Alternatives were proposed. One is a median modification. Another is a connection between the development served by Briar Creek Boulevard and Mease Drive. This would require right-of-way. Despite the recommendations of the consultant, the city requested that the MPO review this signal installation for safety purposes.

Mr. Yauch said that traffic signals do not always solve a traffic problem. They can increase the incidence of crashes. During the three-year study that the consultant looked at crashes, there were 17 reported crashes at this intersection. Only three crashes resulted in injuries, and there were no fatalities. On the entire C.R. 611 corridor over the same three-year period, there were 1,501 crashes. The top 19 locations for crashes were all signalized intersections. Mease Drive to the north had 39 crashes.

Using a simulation model developed by the Federal Highway Administration, it can be estimated that this intersection will experience 5.76 crashes per year if stop-controlled and 9 crashes per year if signal-controlled. The subject intersection has not experienced a high crash history.

Councilmember Kriseman noted that he represents accident victims in his law practice. He said that the method used to calculate accidents resulting in injuries is not reliable.

Councilmember Lasita said that the traffic flow is significant and the area is still building. He asked why any intersection would be signalized if crashes increase. Mr. Yauch responded that there comes a point at which the number of conflicts increase, excessive delays occur, or excessive accidents occur.

Mayor Hibbard asked how much enforcement has been done at that area to stop blockage. Wayne Logan, City Manager for the City of Safety Harbor, responded that the closing of the road median would be a problem. Also, the median age of the residents of Briar Creek is over 74 years. This would be a difficult crossing for drivers going south. Also, the expansion of Mease Hospital will create more traffic.

Chair Seel opened the public hearing.

City Commissioner Nadine Nickeson sent a letter in support of the signalization.

City Commissioner Andy Steingold spoke on behalf of the City of Safety Harbor. He noted that Briar Creek is a retirement-age community with many people in their 70's. The city had voted to pay for the signal and its maintenance.

Vice Mayor Keith Zayac said that Briar Creek was developed when McMullen-Booth Road was a rural, two-lane road. Now the road is a major corridor. The residents are elderly and they can't safely cross a three-lane road to make a left turn to go south. They need a full-time signal. A regional medical center will increase traffic.

City Commissioner Kara Bauer said that with no break in traffic, it is dangerous to cross the road. Other signals have been installed in the name of safety. Traffic engineers have said traffic will improve with the installation of this signal.

Al Denver, President of Briar Creek I Association, spoke. He knew of one fatality, possibly two. The main problem is that when the light at Mease Drive turns red, the traffic backs up. Briar Creek needs a signal that coordinates with Mease Drive.

George Costager, a resident, said that crossing the road to turn south would be impossible. The traffic study is faulty. There are 513 homes in Briar Creek, generating a lot of traffic, and the nearby hospital backs up traffic.

*At 2:00 p.m., Councilmember Lasita left.

Jack Fessler, who owns a complex on McMullen-Booth Road, said that the future will bring 500-600 visitors per day to the complex. A wellness center and an eye institute are opening. The clients will be aged, and the road will be dangerous for them to navigate.

Robert Bouschor, a resident, said that the concern should be lives, not statistics. There are long waiting times to get out of this residential area. A signal could be timed to Mease Hospital.

There was no further public comment. The public hearing was closed.

Councilmember Kriseman said that the light meets one of the warrants, particularly the quantity and severity of the accidents at the signal location. He noted the accident potential and the age of the potential victims. He said that it is unrealistic to ask elderly drivers to make this kind of street crossing.

MOTION: Councilmember Kriseman moved to install a traffic signal at the intersection of McMullen-Booth Road and Briar Creek Boulevard. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion. Board discussion continued.

Commissioner Stewart asked several questions about the signal warrants. Mr. Yauch said that eight warrants were considered in the study as part of the federal requirement that is followed. The intersection met none of them. There was one other time when a signal was installed even though the intersection met none of the warrants. This was at Lakeview Drive and Forest Lake Boulevard in Oldsmar

Commissioner Stewart asked if there would be a liability issue if the board ignores the warrants and grants the light. David Sadowsky, county attorney, responded that the MPO has the discretion to install the light there because it is a planning level decision. The decision made today would not incur liability.

