



**Forward Pinellas Board Orientation
Summary
January 8, 2023**

Board Members in Attendance:

Commissioner Janet Long, Pinellas County, Forward Pinellas Chair
Commissioner Michael Smith, City of Largo, Forward Pinellas Vice Chair
Councilmember David Allbritton, City of Clearwater, Forward Pinellas Treasurer
Mayor Julie Ward Bujalski, City of Dunedin, Forward Pinellas Secretary
Commissioner Dave Eggers, Pinellas County
Councilmember Richie Floyd, City of St. Petersburg
Councilmember Gina Driscoll, City of St. Petersburg
Commissioner Brian Scott, Pinellas County
Councilor Chris Burke, City of Seminole
Mayor Alan Johnson, City of St. Pete Beach
Vice Mayor Jarrod Buchman, City of Oldsmar
Councilmember John Muhammad, City of St. Petersburg

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Vice Mayor Patti Reed, City of Pinellas Park

Others in Attendance:

Whit Blanton, Executive Director, Forward Pinellas
Chelsea Favero, Planning Manager, Forward Pinellas
Rodney Chatman, Planning Division Manager, Forward Pinellas
Tina Jablon, Executive Administrative Secretary, Forward Pinellas
Maria Kelly, Secretary, Forward Pinellas
Dana Santos, Communications & Outreach, Forward Pinellas

Welcome and Introductions

The workshop began at 11:36am EST. Whit Blanton, Executive Director, provided welcoming remarks. This orientation familiarized new board members with the roles and functions of Forward Pinellas and provided an opportunity for shared learning amongst Forward Pinellas Board members.

Ice-Breaker Questions

The following key questions were posed to facilitate knowledge exchange amongst board members:

- Tenured board members: What do you know now that you wish you knew when you first joined the Forward Pinellas Board?
 - Recommended taking the MPOAC course
 - Members need to consider the lengthy duration of time necessary for planning projects and the importance of having future vision. Projects require years of ongoing planning with continuous coordination with cities.
 - The importance of speaking together as a county and region, not separate cities, and the advantage this holds at the federal level.
- New board members: What do you most need to know to be an effective board member?
 - Being intricately aware of the MPO's plans and projects and how these will impact local cities. This will help board members, as representatives of their own cities, to better communicate with people in their city.

Setting the Context

Whit Blanton, Executive Director

Whit provided an overview of Forward Pinellas. Forward Pinellas formed from the merger of two agencies, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Pinellas Planning Council (PPC), in 2014 as a forum for technical assistance, setting priorities and building consensus amongst local cities of Pinellas. In 2016, the two agencies rebranded as Forward Pinellas. This structure is unique in Florida.

Key Pinellas Planning Council Functions

Rodney Chatman, Planning Division Manager

- The Pinellas Planning Council coordinates land use decision making across the county.
- When the PPC & MPO merged as Forward Pinellas, the original PPC functions were maintained, but with a stronger influence of land use considerations in transportation decision-making.
- Key functions include:
 - Development and coordinator of the Countywide Plan which coordinates land use planning among the 25 local governments.
 - Local planning assistance through interlocal agreements
 - Interagency coordination, though efforts such as the Planners Advisory Committee, specific purpose subcommittees, Countywide Housing Compact, etc.

Key Metropolitan Planning Organization Functions

Chelsea Favero, Planning Manager

- MPOs were established to be the local voice in how state and federal funds are utilized in communities. All use of funds must be approved by the MPO.
- Key functions include:
 - Create a Long Range Transportation Plan: a strategic, guiding plan that identifies which projects should receive state and federal funding.
 - Adopt a Transportation Improvement Program: contains project descriptions, schedules, and corresponding funding allocations by project phase regarding transportation improvement projects
 - Conduct a congestion management process which identifies causes of congestion and recommends solutions
 - Develop priority lists which are used to receive state and federal funding
 - Approve a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): budgeting document which identifies all planning activities
 - Establish performance measures and targets per measures set by the Federal Highway Administration
 - Apportionment voting structure for the MPO boundary.

Funding and Budgets

Rodney Chatman, Planning Division Manager

Rodney highlighted the relationship between PPC, MPO, & funding. The PPC and MPO have differing revenue sources. The PPC's primary revenue source is ad valorem taxes. The MPO is fully grant funded on a quarterly reimbursable basis. All Forward Pinellas staff are PPC employees. Both the PPC and MPO pay for expenses.

Closing Remarks

Whit Blanton, Executive Director

The orientation was concluded with an overview of Forward Pinellas staff and their roles.