

Minutes
PCC Executive Committee Meeting
August 16, 2023

Marty Smith, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

Cheryl Damico, PCC Secretary, read the agenda. The agenda were motioned/seconded/approved.

Approve Minutes of May 10th meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Marty Smith commented on taxi companies using upfront pricing that exceeds general meter expectations. He says that upfront pricing will be very costly to the MTA and Paratransit riders. He believes that Uber, Lyft, and AV companies should be left out of Paratransit because he believes that they will “dry up” funds. Mara Math responded and believed that companies are trying to wipe out taxi companies to jack up prices. She believes will be ADA lawsuits against AV companies. She was present at last week’s hearing at the California PUC. She does not want SF Paratransit to partner with Uber, Lyft, Cruise, or Waymo. Wendy asks which meeting this is in regard to Uber/Lyft. Erin McAuliff clarified that we were discussing the CPUC meeting.

Jessica Felix asked why Uber is present at this meeting. Chris Margaronis shared that he is here to hear Paratransit rider concerns and was invited by the SFMTA. Jessica Felix believed that Uber should not be here, and that Uber should pay focus groups. Craig Nelson says he is not aware of upfront pricing. Susan Kitazawa shared that while she is not a fan of Uber, the meeting is open to the public, whether we agree with them or not. She rode with a taxi driver yesterday who says he only uses the Uber app twice a day when he is desperate because he feels the pricing is unfair for the passenger (pricing is high) and unfair for drivers because if he runs into traffic he is not compensated for the additional time. Edda shares that in her building she saw a presentation from IOA about Medical Ubers that are paid for by providers and is unrelated to Paratransit funds. Marty Smith reiterated that all members of the public are welcomed to attend and participate in this public meeting.

Roland Wong spoke on the 10 cents per ride for the TNCs. He asks if AVs will be participating in the 10 cents per ride program. Erin McAuliff says she will ask for clarity on this and is unsure if they are currently collecting fares. She added that there is \$4 million in the Access Fund, administered by SFMTA, and has a meeting next week to discuss how the program will be shaped.

Jane Redmond shared she experienced this with a Yellow Cab YoTaxi ride and paid the upfront price. Her trip was booked in the app, and she has given the receipt to Carol. Cheryl Damico asked Jane how she called the Yellow taxi in which she was charged the upfront price. It was through YoTaxi. Jane Redmond shared her experience again with clarification from Carol Osorio. Jane Redmond shared that at UCSF she received a voucher for Flywheel to get home.

SF Paratransit Mobility Management Update

Rico Daga introduced himself and led the presentation on the Mobility Management activities

There have been 32 outreach events, including six events with translation services in FY22/23. The Mobility Management team sought new outreach opportunities and asked PCC for recommendations. There is a priority to conduct outreach in Equity Priority Communities, which have been historically underserved by public transit, and events with the non-English speaking community. He provided updates on the ETC, Van Gogh and Shop-a-Round programs, including a future schedule change for the Shop-a-Round van service. Information regarding the 5310 program was mentioned as it helps fund the mobility management activities. Applications are due soon and SFMTA is requesting that the PCC write a letter of support for their application. SFMTA would like to expand travel training and create video and analog resources.

Additionally, there are upcoming opportunities for community participation to enhance transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. There will be an informational session by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for a potential one seat/one ride pilot program. The goal of the pilot is to test methods of delivering one-seat rides to minimize transfers for riders when crossing Paratransit service areas. There is also the Link 21 program, which seeks to improve train service in Northern California. There will be a virtual open house happening which provides details about their goals and plans.

Jane Redmond asked if PCC members can be on a committee to decide which stores will be chosen for Shop-a-Round. Rico replied that he will bring it up with Catherine. Jane commented that the Grocery Outlet in the Bayview is not very good as it is very small and dark; in her opinion, the best one is on South Van Ness Blvd as it has more variety and is bigger. Justin Leong described how Shop-a-Round van routes are scheduled.

Mara Math motioned that the PCC send a letter of support for SFMTA's 5310 application. The motion is approved unanimously. Erin McAuliff said that Jonathan Cheng can provide a template letter of support that Marty Smith will sign. A question in chat asks what 5310 funding is. Erin McAuliff stated that it is funding to increase access to people with disabilities and references 5310 vehicles. SFMTA's application will be requesting funds to make travel training videos.

