



**Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority**

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**HILLSBOROUGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY (HART)  
&  
PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PSTA)**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2010**

**10:30 A.M.**

**HART ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
FLORIDA CONFERENCE ROOM  
1201 E. 7<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
TAMPA, FL 33605**

**AGENDA**

1. Introductions and Call To Order
2. Minutes From July 20, 2009 PSTA/HART Meeting ~ Written report
3. HART/Alternatives Analysis Process and Schedule ~ Presentation
4. PSTA/Pinellas County Alternatives Analysis and Schedule ~ Presentation
5. Preliminary Budget Outlook for FY 2011 ~ Staff Oral Report
6. Status of Cross Bay Bus Services and Ridership Trends ~ Staff Oral Report
7. Technology in Transit (Routeshout, PSTA's Planned Real Time Arrival Program, Etc) ~ Staff Oral Report
8. Consortium Procurement Process - HART/PSTA ~ Staff Oral Report
9. Next Meeting

*Celebrating* **30** *Years*

**HILLSBOROUGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
AND PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING  
Monday, July 20, 2009 at 9:00 AM  
HART Administrative Office  
1201 East 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Florida Room  
Tampa, FL 336025**

**Board Members Present (8)**

Wallace Bowers  
Fran Davin  
John Dingfelder  
Commissioner Rose Ferlita  
Councilmember Ron Govin  
Dr. Steven Polzin  
Mark Sharpe  
Mr. Michael York

**Board Members Absent.....(4)**

Commissioner Kevin Beckner  
John Byczek  
Alison Hewitt  
David Mechanik

**Staff Members Present**

David Armijo  
Bob Potts  
Marc Mostoller  
David Persaud  
Philip Hale  
Joe Escobedo  
Ed Crawford  
Vanessa Cephus  
John Green

**Others Present**

Clark Jordan-Holmes, JJH  
R.B. Johnson, PSTA Board  
Jeff Danner, PSTA Board  
Bill Jonson, PSTA Board  
Tim Garling, PSTA  
Alan Wulkan  
Beth Alden, MPO  
Ned Baier, Hillsborough County  
Patrick OConnor, Kinley-Horn  
Deborah Lyars, FDOT

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**Sign-in sheets are attached.**

Meeting was called to order at 8:40 a.m.

Chairperson Govin referred the Board members present to the March 30, 2009 HART/PSTA Joint Boards meeting minutes.

Mr. Jonson noted that on page 2, there is a reference to Drew Park in Pinellas County, and should be corrected to Drew Park-and-Ride.

**Update on New Starts Project/Referendum**

Mr. Armijo introduced Mr. Alan Wulkan, who was invited to give a presentation to the County Transportation Task Force (TTF) later that afternoon. Mr. Armijo outlined the agenda for the joint

boards meeting as well as for the HART Major Projects Committee meeting and invited the PSTA Board members to attend.

Mr. Armijo provided a brief review of the activities undertaken within the New Starts project. He said that after the HART board approved the contract award for the AA update on the Northeast and West corridors, the contract was executed and meetings are in progress with HART's internal project team as well as with PB Americas, Inc. to discuss work scope, schedule and critical issues.

Ms. Fran Davin arrived at 8:48 a.m.

Mr. Armijo spoke about the extensive community outreach and community meetings held to talk about the project progress. He indicated that next steps will include meetings on the travel demand modeling element. Mr. Armijo noted that the project advisory committee meetings are scheduled in July and August, among which are steering committee, stakeholders, land use and development and technical working group meetings.

#### **Update and Discussion On Pinellas County Transit Funding Committee**

Mr. Garling reported that the PSTA will be able to balance its budget without reducing service and raising fares due to a combination of factors such as low fuel prices and federal stimulus package funds. He noted that starting in FY2011, the agency will have to find a sustainable funding source to have balanced budgets.

Councilmember Dingfelder arrived at 8:53 a.m.

Commissioner Sharpe arrived at 8:54 a.m.