Further, once the signal is installed, it must be installed correctly. If the county operates it, the county would have liability. Chair Seel said that through a maintenance agreement, the city would operate and maintain the light.

Responding to further questioning from Commissioner Stewart, Mr. Yauch said that it could be assumed that as the area continues to develop, transportation impact fees would be collected. The fees would probably stay in that district. There could be channelization or other safety improvements.

*At 2:16 p.m., Councilmember Lasita returned.

Mr. Yauch also said that the MPO receives many signal requests, as does the state. The idea of following the warrants is to avoid unnecessary interruptions to through-traffic on a major roadway because that causes accidents. If there were a need, because of existing delays or a history of accidents, you'd want to install a signal.

Commissioner Stewart said that the human side of the discussion says to support the signal. However, the safety of people driving on McMullen-Booth Road everyday must be considered, and the board must consider how traffic moves through the county. The MPO has a committee that studies these technical matters, and they unanimously recommended not to install a signal. Commissioner Stewart asked if there were an overwhelming and compelling reason not to follow the advice of its advisory committee.

Commissioner Gerard said that the nature of the road had changed and that cutting a road through a hospital parking light is not a solution. The traffic could be improved by slowing it down.

Councilmember Lasita said that technology exists to time lights between Mease Drive and Briar Creek Boulevard. The interest of the cities through which McMullen-Booth passes should be considered. While the area doesn't meet warrant criteria, the intersection does

pass the human test and the common sense test for installing a signal. Cutting across three lanes of traffic is unwieldy and unrealistic.

Mayor Arbutine said that installing a signal seems to be transferring a problem, not fixing it. A report said that a signal may not decrease the danger, particularly for through-traffic.

VOTE ON MOTION: The motion carried, with Mayor Arbutine and Commissioner Stewart dissenting.

*At 2:30 p.m., Mayor Arbutine left.

B. Proposed Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) requested that the FY 2005/06-2009/10 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) be amended to include Project FPN 406060 2, a sidewalk project on the east side of Indian Rocks Road between the Suncoast Hospital and Dryer Avenue. This is part of the Dryer Avenue Sidewalk Project FPN 406060 1; but inadvertently, it was separated from the larger project. It will be executed at the same time as the rest of the Dryer Avenue project. Cost for this segment is \$72,616. The funds will come from the 2005 enhancement allocation to the MPO.

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

ACTION: Councilmember Lasita moved to amend the FY 2005/06-2009/10 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include FPN 406060 2. Mayor Hibbard seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

*At 2:33 p.m., Commissioner Stewart left.

*At 2:34 p.m., Mayor Arbutine returned.

C. Transportation Improvement Program Priorities

Staff reported that by October 1, the MPO must give the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) its priorities for the use of the federal dollars that are allocated to the area. The project priority lists for the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the Transportation Enhancements Program (TE), and the Congestion Management System (CMS) were reviewed.

On the STP priority list are listed all the remaining highway projects necessary to implement the Cost Affordable Plan. Also, some projects have been completed.

*At 2:39 p.m., Commissioner Stewart returned.

The Technical Coordinating Committee recommended moving the 118th Avenue Expressway to a higher priority. It currently is listed as #22. Staff did not recommend that this project be moved up the list. It was noted that the FDOT looks at funding availability, not necessarily project priority.

Councilmember Kriseman said that Gandy Boulevard should be moved up the list. It is a major exodus route for many people in the event of a hurricane and it is in the county's emergency plan. Also, two projects not prioritized are the Friendship Trail and the Tyrone Boulevard overpass.

Ms. Ward responded that the MPO did agree to include those two projects in the MPO's Needs Plan adopted one year ago. The only program they would qualify for is the Enhancement Program in ten years.

Mr. Clifford said that the CMAQ money the MPO receives will be less than in past years because now Pinellas County is one of 67 counties seeking funds.

Mayor Hibbard said that Gandy Boulevard is important for evacuation purposes but the best actions for evacuating the county would be early warnings and getting residents to leave rather than moving other important road projects down the list.

Before taking action on this item, the board proceeded to Agenda Item VIII.

VIII. REVIEW OF 118TH AVENUE (C.R. 296) CONNECTOR PD&E STUDY RESULTS

Mr. Clifford reported that public hearings have been completed. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is now seeking the MPO's concurrence as they move to submit to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) their findings and the request for their approval. The next step would be the design.

