

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MINUTES - MEETING OF NOVEMBER 10, 2010**

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 10, 2010 in the chambers of the Pinellas County Commission, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chris Arbutine – *Chairman* – Mayor, City of Belleair Bluffs, representing PSTA  
David Eggers – *Vice Chairman* – Mayor, City of Dunedin Commission  
Karen Seel – *Secretary/Treasurer* – Board of County Commissioners (arrived 1:19 p.m.)  
Neil Brickfield – Board of County Commissioners  
Harriet Crozier – Commissioner, City of Largo  
Jeff Danner – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg Council  
Frank Hibbard – Mayor, City of Clearwater  
William Mischler – Mayor, City of Pinellas Park  
Herbert Polson – Councilman, City of St. Petersburg Council  
Andy Steingold – Mayor, City of Safety Harbor representing Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, and Tarpon Springs  
Kenneth Welch – Board of County Commissioners  
Don Skelton – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) (*ex officio*)]

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Brian Smith – MPO Executive Director  
Sarah Ward – MPO Transportation Planning Division Manager  
David Sadowsky – County Attorney's Office  
Lee Royal – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
Brian Beaty – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
Denise Skinner – Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)  
Bob Lasher – PSTA  
Bob Klute – City of Largo  
Rob Meador – Pinellas County Public Works  
Paul Bertels – City of Clearwater  
Bob Bray – City of Pinellas Park  
Joe Kubicki – city of St. Petersburg  
Tom Whalen – City of St. Petersburg  
Vivian Peters – Citizen  
Lauren Patton – Bay Care TAP  
Christina Gilbert – Bay Care TAP  
Jim Green – Care Ride  
Joan Andrade – Suncoast Center  
William Desmond – NAMI  
Nick Fritsch – CAC Chairman  
Michael Moses – CPOL CS  
Carolyn Kuntz – MPO Recorder

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Mayor Bill Mischler performed the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone on the dais introduced themselves. Commissioner Crozier was congratulated on her successful re-election.

**III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Joan Andrade, Suncoast Center, 4024 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, Local Coordinating Board member, noted she appeared before the MPO two months ago and, at that time, indicated she would gather more information regarding those persons who cannot afford the increased bus pass co-pay. According to information she gathered, there are 88 facilities (ALS) that have people on OSS, with 51 individuals on Medicaid who receive a \$54 monthly stipend and that number might be larger. She sent MPO staff a list of the 88 ALS so GPTMS can cross reference to see if anyone receiving a bus pass resides at an ALS. She would like the creation of a separate co-pay for these individuals receiving \$54 a month stipend since the current co-pay is 15% of that stipend. In addition, there are a lot of individuals who are indigent but don't qualify for the TD Program because they can't provide proof they have no income. She has asked that those agencies who are working with these individuals provide a letter on their agency letterhead verifying the individual does not have an income. She wants to make sure the most vulnerable residents are provided transportation. The Legislative Delegation will be holding their meeting on November 22 and she will be speaking at that meeting. She has developed a way to possibly generate more funding for a Medicaid NET program and has forwarded her research and presentation to the LCB Chairman and MPO staff and is requesting support from the Board members

Mayor Hibbard asked MPO staff to forward the information.

William Allen Desmond, 10269 121<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Largo, member of the National Alliance on Mental Health and a disabled veteran, spoke regarding the increased cost of the bus pass co-pay, noting \$8.25 is a lot to pay when a number of these individuals only receive \$54 a month stipend to live on. They need assistance to have transportation without paying so much.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of October 13, 2010**

**B. Approval of Invoices – Tindale-Oliver and Associates**

**C. Approval of Traffic Count Equipment Repairs**

**D. Approval of Extension of Contract with Tindale-Oliver for the Clearwater Transit Evaluation**

***Councilman Danner moved and commissioner Welch seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.***

Commissioner Brickfield questioned the extension of the contract with Tindale-Oliver and Associates. Mr. Smith responded the contract is being extended from December 2008 to December 2012 to be able to complete the project.

***Following discussion, the motion passed (Vote 10-0).***

**V. PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE FY 2010/11 – 2014/15 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Brian Beaty, FDOT, reviewed the five proposed amendments.

- I-275 (S.R. 93) from the northbound on-ramp and off-ramp to S.R. 682 (Pinellas Bayway) for the replacement of lighting poles to add \$276,000 for the construction phase of this project with funds provided from the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Interstate and In-house Contingencies funds.
- S.R. 699 (Gulf Boulevard) from S.R. 682 (Pinellas Bayway) to 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue for a safety project for the construction phase of seven pedestrian refuge islands between 73<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> Avenues, a raised left-turn separator at 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and a mid-block crossing with a refuge island south of 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north of Gulf Winds Drive to add \$1,232,900 for the construction phase of this project with funds provided by the Arterial Safety Contingencies fund.