Mr. Garling further focused his presentation on results of a focus group and proposed public satisfaction survey. He indicated that focus groups are used to provide qualitative information about the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of participants regarding the topic of discussion, and are not intended to reach a consensus, to arrive at a plan, or to make decisions about what course of action to take. Mr. Garling said that the Pinellas County funding committee focus group's study objective was to gauge citizens' interest in expanded and improved transit service for Pinellas County. He further explained the methodology used and summarized the findings, which he grouped as community-related, service-related, and funding-related. Mr. Garling said that people expressed the will that rail will be beneficial to the county, and expressed interest in inter-county connectivity. He stated that there was a general objection to property tax increases and to increased gas taxes, as well as to the idea that fare increases and other means of levying riders would be sufficient to pay for expansion or improvements. Mr. Garling stated that the survey responses suggest need for increased improvement in transit services. He said the group's suggestion was to develop and present to the public specific types of future transit options, such as rail. Mr. Garling concluded by stating that additional quantitative research is believed to be necessary to assess the public's attitudes on transit and future funding.

Dr. Polzin asked if the focus group gave any indication that an increase in sales tax will be accepted if the property tax is rolled back.

Mr. Garling said that the answers were quite mixed.

Mr. Armijo noted that HART is embarking on its community opinion survey and its results will be known later in August.

Ms. Davin indicated that from her experience she concludes that unless a clear picture is drawn for the respondents, surveys generate a mixed set of responses.

Mr. Armijo remarked that it is critical to tell the story and lay out the plan that needs to be communicated.

Mr. R B Johnson said it was mentioned that HART conducts similar surveys every three years. He asked for comment on the results of the latest survey conducted three years ago.

Mr. Crawford responded that the 2005-2006 opinion survey did not pose a question on support of the rail initiative because at that point in time HART was withdrawn from the process. He indicated that the survey demonstrated strong support of transit by the public that stated that "money spent on transit is good investment."

Mr. Armijo said that the objective of the upcoming survey is to focus on today's initiatives and picturing the path.

Dr. Polzin asked if there was any inclination from the public that the this time is perceived as unique.

Mr. Garling said that there is belief that the tax increases were rejected because it is unique time. He noted that the public was very much engaged in trying to find ways to pay for transit

Mr. Armijo said every community is different, however the recent tendency is that people are much more engaged, but it is important to have a livable plan to present.

### **HART Operational Issues Update**

Mr. Armijo spoke about five major components of HART's improving service. He reported that the Tampa International Airport (TIA) transfer center project will connect local and limited express routes, PSTA express service, and future BRT and circulator services. Mr. Armijo stated that the design work will start in fall of 2009, with the transfer center going into operation in summer of 2011. He demonstrated the TIA transfer center site map. He reported about the progress of the bus replacement project. Mr. Armijo said the first of HART's 30 new buses has just been delivered. He noted the buses will enter service between August 29 and October 8, and all are 40 foot coaches branded in the new paint scheme. Mr. Armijo remarked that rebranding of HART's fleet is another major agency initiative. He spoke about the MetroRapid project, describing the corridors, funding components and the project features such as traffic signal priority, travel time savings, and distinctive branding. Mr. Armijo stated that the construction of the project will begin in 2010, with the start of operations in late 2011. He reported on the streetcar extension project progress. Mr. Armijo indicated that it is 1/3 mile addition to the existing line that will take no auto lanes and is fully funded. Mr. Armijo said that the project's construction is projected to begin in October of 2009, with operations to start in December of 2010. He reported that HART's budget for FY2010 is balanced. He said HART did efficiency cuts and put the savings back into operations.

Mr. Danner asked what the funding source for operation of BRT was.

Mr. Armijo responded that the funding comes from ad valorem.

Mr. Danner asked if that means HART's operating budget has capacity for expansion.

Mr. Armijo responded that FY2012 -2013 will be challenging for HART and an additional funding source will be needed for initiation of the second BRT line. He noted that in case such source is not identified, some projects will have to be delayed.

Mr. Jonson requested comment on the streetcar extension.

Mr. Armijo responded that currently the system is cost effective due to reduction in costs and enhanced services, increasing revenue and ridership. He noted that the service will continue to operate with a deficit, and at some point other revenue sources will have to be found. Mr. Armijo said reserve funds are currently used to cover the shortfalls and at some point the City will have to step in to find sources to fund the system.

