



July Board Meeting
Friday, July 16, 2021 – 10:00 AM
Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
3201 Scherer Drive
St. Petersburg, FL 33716

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Jim Holton
Cliff Manuel, Jr
Commissioner Janet Long
Mayor Rick Kriseman
Commissioner Kathryn Starkey
Commissioner Rene Flowers
David Gwynn
L.K. Nandam
Alan Zimmet
David Green
TBARTA staff

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

FLORIDA AVENUE BRT – CHRIS COCHRAN & JUSTIN WILLITS, HART

This project is currently in the second phase 2A/Task 5, Recommended Alternative PD&E, and will continue through end of the year. Once complete the HART Board will vote to either pursue federal CIG funding for the project or move forward with other supported projects. The corridor runs between downtown Tampa and USF. The projected capital cost is estimated at \$95m to \$119m, and the annual operating cost is estimated at \$3.2m to \$5.4m. Weekday ridership estimates range from 85,000 to 10,900 with transit dependent numbers ranging from 4,700 to 6,000. The phase 1 service recommendation aims to make the trip in 35 minutes every 10-15 minutes. They also discussed curbside/mixed traffic concepts per area and station design. Project coordination is taking place with FDOT, the City of Tampa and THEA. Next steps include TOD input on station locations, refining the guideway, updating “stops” model and updating an operations plan.

RRT LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – BRIAN PESSARO

The Board was presented with four alternatives for the RRT in April. They were scheduled to select the locally preferred alternative this month but could not vote due to lack of quorum. The alternatives are:

- Alternative 6a operates in mixed traffic from Pasco to Westshore, and express bus lanes from the Howard Frankland bridge to St. Petersburg with 6 stations. The 2020 capital cost is \$48 million. There would be no option to receive any FTA dollars toward this alternative. 2045 ridership is projected to be 1,088 per day. 100% of Pasco riders cross county lines, 20% for Hillsborough and 80% for Pinellas. 28,460 will be served from the transit dependent community and 295,166 will have better access to jobs.
- Alternative 8a operates in dedicated BRT lanes from Wesley Chapel to Tampa, and express bus lanes from Tampa to St. Petersburg with 9 stations. The 2020 capital cost is \$206.9 million with a potential for Federal/State contributions. 2045 ridership is projected to be 6,550 per day. 100% of Pasco riders cross county lines, 5% for Hillsborough and 51% for Pinellas. 34,846 will be served from the transit dependent community and 338,261 will have better access to jobs.
- Alternative 8b operates in dedicated BRT lanes from Wesley Chapel to Tampa, express bus lanes to Gateway, and dedicated BRT lanes to St. Petersburg with 9 stations. The 2020 capital cost is \$207 million with a potential for Federal/State contributions. 2045 ridership is projected to be 7,400 per day. 100% of Pasco riders cross county lines, 5% for Hillsborough and 47% for Pinellas. 34,846 will be served from the transit dependent community and 338,261 will have better access to jobs.
- Alternative 8c operates in mixed traffic from Pasco to Bearss, dedicated BRT lanes to Tampa, mixed traffic to Westshore, express bus lanes to Gateway, and BRT lanes to St. Petersburg with 9 stations. The 2020 capital cost is \$89.7 million with a potential for Federal/State contributions. 2045 ridership is projected to be 5,700 per day. 100% of Pasco riders cross county lines, 5% for Hillsborough and 51% for Pinellas. 34,846 will be served from the transit dependent population and 338,261 will have better access to jobs.

The objective is to be a regional service and complement local connections such as HART's Florida Avenue BRT, CSX corridor, Tampa Streetcar extension, future Brightline extension, and the SunRunner.

LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – COMMISSIONERS LONG & STARKEY

Federal Legislative Update (Harry Glenn and Steve Palmer, Van Scoyoc)

The House appropriations committee has worked through all 12 appropriations. The final one, the transportation infrastructure bill provides a 20% increase in spending with much of it going towards transportation. It provides over \$15 billion to the Federal transit administration, which benefits TBARTA and other local agencies. It also provides \$2.5 billion in capital investment grants, these are FTA grants used to build out BRT and light rail systems. It provides \$580 million dollars for transit infrastructure grants that can be used for bus and bus facility upgrades. \$1.2 billion has been provided for the new RAISE grant, it would cover transportation projects of regional significance. \$20 million has been provided for transportation planning grants. In addition this bill does two other things. It funds a new program called the thriving communities initiative, the committee will fund this for the first time at \$100 million. It provides planning and research on how communities can increase opportunities for residents in the areas of jobs, schools and businesses. This will integrate housing and transit. Finally the Committee bill also provides direction to the DOT to do more work in the area of climate change &

transportation with a focus on innovative transit. The Committee will approve the bill this week and it will then go to the House floor in two weeks for approval. The Senate will be delayed until September.

\$2.3 trillion was proposed by the President for the multi-year Infrastructure bill. That bill proposed almost \$23 billion for transit, and the Senate bipartisan agreement has proposed almost \$22 billion. As of now there is no information on how it will be allocated and dispersed. The Senate needs 60 votes to pass the bill. The Democrats are going alone on the American Families Plan bill for \$3.5 trillion. The five-year Surface Transportation bill was passed on the House side house. This bill funds transit at almost \$22 billion a year as well, transit funding could go from \$12 billion to \$20 billion next year.

