

San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council

c/o Muni

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Minutes

PCC Executive Committee Meeting

December 11, 2013

**1 South Van Ness Avenue, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference Rooms
San Francisco**

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Cheryl Damico, Vice Chair Roland Wong, PC&O Chair; Adrienne Humphrey; Claudia Grubler; Fred Lein; Jane Redmond; Jeanne Lynch; John Lazar; Kaye Griffin; Linda Murley; Rodney Lee; Sandra Fancher; Sue Cauthen; Ursula McGuire; Wane Ratanasanguan

PCC Members and Guests: Phil Garth; John Murphy; Kerry Brown; Aisha Jackson; Max Lazar; Marty Smith; Christian Got

PCC Executive Committee Members Excused: Adrienne Humphrey; Gilda Chico; Jacy Cohen; Joseph Flanagan; Laurie Graham; Olivia Santiago; Ruach Graffis; Stu Smith, PCC Chair

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; John Sanderson; Gregory Strecker; Jason Quon; Marie Marchese; Casey Estorga

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Kate Toran; Jonathan Cheng

Cheryl Damico, PCC Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. (The meeting started late due to a building fire drill.)

Read and Approve Agenda

Cheryl Damico, PCC Vice Chair, read the agenda. The agenda was motioned/seconded/passed.

Approve Minutes of September 18 meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Cheryl Damico did not have any comments.

Election of Vacant Seats

Kate Toran announced that there were a number of unfilled seats on the PCC Executive Committee. Marty Smith and Aisha Jackson were elected, by acclamation, to the Unaffiliated Elderly and newly formed van drivers' caucus respectively. Kate announced that there are still seats available in the Affiliated Elderly and Non Profit caucus as well as the Low Income Representative.

Proposed 2014 Meeting Calendar

Jonathan Cheng announced the proposed 2014 meeting dates for PCC Executive Committee and PC&O subcommittee meetings. He explained that the PCC Executive Committee meetings are

held about every six weeks at 1 South Van Ness, 6th Floor in the Candlestick/Corona conference rooms from 10:30-12:30. The PC&O subcommittee meetings focus on individual segments of the SF Paratransit program. Once a month, the group meets to talk about Group Van, SF Access, or Taxi/Ramp Taxi service on a rotating basis. These meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at the Broker's office at 68 12th Street from 10:30-12:30. With no objections, the meeting dates for 2014 were approved.

Annual Meeting Wrap Up

Jonathan Cheng gave a recap of the PCC Annual Meeting. The PCC Annual Meeting was held on November 2, 2013, at St. Mark's Square. Jane Bolig was the emcee for the event. At the event, we inducted Jane Bolig and Genya Ehrlich to the Paratransit Hall of Fame. We also recognized Jane Redmond with the Muzzy Marcelino Award and Claudia Grubler with the Jewel McGinnis "Tough as Nails" Award as well as bid farewell to Erma Brim with the inaugural Griff Humphrey Lifetime Achievement Award. All current members who ran for the PCC were re-elected, and we welcomed Linda Murley, Rodney Lee, and Karen Young-Simmons in the Affiliated Disabled and Unaffiliated Disabled caucus and the Minority Representative respectively.

Current Bike/Pedestrian Project Update

Sandra Padilla was introduced as the new SFMTA Sustainable Streets Accessibility Coordinator. She gave a brief update on the projects she is currently working on. These projects include:

- Accessibility guidelines for bicycle facilities
 - Will ensure paratransit access is incorporated at the earliest stages of the project
 - Provides a set of clear and consistent guidelines for building bikeway facilities, including bike lanes separated by painted buffers and by raised buffers
 - Finalize details by end of 2014
- Accessibility guidelines for bike share stations
 - Preferred bike share station placement is on street in the parking lane
 - Other placement locations should have a clear six feet minimum pedestrian path, be detectable by bookending both sides, and avoid obstructing access to transit stops and stations, white and blue zones, curb ramps, and crosswalks
- Speed cushion tests on paratransit vehicles
 - Traffic calming measure
 - Has slots to accommodate paratransit and transit vehicles without too much jostling
 - Invited one PCC and one MAAC member on test ride; results were very positive
- More blue zones
 - Evaluating locations to recommend that 4% of all metered parking spaces should be blue zones
 - Ensure that proposed blue zones are accessible to nearby businesses

Marty Smith asked whether loading zone signs can be placed for taxis. Sandra replied that she can look into it but is hesitant to place too many signs and wants to reinforce education for the traffic enforcement officers. Jane Redmond emphasized that it is important to put the appropriate signage to avoid issuing tickets to taxi drivers who are doing their jobs.

Fred Lein said that adding the “slots” in the speed hump may defeat their purpose and motorists may drive fast through these slots. Sandra recognized that this may happen but that motorists would have to at least slow down if they want to be able to drive through these slots in the speed bump.

