



**DATE:** January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** 135 N. Pinal Street Florence, AZ 85132

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Craig McFarland, City of Casa Grande, called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM.

## 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande, led the Pinal RTA Board, guests, and staff in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 3. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

**Members Present:** Mayor Craig McFarland, Supervisor Jeffrey McClure, Mayor Jon Thompson, Council Member Robert Schroeder, Council Member Robin Benning, Mayor Micah Powell, Council Member Vince Manfredi

**Members Absent:** Mayor Mila Besich, Mayor Tara Walter, Mayor Curtis Stacy, Mayor Patricia Armenta

**Guests:** Leo Lew, Jason Bottjen, Andrea Robles, Irene Higgs, Hector Moreno, Leo Lew, Duane Eitel, George Arnoldo (Public Guest) Travis Ashbaugh, Benjamin Bitter, Bruce Gardner, Hector Moreno, Katy Proctor, Larry Rains, Eduardo Raudales, Anthony Smith, Heather Wilkey, Keith Brown, Lisa Garcia, Mackenzie Letcher, Rob Wisler, Todd Pryor

**Staff:** John Kross, Jennifer Corralejo, Tara Harman, Dedrick Denton, Nina Arredondo, Ray Telles, Ashlee Feliz, Sylvia Mondejar, Benjamin Coker, Celeste Garza, Joe Ortiz, Andy Smith, Chris Wanamaker, Bill Sims, Dan Marum, Amy Moran, Tami Ryll, Doug Eberhart,

## 4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC - NONE

Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande, opened up the floor to anyone that would like to address the board.  
No items to address.

## 5. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Jeffrey McClure, Pinal County, made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, subject to the page numbers corrected. Council Member Robert Schroeder, City of Apache Junction, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### A. Approval of November 13th, 2023 Pinal RTA Board Meeting Minutes

The November 13th, 2023 Pinal RTA Board Meeting Minutes were approved under consent item 5-A.

## 6. INFORMATION ITEMS - NONE

## 7. New Business Items

- A. Executive Session – Moved item 7A after item 9 on agenda.
- B. John Kross, PRTA Executive Director, presented the PRTA Work Program Schedule. (PowerPoint Presented. Materials attached in Agenda Packet)  
The Work Program Schedule highlights the major/key milestones for the next 16-18 months, ending with the November 2025 Elections.



- **March 2024** At the PRTA Board Meeting in March, John Kross, PRTA Executive Director, will present recommendations from the Transportation Advisory Committee regarding guiding principles criteria for evaluating projects.
- **June 2024** Present a revenue forecast including cost based on the global cost based on all the projects that have been submitted.
- **September 2024** Present three to five scenarios to the Board for consideration, feedback and options will be requested.
- **December 2024** Contemplating submitting the final plans to the board for consideration. If the board is comfortable with the final plan, a request to adopt/approve the plan.
- **January 2025** If the plan is approved, the Public Outreach Strategies will begin.
- **March 2025** Return to the board with feedback from the Public Outreach Strategies. Staff will recommend that two ballot propositions be considered by the PRTA Board for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors:
  1. Consideration of the plan.
  2. Request a new tax to help fund the plan/majority of the plan.If approved, the plan will be presented to Pinal County's Board of Supervisors for their recommendation then the Records Office.

It is noted that public outreach may be limited due to the rules and policies that exist due to the timing of the elections.

Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande, requested a plan creation to allow elected officials to carry on with outreach. A separate request for a checklist/guideline to help advocate the plan.

**Micah Powell, City of Eloy**

**Q:** Are the projects that were previously presented going to remain the same or are new requests going to be submitted from each city/town? Will the city/town be contacted regarding projects before they are presented to the PRTA Board?

**John Kross, PRTA Executive Director**

**A:** The guiding principles and projected project criteria have not been defined as of yet. Some of the projects from the 2017 plan may be included. Refinements of the process is forthcoming and we hope to have criteria for project consideration within 30 to 60 days.

**Micah Powell, City of Eloy**

**Q:** Will the city/town be contacted regarding projects before they are presented to the PRTA Board?

**John Kross, PRTA Executive Director**

**A:** The TAC will review and provide a recommendation to the PRTA Board on all member agency projects submitted.

**Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande**

**A:** Chair recommends each member to sit down and review each city/town needs with their TAC members.

**Robin Benning, Town of Queen Creek**

**Q:** Would you recommend we introduce this item to our individual councils via-regular/executive sessions?



**John Kross, PRTA Executive Director**

**A:** Yes, it is better to get as much information out to the elected officials as possible.

**Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande**

**A:** You could also provide this information to your city manager and ask them to communicate the timeline with the council members so they know what's going on. When presenting, please include attachments and charts.

**Anthony Smith**

**Q:** Are the TAC members that show on the Pinal County website the same as the PRTA TAC?

**John Kross, PRTA Executive Director**

**A:** No, PRTA has a separate TAC.

Supervisor Jeffrey McClure, Pinal County, made a motion to approve the work draft program as presented. Council Member Robert Schroeder, City of Apache Junction, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**C.** Mayor Jon Thompson, City of Coolidge, made a motion to approve future PRTA Board Meeting Dates.