- Worknet Pinellas Transportation Assistance to add \$5,000 for operating assistance; Worknet Pinellas County to add \$201,995 for operating assistance; and Mobility Alternatives in Pinellas County for the Disadvantaged to add \$201,996 for operating assistance in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funding provided by the Small Urban/Rural Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom (NF) programs.

Mayor Hibbard questioned the amount of pedestrian traffic along Gulf Boulevard and what improvements are included in the project. Mr. Beaty responded he did not have the traffic count information but the federal government requires a rigorous cost benefit process before safety funds can be utilized. He noted a more in depth presentation will be provided at the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

**\*\*Commissioner Seel arrived at 1:19 p.m.\*\***

Mr. Skelton provided some of the detail for the improvements.

Mr. Smith suggested having a presentation at the next MPO meeting, noting the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee had a mobile workshop in this area.

Mr. Beaty added the drawings could be provided electronically to the members.

Councilman Polson asked if FDOT is using high efficiency, low energy consumption lighting in the new standards. Mr. Skelton responded not yet but they are looking at that. Councilman Polson noted that St. Petersburg is using them and have a cost savings in addition to better lighting and this would provide a good opportunity. Mr. Skelton responded there had been issues previously but he would check, noting it depends where they are in the process.

Councilman Polson commented that there were too many transportation disadvantaged programs that were narrowly defined. Mr. Beaty responded that the three amendments addressed unmet needs in the rural areas since the majority of funds are distributed to the urbanized areas. It also depends on the providers who apply for these funds.

There being no public comment, ***Councilman Polson moved, Mayor Hibbard seconded, and motion carried to approve the TIP amendments by roll call vote (Vote 11-0).***

## **VI. PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING FALL UPDATE OF THE FISCAL YEARS 2010/11 THROUGH 2014/15 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Sarah Ward noted the MPO approved the TIP with the State projects in June of this year and this is now the updated TIP to include the local projects. She noted the differences list is included in the packet, as well as the associated maps. She highlighted the road, Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), trail, transit, port, and airport projects.

Mayor Mischler stated his concern with Park Street/Starkey Road being moved out of the TIP, noting the need for the improvements and the amount of money that has already been spent in purchasing right-of-way.

Commissioner Welch noted 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South has also been moved out of the TIP and questioned the ITS stopping at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Ms. Ward responded this doesn't include all the facilities being done. Mr. Smith noted the ITS projects are for the upcoming year. Ms. Ward added the ITS projects were split into three phases and they are concentrating on Phases 1 and 2. The intent is to provide a fiber loop and connection. Commissioner Welch requested clarity. Ms. Ward responded she would check with County staff and the projects listed in the long range plan.

Councilman Polson noted the ITS Committee has been discussing bringing the loops into St. Petersburg. The City is in the process of preparing documentation that will be brought to the MPO to ask for an amendment to extend the fiber further south into St. Petersburg.

Mayor Mischler requested that staff provide information as to how much has been spent to date on Park Street/Starkey Road, including consultant fees, right-of-way acquisition, and design and engineering. Chairman Arbutine directed this information to be brought back in December. Commissioner Seel requested staff also present the rationale as to why that project was dropped from the five year program.

Nick Fritsch, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Chairman, noted a picture was included of a wheelchair on Sunset Point Road. The CAC had discussed this safety concern, noting there are no sidewalks in this area, in addition to a ditch. This issue has been discussed several times and the CAC is asking that consideration be given due to the safety issues realizing there are different funding sources.

Mr. Smith stated the Technical Coordinating Committee recommended approval and the CAC recommended approval but recognizing the need for sidewalks on the west end of Sunset Point Road.

Following discussion, **Mayor Hibbard moved, Commissioner Brickfield seconded, and motion carried to approve the fall update of the TIP by roll call vote (Vote 10-1), with Mayor Mischler casting the dissenting vote.**

Mayor Eggers questioned the total cost of the projects that were approved. Ms. Ward asked if County staff knew the total cost of the County's transportation projects. Since that information was not readily available, Ms. Ward responded she would bring back that information.

Mayor Eggers stated there needs to be way to come up with funding to keep the bus pass co-pay at \$4 instead of the increased amount.

Mr. Smith noted the amount for the County's transportation program was included in the back of the material and is \$240 million.

Mayor Eggers questioned the amount of the shortfall to keep the bus pass co-pay at \$4. Mr. Smith responded he wasn't sure but it had to do with how many qualified for that program. Mayor Eggers asked that things be kept in perspective.