Jane Redmond asked how easy it is for homeless people to enroll into SF Paratransit. Rico responded that he does not know specifically but that they do not consider anything other than disability in the eligibility process. Kevin McDonald added that SF Paratransit services is solely based on disability. He said that mobility management focuses on outreach to people who may qualify for the service but do not know it. Jane asked if one could book a trip to somewhere on the street and not a specific address. Kevin answered that a rider only needs a geolocation or address to book a trip and that one does not need to live at the address to book a trip there. Edda shared that IHSS provides support to people and can travel with riders. Mara Math asked if Paratransit could be accessible to aides without the ADA rider on board. She lives in an area with a lack of public transportation and sometimes has trouble getting aides to her home. Jessica Felix shared that we should provide Paratransit information to homeless navigation centers. Susan Kitazawa asked if people need a fixed address to apply for SF Paratransit. Erin McAuliff and

Kevin clarified that someone does not need a fixed address and that the Paratransit office can communicate via phone or email. Additionally, riders can use the broker's office address and come in person to receive physical mail/information.

Dedicated Names on New Paratransit Vehicles

Becky Chen, SFMTA Project Manager for vehicle procurement, led the discussion on the name dedication for the new Paratransit vehicles. She shared an example of a PCC member name on the new Paratransit vehicles. She asked for feedback on the design of the decal.

Jessican Felix asked if we can also put the decal on the back of the vehicle as well as the door side. Becky confirmed that it would be possible. Her fellow members supported this idea. Becky asked where on the back PCC members prefer a name to go. Members agree that the name should go below the URL. Jane Redmond requested that the name font size should be increased. Becky will discuss a new design with the vendor. Roland Wong said that East Bay Paratransit has a phone number on the vehicle and thinks this is a good idea. Kevin McDonald asked if it is the customer service number or the scheduling number. East Bay Paratransit uses one phone number for all services.

Erin McAuliff read the list of names to be added. Marty Smith and Mara Math suggest four additional names. Mara inquired about who the current individuals are that have had vehicles dedicated to them. Erin re-read the names of approved individuals and PCC members shared information about the list of members. Justin Leong clarified that the names that had been placed on vehicles are now out of service and will be transferred to new vehicles. Cheryl Damico motioned for the four names to be added to vehicles. It is approved unanimously.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Report

Mary McLain read the following report:

- **Service Quality Update**

Kenneth Richardson reported they largely resolved tablet issues with IT. They continue to hire and train new drivers, with a new class of 10 which just started. They have open positions in reservations and maintenance.

- **SF Paratransit Broker's Report**

Justin Leong of the Brokers Office reported on service statistics:

- SF Access trip counts were steady with small fluctuations based on the number of days per month. There were approximately 16,400 in March, just over 15,000 in April, and around 15,700 in May.
- SF Access On-Time Performance was 96.6% in March, slightly dipped to 98.4% in April, and just above 98% in May.
- Complaints per 1,000 trips trended slightly down overall, with approximately 0.85 per 1,000 in March to 0.83 per 1,000 in May.

Mark Elias was announced as the new Regional Vice President for this region of Transdev. The Trapeze V21 upgrade was completed in April with only a couple minor outstanding issues. Wayland Li stepped into the role of Contracts Administrator in the Broker's Office. The new Riders Guide is moving along, pending an update on

translations. The Brokers Office has an opening for Eligibility Analyst and is working towards implementing an ADA Short Form application.

- **Rider Feedback and Public Comment**

Riders discussed PCC recruitment, the need for additional participation, and called for an action item for the next meeting. Suggestions were made for potential recruitment efforts. An ad hoc committee will be established by early July to undertake this task.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting is September 6, 2023.

PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Report

Justin Leong read the following report:

- **SF Paratransit Status Update**

Justin Leong reported that they were running in the 90% range for the last three months. 94% in April, 93% in May, and 94% in June. Trip counts have been increasing, approximately 3,900 in April, 4,300 in May, 4,100 for June.

Mary McLain reported that her team continues with direct contact with agencies. They are caught up on all requests. They encourage everyone to continue submitting their full list, upon receipt of that email they will respond individually and give an estimated time frame.

