

**PINELLAS COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES - MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 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, January 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
David Eggers - City of Dunedin Commission
William Mischler - Mayor, City of Pinellas Park
Herbert Polson - City of St. Petersburg Council
Robin Saenger - City of Tarpon Springs Commission, representing Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, and Tarpon Springs
Karen Seel - Board of County Commissioners
Robert Stewart - Board of County Commissioners
Don Skelton, *ex officio* - Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Brian Smith - MPO Executive Director
Sarah Ward - MPO Transportation Planning Administrator
Marian Ange - Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Brian Beaty - Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Paul Bertels - City of Clearwater
Bob Bray - City of Pinellas Park
Rich Clarendon - URS
Bob Clifford - Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Lori Gardner - Renaissance Planning Group
Tim Garling - Executive Director, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
Joe Kubicki - City of St. Petersburg
Rob Meador - Pinellas County Public Works
David Sadowsky - Pinellas County Attorney's Office
Wilfred Sergeant - Transit Consultant
Tom Whalen - City of St. Petersburg
Carolyn Kuntz - MPO Recorder
Harriet McKay - MPO Staff Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Chairman Hibbard gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members introduced themselves.

III. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There was no citizen comment.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes - Meeting of December 12, 2007
- B. Approval of Invoices
 - 1. Tindale-Oliver & Associates
 - 2. Renaissance Planning Group
 - 3. American Consulting Engineers
- C. Approval of JARC/New Freedom Sub-grantee Agreements

ACTION: Mayor Mischler moved to approve the consent agenda, Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

V. FDOT 2008/09–2012/13 TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAM

At its December meeting, the MPO made a preliminary review of the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) 2008/09-2012/13 draft Tentative Work Program. The draft was then forwarded to the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for their review and comment.

Both the TCC and the CAC said that several areas on U.S. 19 have safety problems. Those areas are: 1) Enterprise Road; 2) north of Sunset Point Road; and 3) south of S.R. 580. The TCC recommended that the FDOT initiate a safety project in the Enterprise Road area. A memo detailing the committees' recommendations was included with meeting materials. Chairman Hibbard agreed that the safety issues should be addressed.

Secretary Skelton said that the project at Sunset Point Road and Coachman Road is just opening now. The FDOT will continue to monitor traffic in that area and sections to the north. Next month, the FDOT will review the Enterprise Road interchange situation, and the recommendations of the advisory committees will be discussed at greater length.

In the Tentative Work Program, several projects have been moved back in the schedule. Staff flagged as a possible source of funding for these delayed projects the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB). This is a Statewide pool of funds from which loans can be made. Secretary Skelton responded that there are several issues to be considered when using the SIB for the U.S. 19 projects. One is the magnitude of the projects. There are two projects involved, and each will cost about \$80 million. The SIB has \$100 million per year to loan Statewide. Also,

the FDOT caps "loaning to itself." The intent of the SIB is to have a competitive process and charge interest for the loans. Also, the funds are not there in the available years in order to advance these particular projects.

Mr. Smith reviewed the proposed changes to the current Work Program. The chart of changes included with the meeting packet was replaced by an updated chart prepared by FDOT. Secretary Skelton reviewed the funding for several of the projects.

During board discussion, Secretary Skelton made several other points. The DOT has a policy of programming 75% of its funds for Strategic Inter-modal System (SIS) projects and 25% of its funds for non-SIS projects. When the Work Program was impacted by a forecast of \$1 billion less in revenue, that reduction had to come from the State's SIS program. The U.S. 19 projects are funded from a State-managed program, so they are in the SIS. Most SIS funds come from State sources. The DOT has also had impacts to non-SIS projects. Every district has had to identify projects that they could eliminate, move or defer.

Regarding the \$29 million in right-of-way funds scheduled in 06/07 for Enterprise Road, those funds were used to cover cost increases on U.S. 19 between Whitney Road and S.R. 60. They were used that way to protect the U.S. 19 program.

Commissioner Seel noted that the Whitney-to-Seville and the Seville-to-S.R. 60 projects have slipped several years. People are anxious to see those projects completed.

The overall plan still remains to convert all of U.S. 19 in Pinellas County to a controlled-access facility. The question is how much can be done over the next 20 years. It was noted that the Cost Feasible Plan includes US 19 to Curlew Road.

The draft Tentative Work Program shows \$11 million for the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport. That money will be used to rebuild the inside of the terminal, create more check-in areas, and add jetways. Almost \$9 million of that money is from local funding.

ACTION: Commissioner Eggers moved to accept the draft Tentative Work Program. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion, and the motion carried, with Commissioner Seel dissenting.

VI. LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

*At 1:37 p.m., Commissioner Stewart left.

The MPO's current Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) has a planning horizon year of 2025. The next Plan update and adoption are due in 2009, and that Plan will have a horizon year of 2035. Update activities have been underway for several months.