## **VII. PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE ORDINANCE**

Mr. Smith indicated that, since the mobility fee was previously placed on hold, the MPO had recommended the bi-annual review of the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance (TIFO) proceed. In reviewing the TIFO, seven categories were modified based on the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITS) Manual, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Six of the categories' rates were reduced, with the exception of the private library category, which slightly increased. The Technical Coordinating Committee recommended approval.

There was no public comment.

**Mayor Hibbard moved, Commissioner Crozier seconded, and motion carried to recommend approval of the modified TIFO to the Board of County Commissioners (Vote 11-0).**

Commissioner Welch commented that two businesses in St. Petersburg called regarding problems with the transportation impact fee. One caller was for a day care center redeveloped from an old bank where they had to pay \$8,600 in impact fees. The second caller was an eye doctor who

moved to a new office on 49<sup>th</sup> Street and had to pay \$13,000 in impact fees. He asked how the fee could be fine tuned to encourage redevelopment and how the notification process could be improved so people know upfront how much they are expected to pay in transportation impact fees.

Mr. Smith suggested holding a workshop for the local governments so they are aware of the procedures and costs for impact fees. The costs should be calculated so the people are aware upfront how much they'll be required to pay. Based on discussion, Mr. Smith clarified that impact fees for redevelopment are differential fees.

Commissioner Seel indicated she has previously questioned why day care centers have the highest trips and associated impact fees and suggested having the MPO do traffic counts to see how they compare with the ITE Manual.

Paul Bertels, City of Clearwater; Joe Kubicki, City of St. Petersburg; and Bob Bray, City of Pinellas Park, all responded as to how their respective cities collect impact fees and the notification process, which is calculated upfront when they submit their site plans. It was noted they are willing to work with the applicant and, in addition, there is an appeals process. They also notify the MPO office of any adjustments for any other community that might be interested.

Commissioner Welch felt this is a discussion worth having.

#### **VIII. MPO REAPPORTIONMENT PLAN**

Ms. Ward reviewed the MPO Reapportionment Plan, which would add two members with one representing the beach communities and one representing the inland communities. The MPO alternating members can serve up to four years; however, to allow for rotation, Tarpon Springs/Oldsmar/Safety Harbor agreed to a two-year term. MPO staff is suggesting a two-year term for the two additional members. Once the MPO endorses the Reapportionment Plan, it will be sent to the agencies asking them to adopt the resolution. Once all the agencies have approved the supporting resolution, the entire package will be sent to FDOT Central Office in Tallahassee that will make a recommendation to the Governor.

Councilman Danner asked if the Special Act was not modified, would the Reapportionment Plan for two additional members be in effect? Ms. Ward responded it is not tied to any other action.

Chairman Arbutine indicated he didn't like that the two new members would be on a rotated based and that they should be elected among themselves for continuity. Mr. Smith responded they could succeed themselves. Ms. Ward added the law indicates an alternating member and staff is recommending a two-year process but they could continue additional terms.

Councilman Polson noted the only reason to add two new members is due to the discussion of the merger of the MPO and Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) and feels it is bad policy to proceed with the additional members unless it's contingent upon a change to the Special Act. Mayor Hibbard agreed, indicating he doesn't see the equity in the reapportionment otherwise. Mayor Mischler agreed that the expansion of membership should be subject to the merger of the MPO and PPC and cannot support it unless the Special Act is changed.

Commissioner Seel indicated the County Attorney has been working with the various cities and has sent another draft of the modification to the Special Act for review.

Ms. Ward responded that this could be sent out asking for the resolutions of support and delay submitting the package to FDOT until after the Special Act has been modified. She has not had a discussion with FDOT if language could be inserted that it was contingent upon the Special Act being modified. She noted that with the change in Governor, there is the possibility of a change in the FDOT Secretary, which could delay approval of the Reapportionment Plan.

Mr. Skelton suggested stopping the process before the package is submitted to FDOT. Once the package is submitted to FDOT, there is a time period involved where FDOT must make a recommendation to the Governor.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the expanded membership. Lee Royal, FDOT, indicated that, historically, it takes awhile for a decision and, with the new Administration, there is not a time line in place for the approval process.

David Sadowsky, MPO attorney, indicated the PPC members wanted to make sure the MPO Reapportionment Plan was concurrent with the modification to the Special Act to make sure representation of all communities was in place.

Councilman Danner asked if the resolution could indicate the expanded membership was contingent upon passage of the modifications to the Special Act. Mr. Sadowsky responded they are two different processes. The PPC is through a Special Act and the MPO is a federal/state process.