- **Agency Status Reports**

- Self-Help reported they are operating normally. All buses except for #2 are in operation. Self Help provided 3,443 trips in June and are experiencing higher ridership recently as they come out of COVID.
- Institute on Aging is operating as normal and running around 30 participants per day with around 12-16 paratransit riders a day. Overall they're happy with this group of drivers.
- OnLok reported that they are fully back in-person since the new fiscal year started. They are seeing an increase in participants; they are exploring reinstating their Group Van services at 30th St.
- Stepping Stone Mission Creek has no updates to report.

The next PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting date is October 11, 2023.

Cheryl Damico described how she was present and chaired the meeting. There were many agency representatives but only two PCC members which made the meeting challenging to run (with motions to approve and such). Cheryl encouraged any PCC members with an interest in Group Van to join the meetings. Susan Kitazawa shared that she has never attended a Group Van meeting but wonders if agency representatives can recruit members in their Group Van ridership. Mara Math shared that that is part of our outreach plan. Cheryl proposed doing an outreach to Jacy Cohen. She said the clients of Group Van service may not be able to join a meeting. Susan commented that even people with developmental disabilities (or other cognitive disabilities) should still be included and that they are able and should be encouraged to join.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Report

Jessica Felix read the following report:

- **Comments from the Chair**

Jessica noted the CPUC autonomous vehicle vote scheduled for August 10th. There was discussion of providing public comment. The SFMTA shared their statement with the group to assist with formulating the group comment. Since an official PCC message was not possible before the meeting, it was suggested each member send a message and/or speak during public comment.

- **Broker Report**

- On-Time Performance for April was 96.67%, May 97.85% and June 100%.
- Taxi Incentives paid were April \$12,235, May \$13,690, and June \$13,155.
- The trip count for April was 22,955, May 23,820, and June 23,627.
- Qualifying SFPT ramp trips for April 563, May 602, and June 598.
- Complaints per 1,000 trips were 0.13 in April, 0.16 in May, and 0.33 in June.
- Ramp Taxi Capital & Operating incentives increased in July to \$1,000 for new vehicles and \$800 for used vehicles.
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The new rider's guide is expected to be out in the next two months. Taxi color schemes were contacted to expect extensions to their service provider agreement for another 12 months. Comfort Cab has ceased business. Per Jessica's request, Kevin reported there were 368 in January, February 409, March 508, April 545, May 584, and June 582, not including General Public trips.

The IT department is replacing servers at both the Brokers and Brisbane locations. They are also working towards replacing the phone system in both offices with something cloud based.

- **Service Quality Issues**

- Riders: There was discussion about an updated Ramp Taxi Cell Phone List, posting it online, and suggesting riders call dispatch before going to the list. In response to hearing about drivers not having IVR's, it was clarified that the color schemes are supposed to order them and supply their drivers.
- Drivers & Cab Companies: Ramp taxi availability was discussed, suggesting that riders should be prioritized over being at the airport. It was perceived that SFMTA investigators were not focused on taxi issues. The SFMTA reported they monitor ramp drivers to check if they met their monthly pickup requirement. It was suggested the qualifiers apply to the driver. SFMTA further clarified their responses to IVR complaints, their recently completed SFO operation, current efforts to audit taxi drivers, and actions being taken against ramp drivers not meeting trip requirements for SFO. Jessica reported that Yellow ramp orders were being responded to quicker, suggesting the use of YoTaxi. Revisiting the unlimited short pass for ramp drivers was also suggested.

- **Public Comments**

The lack of spare ramp vehicles was discussed. SFMTA application to be a local administrator of the Access For All funds and there would be an upcoming meeting where SFTWA would also be present.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting will be on November 1, 2023.

