

Minutes
PCC Executive Committee Meeting
August 14, 2024

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Mara Math, PCC Chair; Marty Smith, PCC Vice Chair; Jane Redmond, PCC Secretary; Zuhair Sinada, PC&O Chair; Cheryl Damico; Chuck Paschal; Jessica Felix; Joan Kwansa; Kevin Lee; Roland Wong; Susan Kitazawa; Yvette McNeese

PCC Members and Guests: Fred Lein; James Greenblatt; Fanny Lapitan; Barry Taranto; Katherine O'Keefe; Tracey Gamedah; Jungeun Lee; Doeon Cho; Jihyeon Kim; Subin Choi; Lewis Gartenberg

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused:

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Kevin McDonald; Justin Leong; Carol Osorio; Matthew Teixeira; Catherine Callahan; Rico Auga; Nichelle Williams; Gregorio Moreno

SFMTA: Jonathan Cheng; Javaun Garcia; Matthew Liu

Mara Math, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

Mara Math, PCC Chair, read the agenda. The agenda was motioned/seconded/approved

Approve Minutes of May 8th meeting

Jane Redmond noticed that the next meeting date was incorrect. Jonathan Cheng responded that he corrected it on the online version of the meeting minutes. The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Mara Math mentioned that Dani Soto from Openhouse SF held a focus group on SF Paratransit program and will present the findings at an upcoming meeting. She also wanted to thank Zuhair for his detailed suggestions for improving ramp taxi that will be discussed later.

General Public Comments

The comments were not recorded.

Access for All Update

Jonathan Cheng provided an update to the Access for All program.

Jonathan provided a brief overview of the Access for All program and SFMTA's role as the Local Access Fund Administrator. In that role, SFMTA was responsible for developing a competitive solicitation process to distribute the \$3.4 million dollars in grants to improve on-demand wheelchair transportation service in San Francisco. Based on feedback from a working group comprised of key stakeholders, SFMTA issued a RFP in March 2024. All applications

were due by mid-April. A selection panel reviewed and scored all the applications. SFMTA awarded grants to the three top scoring applications. Moving forward, SFMTA will work to enter into grant agreements with the selected vendors. Jonathan also introduced Javaun Garcia as the project manager for this program.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Report

Matthew Teixeira read the following report:

- **Service Quality Update**

Yvette McNeese introduced herself as the new General Manager of the Operating Division. She reported they are reviewing the concerns passengers reported on the entry step depth on some vehicles.

Justin Leong of the Brokers Office reported on service statistics:

- SF Access trip counts were approximately 12,800 in March, 12,700 in April, and 13,200 in May.
- SF Access On-Time Performance held steady in March and April at 98% with a slight decrease to 97.7% in May.
- Complaints per 1,000 trips had a slight uptick, with approximately 1.1 per 1,000 in March, 0.78 per 1,000 in April, and 0.37 per 1,000 in May.
- The batch of new vehicles recently received are mostly in service except for a few undergoing warranty repairs.
- Matthew Teixeira was selected to fill the role of Transportation Planner. The Broker is seeking to fill the Contract Compliance Specialist vacancy.

- **Rider Service Feedback**

Riders discussed topics including the training curriculum for new SF Paratransit van drivers, along with topics of rider assistance, disability sensitivity and awareness, and sighted guide training for assisting blind riders.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting is September 4, 2024.

Mara Math commented that the 600 series vehicles have a narrow stair way and little leg room in the front row. She would also like shoulder belts to be considered for future vehicle procurements. Susan Kitazawa was fine with the 600 series vehicles but had heard from drivers that they do not like the step down from the drivers' position. Jane Redmond commented that the seats on the Paratransit vehicles are not made for big people and that the seat length is very short without inadequate legroom. Tracey Gamedah would like there to be seat belts on the wall to allow carts to be secured. Kevin Lee would like to be able to see the prototype vehicles to provide feedback

Chuck Paschal asked if SF Paratransit vehicles can drive in the same transit-only red lanes that allow taxis and Muni. Matthew Teixeira confirmed this. Nichelle Williams added that some Paratransit drivers might have gotten confused on when they can use the transit-only red lanes so they may have not as a precaution.