Jeanne Lynch asked how the designs were formulated. Sandra answered that some elements were influenced by other cities but that these designs were created to fit the needs of San Francisco, including accommodating paratransit vehicles. Jeanne added that there has been much coverage in the news regarding bicycling and their conflicts with motorists. Sandra mentioned that one of the biggest goals is to ensure that there is separation between motorists and bicyclists to avoid this conflict. Jeanne once again said she would like to see greater efforts to keep bicyclists and skateboarders off the sidewalks. John Lazar suggested licensing bicyclists to increase revenue.

Kaye Griffin questioned whether individuals with blue placards would be able to afford paying for parking meters. Sandra clarified that this was one of the recommendations from the taskforce - to remove the payment exemption for individuals with blue placards. However, she said currently, this project is in the early stages and there are no plans to immediately charge blue placard holders. It was stated that the SFMTA Board of Directors recognize the financial limitation of some blue placard holders and the possible need for a program aimed at relieving the financial burden to low income seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Changes to the Ramp Taxi Incentive Program

Kate Toran reported on the proposed changes to the ramp taxi incentive program. Recognizing the challenges to the ramp taxi program over the past couple of months, the SFMTA has been working to reform the existing ramp taxi incentive program. One of the biggest changes is shifting the incentive awards to a per-trip basis. It is proposed that every ramp taxi driver who completes a paratransit wheelchair trip will be given a \$10 bonus that will be paid quarterly. In addition, there are plans to give an airport taxi queue “short pass” to ramp taxi drivers who have completed a number of wheelchair trips in the outlying neighborhoods of San Francisco. These neighborhoods would include the outer Richmond and Sunset, Park Merced, Bayview, Visitacion Valley, Portola, Excelsior, Ingleside, and Oceanview. This airport short pass would allow drivers to jump ahead of the queue of taxis at the airport. Another proposed addition to the incentive program is to allow ramp taxi drivers who have completed a high number of wheelchair trips to be given a \$10 per trip credit towards the down payment of a medallion. Another proposed change is that there would be a direct lease agreement of the ramp medallions with color schemes as opposed to the existing leases with the individual ramp medallion holders.

PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting

Cheryl Damico read the following report

1. Service Quality Discussion

- a) Stepping Stone – Discussed how everyone is trying to work together to try to keep ride times down.
- b) Bayview ADHC – Reported that communication between the Provider and the center is very important, especially when new drivers are added to routes after a shift change.

c) ARC Howard – Discussed issues with the new shift bid. One of their routes has a different driver almost every day. They have been in communication with MV to try to get this issue resolved.

d) Baymed – Has been working on ride times with all of their centers due to an increase in frail and wheelchair riders. Baymed has hired more drivers to help.

2. SF Paratransit Broker Report

a) There will be a soft launch of the New IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system by the end of the year.

b) Group Van ride times are still a big problem, SF Paratransit is going to be doing a limited reorganization to try to make some of the routes more efficient while decreasing ride times for all clients. Some changes to Group Van service will be made by the end of the year, and all affected centers will be notified ahead of time before route changes are finalized.

3. Announcements

Baymed's Anna Krevets has taken a new position at a new company. Everyone told her she would be very much missed. Sam, Valarie, and Natasha will be taking over all her duties.

The next Group Van PC&O meeting will be on January 8, 2014.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Meeting

Fred Lein read the following report:

1. Comments from the Chair

Vice Chair Fred Lein said Yellow Cab has partnered with Taxi Magic to use their application (app). There are 2 separate dispatch systems in the cab available to the drivers; the mobile dispatch through the app and the devices in the cab. The mobile apps are offering incentives to drivers if they fulfill the app's orders. Each driver must sign-up with Taxi Magic to use their app.

2. SFMTA Taxi/Ramp reforms – Update

Kate Toran of SFMTA mentioned the proposed new incentives in the Ramp Taxi Program. The proposed incentives will include new driver incentives, such as \$10 per paratransit wheelchair pick-up for ramp drivers. Also, if a ramp driver provides a wheelchair pickup for an outlying area, the ramp driver could receive an airport "short pass" which can provide access to the front of the taxi line at SFO.

3. CPUC Activity - Update

Christiane Hayashi of SFMTA provided an update on CPUC ruling in late August that will require the Transportation Network Companies, such as Lyft, Sidecar and Uber, be to subjected to regulation. There will be an insurance requirement under an umbrella policy. Background checks will be required as well as driver training.

4. Service Quality issues

Many patrons mentioned it has been harder to get a ramp taxi. Marc Soto of SFPT/Veolia mentioned Gold Star taxi wants to revamp their ramp taxi and is looking to provide more wheelchair pickups.

5. SF Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson of SFPT/Veolia mentioned continuing enforcement on fraudulent activity on the taxi debit cards. This has led to revocation of at least one taxi medallion. The efforts also led to enforcing the rules on the riders which have been going well.

The next Taxi/Ramp Taxi PC&O meeting will be held on February 5, 2014.