PC&O Ad Hoc Subcommittee – Membership Recruitment

Mara Math read the following report:

- An ad hoc subcommittee was established by the PCC to address concerns over decreased participation in meetings since the pandemic. The ad hoc subcommittee met four (4) times since June 2023 and is undertaking the following efforts:
 - Updated on-hold telephone messaging for the Operations and Broker phone queues: Verbiage was finalized, and Justin is working on ordering with the vendor.
 - Informational postcards: The content is finalized, and Kevin is working to get quotes for translation and printing.
 - Targeted Outreach to Disability-related and other Organizations: A list of organizations was compiled and language for letters and flyers is being drafted by the group.
 - Website messages: Verbiage based on the flyer will be posted to the SFMTA.com/Paratransit page and SF Paratransit Taxi Online info page.
 - Advertisement onboard Paratransit Vehicles: Jonathan is working on fitting both the Title VI messaging and PCC messaging in the dimensions of the vehicle mounted frames.
 - Outreach via third-party newsletters: The outreach target list notes which have newsletters, Mara also suggested contacting local news organizations.

The next PC&O Recruitment Ad Hoc Subcommittee Meeting date is August 29, 2023.

Mara Math added that she is proud of the progress the committee has made. Edda shared that she received a poster for member recruitment from her eligibility analyst who thought she may be a good fit for the PCC.

Wendy commented that we should advertise on MUNI buses. She suggested sending a postcard to ETC and Shop-a-Round riders. She also suggested reaching out to organizations that are a part of senior affordable housing who can share information with their residents. Mara Math responded that the postcards are going to all active riders and that the list of organizations includes housing. Imogen Budetti provided clarification. Matthew Teixeira commented that we chose not to advertise on fixed-route buses because it may confuse fixed-route riders. Mara Math suggested advertising for Paratransit services in general on fixed-route transit because there are a lot of misconceptions about who Paratransit serves. Wendy clarified what representative payee is – it is a program to help people budget their social security. Mara asks how we can contact them. Wendy provides programs and Mara asks Wendy to send the list of organizations to Imogen who will coordinate outreach to them.

Paratransit Broker Report

Marc Soto and Justin Leong, reported as follow:

- **Service Level Statistics**
Justin provides key statistics; SF Access trip counts trending downward slightly, while Group Van trip counts fairly steady, only 1 group van complaint which related to an emergency. Taxi incentives were roughly \$13,000 per month, taxi trip counts about 23,000 trips, ramp trips were roughly 600 trips per month trending upward, and complaints per 1000 trips were around 0.3 per month.
- **On Time Performance**
For the SF Access service, the on-time performance was in the 90th percentile. For the taxi service, the reporting mechanism for the on-time performance for taxis was modified. For the Group Van service, on-time performance hovered around 93 – 94%.
- **New Vehicle Procurement**
This week operations are receiving 6 new vehicles which will replace vehicles that have gone beyond their FTA lifespan.
- **Broker/Operations IT Activities**
The telephone system at broker and operations will be updated soon, but it is not yet in the procurement process. The old servers are being decommissioned, and data security program licenses have been renewed. Two new servers for the broker's office and operations have been ordered and will arrive soon.
- **Rider's Guide**
The new Rider's Guide is in the process of being translated.
- **Staffing Update**
Wayland Li has joined as the Contract Administrator and Karolina joined as the Customer Service Representative at the Broker's office.

Wendy asked what taxi incentives are. Justin explained that the incentives are provided to ramp taxi drivers for a variety of reasons including purchasing and operating a wheelchair accessible vehicle, operating a wheelchair trip in an outer area or nighttime, or for completing a wheelchair trip.

Public Comments

Susan commented on the abilities of people living with cognitive differences. She said she did not in the past see those folks as a part of the “we,” however, she has been in City College courses with people with cognitive differences which allowed her to see her biases. She recognizes a remaining chasm between the disability community/movement and those with cognitive disabilities. She recommends the film “Deej” which follows a nonverbal young man who graduated from Oberlin College. Susan found that the film helped her recognize her own prejudices and biases.

Barry Taranto wonders what has caused the increase in ramp taxi trips in July. To qualify for the medallion, Barry thinks it should be by driver name. Mara Math suggested that this topic is too specific for the PCC Executive Meeting. Jessica Felix suggested the SFMTA review short passes requirements to increase the availability of ramp taxi drivers at night. She would also want the SFMTA to revisit the incentives because they have not increased from \$10 per trip in years. Jessica asked why there have been no new ramps at Yellow. Erin McAuliff will look into it. Fred Lein mentioned that February will mark 30 years of ramp taxi service in SF and suggests having a commemoration.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 4th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.