*At 1:41 p.m., Commissioner Stewart returned.

Ms. Ward gave a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the LRTP planning factors; Federal law and regulations; the Public Participation Plan (PIP); State requirements; local and regional plan coordination; a flow chart of the Plan development and approval process; and the 2009 LRTP Development Schedule for the region. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was included with meeting materials.

Federal SAFETEA-LU legislation required some changes to the LRTP planning process. Effective December 12, 2007, project cost/revenue information must be expressed in year-of-expenditure (YOE) dollars. The MPOs, FDOT, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have written the "Metropolitan Transportation Plan Year of Expenditure (YOE) Compliance Process", which explains how this will be accomplished. This document will be presented to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council at their next meeting. A result of the YOE requirement is that the MPOs will have to spend more time prioritizing their projects to establish a timeframe for when the projects will actually be built.

Also, effective since December 2007 is a rule that any amendment to the LRTP triggers the YOE requirement. One possible scenario is that because of project cost increases, a project may have to be removed from the adopted Plan. Staff expects some changes to the adopted Plan to address changes to County roads. Some changes could be handled as administrative modifications, which is a simpler process.

*At 1:54 p.m., Commissioner Seel left.

Different plans with different planning horizons will need to be coordinated with each other. Staff noted that the biggest challenge is likely to be specifying the time of a project. This process has been the subject of a decades-long debate, but the new Federal law requires a specific year and cost for a project.

VII. TAMPA BAY AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (TBARTA) FUNDING REQUEST UPDATE

Chairman Hibbard reviewed that in December the MPO had allocated \$10,000 as seed money for TBARTA's legal services. All five MPOs were to do this, and the Tampa Bay Partnership was planning to get private sector matching funds.

Since that time, Hernando, Hillsborough and Pinellas MPOs have approved their allocations. However, Sarasota/Manatee MPO took action not to approve, and Pasco MPO has not voted yet. Sarasota/Manatee MPO said it understood that when TBARTA was established, it wasn't going to impact local revenues. However, this allocation would come from local revenues. Pasco MPO asked where the monies would be deposited. This is a procedural question that the MPO staffs are going to discuss at their next meeting.

Board members agreed that Pinellas County should keep its commitment to this allocation, noting the importance of the regional transportation efforts, and with the understanding that all the participating MPOs will make their contribution.

Councilmember Danner noted that none of the State legislators had submitted a request for additional TBARTA funds since their request for funds last year was vetoed by the Governor. The State needs to help fund TBARTA.

Mayor Arbutine said that Pinellas County MPO should leave its funding in place with the caveat that if any of the MPOs don't contribute, the MPO should then withdraw its contribution. He said TBARTA should go to the Sarasota/Manatee MPO and get them "on board." The region needs unity in this effort, and TBARTA has to work with the MPOs.

Secretary Skelton said that Pasco County MPO is supportive of the regional effort, but TBARTA does not have a financial account at this time. Pinellas County MPO has not deposited any money yet. The FDOT and the consultant are working to bring the MPOs together.

Chairman Hibbard noted that some counties are not going to accrue benefits in the near future, but they need to stay together and keep moving forward. Of the top 25 major metropolitan areas in the country, only the Tampa Bay area and Detroit do not have mass transit programs.

Secretary Skelton noted that the private sector is committed to matching everything that the MPOs can commit.

ACTION: Councilmember Danner moved that the \$10,000 for legal services remain allocated until the next meeting of the TBARTA, at which time it can be determined if all the MPOs will make their allocations and where the funds will be deposited. Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

VIII. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Hibbard urged the board to find candidates for the open positions on the advisory committees.

ACTION: Mayor Mischler moved to appoint Bernard Buxton-Tetteh as the new alternate representative of the City of Largo on the Technical Coordinating Committee, replacing Bill Ondulich. Vice Mayor Crozier seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

IX. PSTA ACTIVITIES

The next meeting of the board of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority will be on January 23, 2008.

Tim Garling, Executive Director of the PSTA, addressed the MPO. The PSTA will conduct a Transit Development Plan meeting next week in partnership with the Pinellas Mobility Initiative Steering Committee. This will be an important step toward forming a plan to improve transportation in the area. Also, the PSTA will host the TBARTA meeting at the end of this month.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation

The Medicaid Expenditures Report showed a fund balance of \$722,330.45 as of November 2007.

B. Correspondence

Included with meeting materials was a letter dated December 17, 2007 from Tim Garling of the PSTA to Scott Collister of the FDOT regarding transit-friendly roadways. No action was necessary.

C. Other

Mayor Mischler noted that Commissioner Stewart would chair the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for 2008. He thanked Commissioner Duncan for his service as chairman of the BCC for 2007.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business. The meeting adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Frank Hibbard, Chairman