Jeff Novotny of American Consulting Engineers of Florida reported that a public hearing was held four weeks ago. Prior to this, the feasibility study that looked at several alternatives was approved in March 2005. A single build alternative and a no-build alternative were presented at the recent public hearing.

*At 2:47 p.m., Councilmember Kriseman left.

The recommended alternative is broken into three areas of improvement. One is at the interface with U.S. 19, the second is at 49th Street, and the third is at the proposed Roosevelt Connector. He explained the recommended alternative for each area of improvement. The three segments may be staged.

The cost for the recommended alternative, including all segments, design, land acquisition, and construction, is \$190 million. The PD&E documents are being finalized and should be ready to go to the FHWA by the end of the year.

*At 2:50 p.m., Councilmember Kriseman returned.

A copy of Mr. Novotny's presentation will be forwarded to board members.

The board continued with a discussion of the TIP priority lists begun under Agenda Item VII-C.

On September 6, the Board of County Commissioners approved the technical listing for the TRIP monies. They include an ATMS system for C.R. 611, widening of Bryan Dairy Road from Starkey Road to 72nd Street, and the 118th Avenue Expressway. The county got a federal

appropriation for Bryan Dairy Road, so that would free some money that could be matched with TRIP funds to be put on 118th Avenue.

On the STP, Project Priorities #14 and #17 have been completed. Staff proposed moving 118th Avenue from #22 to #14. It was noted that projects are kept on the program list until construction is complete.

Commissioner Stewart asked if the number of the priority meant anything. Mr. Clifford responded that it does not from a work programming perspective. FDOT's issue is SIS. They need the required lists, but the MPO can make an additional list of corridors with prioritizations.

Chair Seel asked staff to bring a corridor list to the next meeting. She also reported that on the Transportation Enhancement list, three projects dropped off. They are the Trotter Road sidewalk and the Park Lake Drive sidewalk, which have been completed, and the 113th Street sidewalk.

The FDOT will bring to the next board meeting information on the status of the Tarpon Springs project on Alternate U.S. 19.

On the Congestion Management System list, there is an intersection improvement recommended at U.S. 19 and Alderman. Staff is looking at all potential options for funding it.

Chair Seel said that if the board spends money on studies because they think a potential project is worth that expense, then they should work more diligently to find money to fund solutions. Ms. Ward said that staff does monitor and assess what's happening with completed strategy plans. Staff will prepare a follow-up report.

Regarding enhancements, staff has asked the local governments to provide a status report on their pending projects that have no funding.

The public hearing was opened.

*At 3:11 p.m., Commissioner Eggers left.

Kathy Durham of St. Petersburg addressed the board. She said that she would like to see some emphasis placed on the Gandy Boulevard area. It has not been addressed as it is developing. It should be studied in light of intermodal transportation. She is also concerned about the development of area on 22nd Avenue between I-275 and 34th Street at U.S. 19. She advocated good land planning.

*At 3:13 p.m., Commissioner Eggers returned.

Councilmember Lasita responded that beyond U.S. 19, it is all residential. Making changes is not doable short of radically changing the lives of the people who live on that street. The character of the road changes radically going west off the interstate once you get to U.S. 19.

There was no other public comment. The public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Mayor Hibbard moved to approve the TIP priority lists, changing Priority #3 to include the rest of the 118th Avenue Expressway. Councilmember Lasita seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IX. HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This agenda item was discussed after Agenda Item X.)

Mr. Smith reviewed that in 2004, Florida voters repealed the state constitutional amendment that had mandated a high-speed rail. However, the voters' action did not affect the legislative mandate for the Florida High-Speed Rail Authority (FHSRA). Therefore, the FHSRA remains in effect pending any future action the legislature may take. The FHSRA continues to move ahead with planning studies.

Enclosed with meeting materials was the executive summary of the "Final Environmental Impact Statement" pertaining to the Florida high-speed rail from Tampa to Orlando.

X. REPORT ON NEW STATE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Lee Royal of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) gave an overview of the recently passed Senate Bill 360, the Growth Management Act. This act closes the gap between new development and infrastructure needs, i.e. schools, transportation, and water supply. This act provides \$1.5 billion next year for infrastructure funding with recurring funding of \$750 million annually after that.