Dr. Polzin explained that the logic was to extend the line to downtown as a prior commitment. The dilemma now is that we do not have the level of service to move to a commuter-type service.

Councilmember Dingfelder noted that the key is residential potential for Channelside and Ybor.

Mr. Johnson asked if there are any plans to extend the streetcar past Phase II.

Mr. Armijo said the long-range plan includes it, but there is no capital funding program. He remarked that some changes and enhancements in revenue are needed and certain efforts are taken through the marketing and naming rights process.

Mr. Johnson asked for comment on the level of projected service to the TIA center after its opening.

Mr. Armijo responded that the Route 30 service has been increased to 15 minute frequency. He said that service will be amended to operate straight from that location to downtown. Mr. Armijo indicated that at some point with improved signalization on Kennedy we will be able to make the trips shorter.

Bill Jonson noted that his expectations were that an increased level of service from Pinellas County to the airport would be implemented sooner than 2011.

### **PSTA Operational Issues Update**

Mr. Garling reported that the proposed routes to TIA are under review, with possible implementation in January of 2010. He noted that there is a funding constraint on the cross-bay service with three routes connecting the counties. Mr. Garling indicated that the assumption is that in order to increase frequency and service it will be necessary to cut the routes to two. He said that some hours could be freed up from PSTA routes not to duplicate HART's service to downtown. Mr. Garling also mentioned that PSTA is partnering with FDOT which provides some funding for the cross-bay service.

Ms. Davin asked if traffic to the airport is considered cyclical and dependent on a tourism season.

Mr. Garling responded that it is believed that the service can sustain itself with work trips to Westshore and Downtown Tampa. He noted that PSTA staff is working on ridership models, and the current level of service is disappointing which means that the right market is not hit, and that hours of operation need to be considered, too.

Mr. Garling presented the marketing and design strategy for PSTA's hybrid buses. He touched upon the benefits of hybrid buses. Mr. Garling said hybrid buses are environmentally-friendly and are expected to save operating cost. He stated that the long-term plan is a county-wide BRT or enhanced service on the main corridors in Pinellas County. Mr. Garling noted that staff is looking to brand how that future service will look, but in the meantime PSTA staff is taking advantage of the marketing opportunity with a brand for hybrid buses as "smart bus." He then demonstrated the smart bus logo, message and commented on color schemes. Mr. Garling indicated that Pinellas County has extensive trolley service where hybrids will be used, wrapped in sea life motif, with hybrid messaging. He indicated that staff takes advantage of the buses' quietness which is important in the residential area by the beach. Mr. Garling spoke about passenger benefits, improved air quality and energy savings. He outlined the maintenance benefits of hybrid buses, among which are significant reductions in transmission and brake maintenance, reliable drive systems, lower wear rate and repair on mechanical service brakes, and increased fuel economy that range, from 20-50 percent depending on the routes the vehicles are on. Mr. Garling said that staff expects to see 20 percent in fuel savings compared to the conventional bus. He reported that the ARRA funds were used to purchase 14 35-foot hybrid buses, to implement real-time bus information system, to plan bus stop improvements, and have some funds available for contingency and project administration. Mr. Garling explained that at each bus stop customers will have an opportunity to connect with a bus stop through a cell phone to find out when the next bus is coming.

Responding to Dr. Polzin's question, Mr. Garling said that hybrid buses are more expensive; however the viewpoint is to make a capital investment to help take pressure off the operating funds.

Answering Commissioner Sharpe's question, Mr. Garling explained the functionality of the real-time bus information program. He noted that at all 5700 PSTA bus stop locations customers can receive real-time route information about buses using Blackberries or text messaging function on their cellular phones.

Commissioner Sharpe asked if there was a way of providing informational bulletin boards at the stops.

Mr. Garling responded that informational boards are available at the main transfer center locations as there is an advantage of doing it where there is high traffic flow.

Chairperson Govin thanked the Board members present for attending the meeting and providing the updates.

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.