State Legislative Update (Ron Pierce, RSA)

Governor DeSantis vetoed our appropriation due to concerns on unspent Federal grant funds and continuing to ask for non-recurring revenue for operations. RSA has put in a request to the Governor's office to discuss the concerns that were raised. Other ideas include meeting with DOT to see what ideas they might have and meeting with President Simpson. We need to have projects that tie back to any requested money.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT – COMMISSIONER LONG

June Financials (Melonie Williams)

Year to date through the month of June, the net surplus of \$322,975 was \$425.00 over the budget of \$322,550. On the revenue and expense side we were \$2 million under budget due to use of STP and FTA 5307 funds, and the timing of the PD&E and technology studies. At the end of June there was approximately \$471,000 in the bank.

FY 2022 Budget (Melonie Williams)

The \$3.8 million draft budget for FY 2022 is supportive of TBARTA's mission and includes resources to support the organization, the Commuter Assistance Program, and planning work to continue our transit vision for Tampa Bay. The focus will now be on reviewing the draft budget and presenting a final draft budget to the Governing Board at the August board meeting. Key highlights include:

- Continued Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) funding support from FDOT that assumes increased participation in the van pool program.
- Completion of the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) work for the 41-mile BRT.
- Completion of the Pinellas Aerial Gondola Feasibility Study.
- Partner contributions remain the same to continue establishing an operating reserve.
- Revenues will exceed expenses by \$385k, allowing for a thirty-six-day operating reserve.
- Salary assumptions include a 3% maximum merit-based increase.

The capital budget for FY 2022 is \$552,714 funded by an FTA Section 5307 grant passed through to TBARTA from PSTA. The main highlight is the US19 BRT Feasibility Study and other related studies

BMO Annual Performance Review (David Green)

The Board was presented with the professional legal services agreement for BMO, whose performance and compensation must be reviewed each year. Staff is fully satisfied with BMO's performance and the recommendation includes an increase of \$5 per attorney hour effective August 1, 2021. This brings the new hourly rate to \$255 with all other hourly rates remaining unchanged. This item has been included in the FY 2022 draft operating budget. The original contract was awarded on August 3, 2018, and either party may terminate it for any reason. This will move to the August meeting due to lack of quorum.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Holton underscored the need for all Board members to get on the same page on projects in order to get federal funding.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The TD Tampa Bay was discontinued on July 1st due to funding. The program finished strong and there is still a need for cross-county transportation. June ridership eclipsed 1,000th was the second highest month-to-month increase. We are hoping to find another solution in FY 2023.

The TBARTA statute has changed and we have drafted changes to the bylaws. This will need to get approved next month.

Annual Board officer elections will be held next month in August. We are currently accepting nominations.

The MOU in place with PTSA had a reciprocal update made with TBARTA able to also provide PSTA billable services. This was part of the strategic plan of recommendation discussed back in April and will fill in gaps from reduced staff at TBARTA.

PRESENTATIONS

Envision 2030 Annual Progress Report (Brian Pessaro)

This is a ten-year strategic plan for regional transit in the five-county region. It outlines both phased ten-year service and implementation plans. It also includes a major RTDP update that is completed every five years with annual progress reports required each year between major updates. FY 2021 accomplishments included:

Moving People:

- Continued to lead the RRT PD&E study.
- Rebranded Commuter Services program to "Commute Tampa Bay" with an app and website that included a one-stop resource. The program also implemented online webinars during the pandemic.
- The TD Tampa Bay program was created in partnership with UZURV to provide inter-county regional TD trips, supplementing intra-county evening/weekend TD services with 2,023 trips provided from December 2020-April 2021.

Advancing Technologies:

- Completed the Innovative Transit (ITT) Feasibility study.
- Selected SJC Alliance to begin the Pinellas Area Gondola Feasibility study.

Leveraging Partnerships:

- I-275 Bus on Shoulder pilot study. This serves PSTA route 100x and began operating in June 2021. TBARTA provided \$30,000 to fund on-board communication equipment.
- PSTA AVA Demonstration project. This is a 100% electric, driverless shuttle that currently has three test runs in Pinellas County. TBARTA provided \$400,000 in funding assistance for the Dunedin and Clearwater Beach test runs.
- Submitted a resolution in support of MCAT's grant application improving service on Route 99. The grant was awarded in December 2020.
- Staff attended 250+ partner agency and stakeholder meetings.
- Relayed COVID-19 related info through free webinars and webpage updates for transit users.

Ensuring Compliance:

- Prepared the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).
- Prepared the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan.
- Updated the Title VI Program.

A call-to-action outlined steps for the TBARTA Board to implement Envision 2030 and was also updated in the APR to better reflect where TBARTA is today. The Board also requested to update the report by adding a reference to sustainability/resiliency. This will help ensure consideration for future grant opportunities.

Policy:

- Adopt Envision 2030 & Annual Progress Reports, confirm/clarify mission, and convene a periodic Regional Transit summit.

Funding:

- Support flexibility of existing funding, pursue funding for agency operations/regional transit projects, endorse local grant applications, and explore grant/funding partnership opportunities with local partners.

Commitment/Collaboration:

- Facilitate Board workshop to build consensus and confirm/clarify mission, achieve consensus on locally preferred alternative for RRT, cultivate champions to pursue funding, and present annual progress report to partners.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

- The Board requested to accelerate the August meeting date in order to adopt the new bylaws, which will provide both mayors the option to designate an alternate.
- The Board continued discussions on a regional transportation forum. More information will be provided in the future.

****NEXT BOARD MEETING******August 20, 2021 – 10:00 AM****PSTA Board Room****3201 Scherer Drive****St. Petersburg, FL 33716**

Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority meetings are open to the public. If a decision made at a meeting is appealable, any person who decides to appeal will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, including testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based. Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in a Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority meeting is asked to advise the agency at least 2 business days before the meeting by calling 1(800) 998-7433. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1(800) 955-8771 (TDD) or 1(800) 955-8770 (Voice).