*At 3:15 p.m., Commissioner Seel left.

The act sets up a pay-as-you-grow system. As development occurs, funds will be set aside for transportation facilities to add the needed capacity to the transportation system.

The other feature of the act is coordination with the DOT on new development and improvements to the community. Agencies must consider the impact of growth on the Strategic Intermodal System and on regional transportation programs. The DOT is looking at those facilities that support the goals of the SIS; at the Growth Management backlog of facilities and moving them forward; and at commitments from partners.

*At 3:19 p.m., Commissioner Seel returned.

Ms. Royal noted that in this region, there is a Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) that has entered into local agreements to develop a regional entity. The local communities would need to adopt the level of service standards.

*At 3:20 p.m., Mayor Arbutine left.

FDOT in District 7 is in the process of coordinating with District 1 on the regional facilities. This area is farther along than other areas because the CCC has been active. They are updating the regional system, adding facilities, and currently reviewing what projects would qualify for funds.

Ms. Ward reported that the CCC has most of the pieces in place to implement this program. Staff has been working with the DOT and the district. District 7 counties can receive \$40 million.

Citrus County has not submitted any projects as part of the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP). District 1, which includes Polk County and Sarasota/Manatee, has participated in the process with the CCC; but the allocations are by district, so they are not competing for the \$40 million.

*At 3:25 p.m., Councilmember Lasita left.

Staff reviewed the Regional Road Map and the projects proposed for funding under the Growth Management Act. Bryan Dairy Road has been added by Pinellas County. A public workshop was held on September 1, and no issues were raised

Staff will email the board members the information regarding what projects were submitted for funds from the County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP).

*At 3:29 p.m., Mayor Arbutine returned.

Mr. Clifford said that the intent of the Growth Management Act is to get more money for transportation and more projects into planning. The funding programs are matching programs, and that will free up money. Chair Seel said that the freed money should be used for transportation purposes.

ACTION: Commissioner Gerard moved to endorse the project priorities for TRIP funds as recommended by staff. Mayor Hibbard seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XI. MEMORIAL CAUSEWAY LANDSCAPE PLAN

The City of Clearwater has had a landscaping project, FPN 406058 1, planned for S.R. 60 at the Courtney Campbell Causeway. The project appears on the MPO's Priority List for the Enhancement Program. The project was to include landscaping and pedestrian/bicycle facilities. The current cost estimate is \$140,000.

The city requested that this project be shifted from S.R. 60/Courtney Campbell Causeway to S.R. 60/Memorial Causeway as a landscaping project that would be part of a larger project there estimated to cost \$2.1 million. Bicycle/pedestrian facilities are not part of the plans for the Memorial Causeway project.

Mayor Hibbard said that the money would be for replacements and enhancements. The trail will be upgraded in 2006. A new pedestrian bridge will cross the Mandalay Channel. The Druid Road Trail will connect to that, and then to the East-West Trail, which will connect Safety Harbor to the Gulf. The full plan for the Courtney Campbell Causeway and the Scenic Highway is not complete, and that plan must be in place in order to use the funds. Therefore the City would like to transfer the money to the Memorial Causeway project. There are no plans to put any landscaping enhancements on the Memorial Causeway Bridge.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Kriseman, Mayor Hibbard said that while he was not serving at that time, he understands that 40% was for the bike trail and 60% was for the landscaping on the Courtney Campbell Causeway project. Some of the money the city already has will be used for bike facilities that will be completed next year.

ACTION: Commissioner Stewart moved to approve the request from the City of Clearwater. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XII. COMMUTER CHOICES WEEK

Sandy Moody, Executive Director of Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS), addressed the board about the Ninth Annual Commuter Choices Week, which will be held on September 26-30. This is a two-county event that takes place in Hillsborough County as well. The event promotes modes of transportation to work that would be an alternative to the single-occupant vehicle.

*At 3:43 Councilmember Lasita returned.

Ms. Moody noted that Telework is a big initiative of the federal government and that BACS is working on that effort. She thanked the MPO for their support of BACS.