Further discussion followed as to when the Reapportionment Plan process would begin.

***Councilman Danner moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to endorse the Reapportionment Plan conditional upon the Special Act passing, have the cities submit to the MPO resolutions of support, putting together the package but wait until the Special Act is approved before submitting the Reapportionment Plan package to FDOT (Vote 10-1) with Mayor Hibbard casting the dissenting vote.***

## **IX. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. PTAC and BAC Recommendations Regarding New Florida Law Affecting Sidewalks**

Mr. Smith indicated the Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) noticed the legislature had passed legislation that allowed golf carts and other motorized vehicles on 8-foot sidewalks and had a concern with safety by mixing these types of uses with pedestrians. They understood the reason to get them off the road due to safety reasons. The PTAC flagged this concern for the MPO. The Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) also reviewed the legislation and had a similar concern and wanted to flag it as a major safety issue. They are recommending the MPO notify the local governments that this is a safety issue and, in addition, support corrective legislation to remove this allowance.

Mayor Hibbard asked if the legislation included Segways. It was noted they are considered motorized but are allowed on the Trail.

Mayor Mischler noted that Pinellas Park has adopted certain local roads that allow golf carts to use the roads to take them off the sidewalks, since that was creating a safety issue with pedestrians. Mr. Skelton clarified the legislation, noting if improvements are made with federal funds, it is illegal to operate a golf cart on sidewalks.

Following considerable discussion, ***Mayor Hibbard moved and Councilman Danner seconded a motion to receive and file the recommendation.***

Commissioner Brickfield noted that citizens are using alternative modes of transportation and this issue should be addressed.

Mayor Eggers indicated Dunedin is also looking at this issue to allow golf carts on roads and that it is important and needs to be addressed.

Following further discussion, ***the motion passed (Vote 11-0) to receive and file.***

**B. PTAC Recommendation Regarding Madonna Boulevard**

Mr. Smith indicated the PTAC proposed several additional safety improvements to assist with pedestrian and vehicular movement on Madonna Boulevard and FDOT concurred. Chairman Arbutine noted there was an additional attachment in the folders.

*Commissioner Brickfield moved, Commissioner Crozier seconded, and motion carried to approve the recommendation (Vote 11-0).*

**X. PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mayor Hibbard provided a brief update on the latest Project Advisory Committee activities, noting there was discussion as to what Hillsborough County plans to do since the one cent transit surtax was defeated, the plans to hold i-town meetings and the fact it will include video, continuing to refine evaluation of the different corridors and narrow the criteria to be used, and still on track to be completed in the 18-month timeframe.

**XI. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

*Mayor Hibbard moved, Councilman Polson seconded, and motion carried to approve Aaron Lounsberry as the Agency for Health Care Administration representative on the Local Coordinating Board.*

**XII. PSTA ACTIVITIES**

Denise Skinner, PSTA Interim Executive Director, indicated PSTA exceeded 1.1 million riders in October even with the fare increases. They now have all the partners along with PSTA to provide Jolly Trolley service from downtown Clearwater north through Dunedin, Palm Harbor, and then to Tarpon Springs. The kick-off for that event is Wednesday, November 17, 2010, 4:00 p.m., at Pioneer Park, with service beginning next Friday. Service will be from 10:00 a.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday. All proposals for a search team for the new Executive Director are due today. They will set up a meeting with the Personnel Committee and take the recommendation to the full Board in December to begin the replacement process.

Mayor Hibbard thanked all the partners for their support of the Jolly Trolley, which is under new management and they've turned the organization around.

**XIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Establishment of Nominating Committee for 2011 Election of Officers**

*Commissioner Brickfield moved, Commissioner Welch seconded, and motion carried to appoint Mayor Mischler, Chairman Arbutine, and Councilman Polson as the Nominating Committee to recommend a slate of officers at the December MPO meeting.*

**B. Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee Scheduled to Meet December 10, 2010**

Mr. Smith noted the CCC will meet on December 10.

**C. MPOAC Meeting of October 28, 2010**

Mr. Smith indicated the MPOAC met on October 28.

**D. Update on Proposed Changes to the Special Act for the Pinellas Planning Council**

Mr. Smith indicated there is a status report on the Special Act that had previously been discussed.

**E. Correspondence**

**F. Other**

Mr. Smith noted the December MPO agenda will include an item on the Medicaid transportation program since the program has been operating in the red for the last three

months. The Local Coordinating Board will be discussing this issue at their November 30 meeting to develop recommendations that will be brought to the December MPO meeting.

It was announced that the Nominating Committee will meet shortly after the adjournment of today's MPO meeting.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

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Chris Arbutine, Chairman