Kate Toran provided an update on the status of the fraud investigations. She stated that a medallion holder had their medallion revoked following a hearing before a hearing officer and a subsequent appeal filed with the City's Board of Appeals. She applauded the efforts of the staff and hopes this will lead to better behavior among drivers.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting

Jane Redmond read the following report:

1. Service Quality Discussion

The PCC Members in attendance said that the quality of the drivers has improved. However, SFMTA and the Broker's office said that in the last three months the overall numbers of complaints have increased, and On-time performance has decreased for SF Access. The group also discussed ways that MV could increase their driver morale.

2. MV Transportation Service Provider Report

MV Transportation acknowledged the decrease in performance recently. In order to correct these issues they have hired 25 new drivers. In addition, they are in the process of re-training all their dispatchers on the Trapeze scheduling system in order to improve their performance and efficiency.

3. SF Paratransit Broker's Report

The new IVR (Interactive Response System) has launched as of December 1st, 2013 and overall everyone said that they have seen positive results from this new system and that riders in the pilot have given positive and helpful feedback. Reservationists have been offering riders the calls when they make a reservation. The broker also discussed the recent downturn of Service Quality for SF Access and everyone discussed ways that the service can turn around for the better.

The next SF Access PC&O meeting will be held on March 5, 2014.

Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson and Marc Soto reported as follows:

- **SF Access Service Quality Report:**

On time performance is slightly above last month's, up from 77.92% in November to 78.33% in the first days of December. There has been a decrease in on time performance beginning in mid-November and it is slowly recovering. There were 77 SF Access complaints in September, 63 in October, and 51 in November; however, the number of overall complaints remains high. Staff at SF Paratransit will continue to work with MV Transportation to improve on time performance.

- **SF Access Reminder Line Pilot and Roll Out:**

The rollout of the SF Access Reminder Line went out live to the entire SF Access service on December 1. Response so far has been good. Members who participated in the pilot program were thanked for their participation as it helped work out the kinks. In the near future, there are plans to send out a brochure to all active SF Access riders about the SF Access Reminder Line and allow them to sign up for calls for existing standing orders. In addition to the two existing calls, the Trip Reminder and Van Status Update, SF Paratransit is looking to include other call types for patrons.

- **DCCS Update:**

There have been reported failures with the VeriFone brand in-taxi equipment used to process paratransit debit card transactions. It was discovered that the overflow system for VeriFone transactions had an incorrectly set up firewall which prevented processing the paratransit debit card transactions. Drivers were reporting excessive need to use IVR slips. These were collaboratively addressed. Additionally, there are plans to introduce a patron portal on the SF Paratransit website that would allow riders to access their own paratransit debit card account as well as view their transaction history and report lost/stolen cards.

- **New Phone System:**

A new phone system is in the process of being procured for the Broker's office. The current phone system is over 13 years old and in need of replacement. There were issues with current phone system in November. The Broker expects to have the new system fully deployed soon.

- **New Staff Introductions:**

Jason Quon is the monitor assigned to paratransit Taxi service while Gregory Strecker is the SF Access & Group Van Monitor. Marie Marchese is the new Mobility Management Specialist and has several years of experience working in transportation. She will be focusing on the Van Gogh shuttle and other projects. Casey Estorga is the newly hired Director of Finance and Administration. He has several years of experience in finance and has been on many advisory boards in San Jose. He replaces Aaron Bonfilio.

- **Mobile Data Computers**

The accuracy of the SF Access TripInfo Line is reliant on accurate usage of the on-board Mobile Data Computers by SF Access drivers. Staff at SF Paratransit has been working closely with MV Transportation to ensure that all drivers are using the MDC devices. In addition, SF Paratransit will be purchasing an additional ten MDC devices to ensure that there are spares should any of the installed devices require service.

Rodney Lee mentioned that this past week, his vehicle did not arrive at the time in which the SF Access Reminder Line told him. He wondered if the system could provide him with an updated time. Marc replied that due to the limitations of the system, it could not but that it is the responsibility of the dispatcher call him with the updated time. Annette Williams stressed the importance of reporting incidents like these to the SF Paratransit office.

Kaye Griffin mentioned that many seniors do not have computers and would like for there to be greater access to them. Wannee Ratanasanguan would like to have cameras on the paratransit vehicles to monitor the drivers' behavior.

Public Comments

Kate Toran mentioned that SFMTA is rolling out a new email system that may change how the meeting notices and other PCC related news is electronically mailed. Cheryl Damico acknowledged John Lazar and Luxor Cab as well as Roland Wong for the Christmas poinsettias and chocolates given to the PCC at today's meeting. Kate Toran also recognized Claudia Grubler, who was unable to attend the PCC Annual Meeting, as the recipient of the Jewel McGinnis "Tough as Nails" Award.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

**The next PCC Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 22, 2013
from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 1 South Van Ness, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona
Conference Rooms**