ACTION: Commissioner Duncan moved approval of MPO Resolution #05-7 endorsing and sponsoring Commuter Choices Week. Mayor Hibbard seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XIII. MPO CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A. MPO Report

At the MPO's July meeting, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reviewed the results of the triennial certification review conducted last January. FHWA staff reported that the Pinellas County MPO's planning program complies with federal planning regulations. The certification report included four recommendations. On July 18, 2005, Mr. Smith wrote to Secretary Skelton of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 with responses to the recommendations. A copy of the letter was included with meeting materials.

Staff continues to work with the DOT's Title VI office in Tallahassee regarding the response to that recommendation. Already included in the TIP is an expanded, citizen-friendly explanation of how the MPO establishes its project priorities. Also, staff is working with a general planning consultant to develop a scope of services to update the goods movement study.

Feedback from the DOT about the staff's responses to the recommendations has been favorable.

*At 3:48 p.m., Mayor Hibbard left.

B. CAC Membership Refinement

During the FHWA's review in January, it was recommended that the membership of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) be more representative of the county's population. This recommendation was discussed at the last CAC meeting in August, at which time CAC member Nick Fritsch made some proposals regarding this.

Mr. Smith reviewed that several months ago, the MPO divided the CAC into groups by term limits of one, two, three and four years. The one-year terms are scheduled to expire this month. Staff recommended that the terms be extended until January 2006 while discussion about committee membership continues.

ACTION: Commissioner Stewart moved to extend until January 2006 the terms of those members whose terms are expiring this year. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XIV. APPROVAL OF MPO RESOLUTION DECLARING OCTOBER 31, 2005 AS PEDESTRIAN AWARENESS DAY

*At 3:49 p.m., Mayor Hibbard returned.

The MPO has gone on record as establishing a Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day in conjunction with the Monday following the return to Daylight Savings Time in the fall of every year. This year, that Monday would be October 31.

Commissioner Duncan asked how the MPO would recognize the day. Mr. Smith said that staff works with law enforcement officials and the school system on this effort. Literature pertaining to safety awareness is distributed to schools, and the students focus on safe pedestrian procedures. Commissioner Duncan asked if the communications departments in the county's municipalities are engaged in this. He said that people along Gulf Boulevard consider pedestrian safety a top priority and that the MPO should make sure that this effort is supported by them.

Under the consent agenda, the printing of 150,000 brochures regarding Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day was approved. Chair Seel said that it would be important for students to take home the literature they receive and share it with their parents. Commissioner Duncan said that communication should be enhanced to reach all residents and visitors to the county.

Chair Seel said that when the MPO reviews bicycle plans, it should pay attention to fatalities. It should also track down the countdown signals.

Commissioner Stewart noted that Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day would be competing with Halloween for attention. Mr. Smith said that the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee works with the school system to set the day. Traditionally, the day after the time change has been chosen. It's a county-wide program.

Staff will reword the resolution to state that the pedestrian has the right of way every day, not just Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day.

ACTION: Councilmember Lasita moved approval of MPO Resolution #05-6 declaring October 31, 2005 as Pedestrian Safety Awareness Day. Councilmember Kriseman seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XV. PINELLAS MOBILITY INITIATIVE UPDATE

Commissioner Duncan reported that on September 7, the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Steering Committee and the Board of Directors of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) met to discuss public transit initiatives. These groups will meet again to continue their discussion.

On September 12, the PMI Steering Committee met to discuss how to use the \$3 million recently received from a federal earmark. They also discussed how to get a project started.

The steering committee voted to recommend spending the earmark on 1) the St. Petersburg Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program from downtown St. Petersburg to the beaches, and 2) the City of Clearwater's analysis and initial stages of planning for a light rail system between downtown Clearwater and the beaches. Before its next meeting, the steering committee will need more detailed financial numbers for these potential projects.

XVI. PTAC POSITION STATEMENT RE FLORIDA ONLINE TRAFFIC SCHOOL COURSES

Mr. Smith reported that in the manuals given to drivers, as well as in driving tests, there is little emphasis on rules pertaining to pedestrians. The Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) felt that questions about pedestrian traffic rules would be appropriate during driving tests. They requested that the MPO approve forwarding this recommendation to the state.

ACTION: Commissioner Gerard moved to approve forwarding the recommendation of the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee to the state. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XVII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Staff reported that on August 10, the president signed the SAFETEA-LU bill into law. This legislation authorizes the federal government to spend \$286.5 billion for highways and transit over the next five years. It contains several earmarks for Pinellas County including projects on U.S. 19, Ulmerton Road, Bryan Dairy Road, and the Pinellas Mobility Initiative.