- March 25, 2024
- June 10, 2024
- September 30, 2024
- December 9, 2024

Supervisor Jeffrey McClure, Pinal County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**D.** John Kross, PRTA Executive Director, discussed the Auditor General Request. The Statutory requirement to conduct audits of taxing authorities has reached the five-year audit time period. A letter was received December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. A response was organized and sent out January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, prior to the January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 deadline, addressing the six questions. A copy of the letter was sent to the Board.

Mr. Bill Sims, Sims Mackin Ltd., PRTA Legal Counsel, stated ADOR has abandoned the position articulated in a letter that was delivered to you Mr. Chairman, right at the end of The League conference when they told you that the PRTA and the Pinal County were responsible for determining the amount of the tax and returning the tax. Pinal County has been very supportive and cooperative. The Pinal County is assisting ADOR with personnel and have struck a Cooperative approach so that we don't let the plaintiffs drive a wedge between ADOR, Pinal County and the PRTA. We have been Crystal Clear since the Supreme Court's decision we have articulated the need to cease collecting taxes and to commence the process for distributing the taxes. The Goldwater Institute and the Judge both believe that the distribution process should commence. We have very positive discussions with the ADOR personnel to develop a process on how the refund will be refunded. I know Mr. Chairman you have been fairly focused on the need to document the fact that tax payers can waive the requirement to receive a refund. Initially Pinal County had some reservations about that, but now the Pinal County and ADOR are fully supportive. The document that the taxpayers will apply for a refund will have a box where they can rescind their right to receive a refund.

This option will do a couple of things. It will suspend the requirement for ADOR to determine that amount and if amounts are not returned they don't get the prime rate plus three percent which is quite high. If you have legal questions, we can discuss that in Executive Session at the end with your permission. We've told Pinal County that you will not be insisting upon legislation this fall and that effort can wait until the following year to not get into the way of their Road tax. In the fall of 2025, we will be coming back to you with the plan that John has described and with a recommendation as the financing that would go out for the taxpayers. We will be coming to you with



recommendations for a modification to the state statutes that make sure that money is not returned stay in Pinal County and the one Mr. Chairman that you've been adamant about is that they incorporate into the legislation that we actually would hope to have been Incorporated almost six years ago allowing tiered taxation, which would have prevented this lawsuit. Other than that we're showing cooperation among the three agencies ADOR agrees it has to take the lead. It is very complicated because apparently once you allow one refund for one of 26,000 it changes everybody's taxes. We're trying to figure out a simple way to do that ADOR is working and the Pinal County has graciously offered Personnel to assist in the process.

- E. Dedrick Denton & Tara Harman, Pinal County, presented to the PRTA Board an update on the Transportation Improvement and Maintenance Program (PowerPoint Presented. Materials attached in Agenda Packet)  
**Upcoming Events in February, March, & April:** 10 - Presentations, 12 - Open Houses, & 10 - Events  
PRTA Board request a schedule of events.

**Council Member Vince Manfredi, City of Maricopa**

Q: Is there anyone from my district on TAC?

**Tara Harman, Pinal County**

A: Yes, Robin Davis

**Council Member Vince Manfredi, City of Maricopa**

Q: Does any funding go to the City of Maricopa or is that only for Transportation projects outside of the city limits?

**Dedrick Denton, Pinal County**

A: Funds go directly to the City of Maricopa. The funds are placed in the General Funds.

- F. Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande, request the Board to help support Maricopa County's Plan. This item will be on the March agenda.  
The resolution included in the agenda packet is subject to modification by Bill Sims & MAG.  
Bill Sims, Sims Mackin Ltd., PRTA Legal Counsel, stated he wanted to add changes so the focus would be on the views of public transportation and supporting the proposition. The focus will be on the plan and not the on the election to authorize the tax.  
Chairman McFarland, City of Casa Grande, stated to disregard the resolution in the packet. The updated resolution will be emailed to the board.  
Mayor Micah Powell, City of Eloy, requested more education on the topic and the reasoning why we are doing this.

### **8. Discussion of Board members' request for future agenda item BY(s) and/or reports.**

Supervisor Jeffrey McClure, Pinal County, asked as a part of the regional plan update in the overall narrative, could reference the plan as a multi-year plan, perhaps sixty years.

Council Member Robert Schroeder, City of Apache Junction, made a motion to move into executive session. Mayor Jon Thompson, City of Coolidge, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The regular session of the Pinal RTA was adjourned at 2:40 PM.



## 9. Upcoming Meetings & Events

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## 7. Executive Session

Chairman Craig McFarland, City of Casa Grande, called the meeting to order at 2:40 PM.

- A. Mayor Jon Thompson, City of Coolidge, made a motion exit the executive session. Supervisor Jeff McClure, Pinal County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The executive session of the Pinal RTA was adjourned at 2:49 PM.

## 10. ADJOURN

Chairman Craig McFarland, City of Casa Grande, adjourned the Pinal RTA executive session at 2:49 PM.

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