XVIII. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

A. MPO Committee Vacancies

Chair Seel reported that Mayor Doglione had resigned from several MPO advisory committees. Chair Seel will attend the MPO Advisory Council meetings. Commissioner Eggers will serve on the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Steering Committee. Mayor Hibbard will serve on the Intelligent Transportation System Advisory Committee. A vacancy remains for the City of Dunedin's representative to the School Transportation Safety Committee.

B. CAC, BAC, PTAC

The Citizens Advisory Committee has four vacancies, the Bicycle Advisory Committee has six vacancies, and the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee has one vacancy. Chair Seel had sent a letter to the mayors asking for nominations to these committees, but no nominations were made. She asked for the board's assistance in filling these vacancies.

C. TCC

ACTION: Councilmember Kriseman moved to appoint Danny Taylor to the Technical Coordinating Committee as the representative of the City of Indian Rocks Beach. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
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XIX. PSTA ACTIVITIES

The board of directors of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority met on July 27 and August 24, 2005. Minutes of those meetings were included with the meeting packet.

Mayor Arbutine noted that the PSTA had met with the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Steering Committee. He said that he believed the PSTA would be willing to work with the MPO on further examination of the two projects proposed to receive funds from the recent congressional earmark. Those projects are the St. Petersburg BRT and the Clearwater light rail.

Chair Seel said that the scope for the McMullen-Booth Road corridor BRT study is now in the budget for the FY 2005/06 planning program. She asked why that study wasn't considered for the earmark.

Mayor Arbutine responded that it was mentioned. There is an issue about who would be getting on and where it would end. The right-of-way is there. Also, the PSTA is willing to put money toward these studies. They were looking for help on the St. Petersburg route because they have money allocated for that. The Clearwater light rail system is of interest. McMullen-Booth Road is still being considered by the PSTA if not in a joint examination.

Commissioner Duncan said that he had hoped to put some of the earmark toward McMullen-Booth Road. However, staff had informed the PMI Steering Committee on Monday that there are no ridership numbers because there is no PSTA activity in that corridor. Also, the MPO has a study commencing to identify potential ridership. Therefore, because there may be no project, it was decided not to allocate earmark funds to it.

Chair Seel said that the light rail to the beach is another study. There is no money to fund the actual construction. Mayor Hibbard said that the earmark would fund initial engineering and a cost estimate.

Commissioner Duncan said that the steering committee was under some pressure to identify how to use the \$3 million. The two projects selected to receive the funds are the farthest along in the process.

XX. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Report on Florida Impact Fee Review Task Force

Commissioner Stewart has been appointed to the Florida Impact Fee Review Task Force. He reported that the task force is composed of two county commissioners, two school board members, a number of home builders and contractors, and citizens. The task force has had one meeting, which was on August 23. The next meeting will be on September 23 in Orlando. That will be the one meeting at which the task force will hold a public hearing.

There are issues of home rule, restrictions, and whether or not there should be a state-mandated impact fee. The task force has surveyed every county and every school system that is imposing impact fees. The task force will finish its work on February 1, 2006, when they will make a recommendation to the governor and to the legislature.

Commissioner Stewart also noted that there are 67 counties in the state, and 28 of them receive no revenue from impact fees. Of the remaining 39 counties that do receive impact fee

money, Pinellas County ranks 23rd in terms of dollars received. Also, Pinellas County collects only one fee, that being for transportation. It totaled \$3.4 million last year. Palm Beach County imposes five different impact fees, and they collect over \$90 million per year. Orange County imposes four fees and collects over \$103 million per year. Orange County and Pinellas County have approximately the same population.

B. ITS Advisory Committee

The Intelligent Transportation System Advisory Committee met on August 17. A copy of the agenda was included with meeting materials.

C. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee

The West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee held a special meeting on August 26 at FDOT headquarters in Tampa. A copy of the agenda was included with meeting materials.

D. School Transportation Safety Committee

The STSC met on September 6. A copy of the agenda was included with meeting materials.

E. Correspondence

One news article and several letters related to transportation matters were included with meeting materials.

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business. The meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Karen Williams Seel, Chair