Mara Math suggested that each vehicle have the drivers name listed. Nichelle Williams replied that the drivers have a badge on them with their names. James Greenblatt suggested drivers introduce themselves when riders board. Jane Redmond asked how many drivers are operating for SF Paratransit. Yvette McNeese responded that there are currently 107 active drivers. Susan Kitazawa suggested that the postcards be made available for drivers to inform them about the meeting. Chuck Paschal agreed with this comment.

PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Report

Marc Soto read the following report:

- **Election of Vice Chair**
Cheryl Damico was nominated and elected Vice Chair.

- **SF Paratransit Status Update**
Justin Leong reported that Group Van on-time performance was 99.7% in April, 99.8% in May, and 99.6% in June. Trip counts were approximately 8,900 in April, 8,190 in May, and 7,900 for June. There was one complaint in April.

The Broker is working with the Operating Division and Redi-Wheels to identify a replacement intercounty transfer location at Stonestown due to the abrupt closure of the McDonalds.

Nichelle Williams of the Transdev Operating Division reported that they are in the process of filling the position of Safety Manager. They plan to start a new driver class within the next two weeks. The current class of trainees should be finishing within the week.

- **Agency Status Reports**
 - Self-Help reported they continue operating normally. They provided around 3,522 trips in June.
 - Kimochi reported they restarted transportation service for their congregate meal programs.
 - Institute on Aging (IOA) reported their communication with paratransit has been good and they appreciate the partnership.
 - On Lok reported they are operating as normal and also appreciated paratransit services.

The next PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting is October 9, 2024.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Report

Justin Leong read the following report:

- **Comments from the Vice Chair**
Jessica Felix appreciated receiving the service statistics prior to the meeting.

- **Ramp Taxis Requirements & Standards**

Jonathan Cheng reviewed the current requirements and standards and solicited feedback for potential changes. He responded to questions clarifying the existing rules. Members suggested increasing SFO access minimum pickup requirement from 15 or 20 wheelchair trips per month. Drivers must perform at least 10 wheelchair trips per month to maintain a ramp medallion, and may lose it if they are short three months in a six month period. Jessica suggested the ramp trip incentives be increased \$5 from their current amounts.

- **Broker Report**

- Taxi Driver Incentives paid: April \$18,570, May \$ 18,750, June \$16,125
- Ramp Vehicle Incentives paid: April \$9,600, May \$10,600, June \$9,800
- The SFPT trip count: April 25,586, May 27,263, June 25,137, July 26,013
- Qualifying SFPT WC trips: April 941, May 909, June 793, July 825 (preliminary)
- Complaints (per 1,000 trips): April 6 (0.24), May 4 (0.15), June 2 (0.08), July 6 (0.23)

The Transdev Operating Division hired a new General Manager and Safety Manager. The SF Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey was completed with results to be reported in an upcoming meeting. The responses showed general satisfaction with the current services and on-time performance. The Broker is working on a campaign to have all riders with Paratransit cards receive updated versions with their photo on it. The Broker is also working to update their conference rooms with remote conferencing equipment for hybrid meetings. It was suggested that taxi companies be required to attend at least two PCC meetings times per year as part of SFMTA's requirements.

- **Service Quality Issues**

- Riders - Cheryl Damico raised the topic of driver training, believing that online training lacked effectiveness. Marc responded that SFMTA has a taxi school for all drivers. Marc reported the Broker plans to coordinate another PASS train-the-trainer class in the near future.
- Drivers & Cab Companies – Zuhair Sinada reported hearing riders who waited long periods for Yellow to send a ramp taxi, Jessica suggested following up with Yellow dispatch. Susan Kitazawa reported a rider with taxi issues reached out to her and she was asked to refer them to the Broker.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting will be on November 6, 2024

Zuhair Sinada presented his proposed changes to the existing ramp taxi program, which included changes to the incentives as well as requirements to maintain the ramp medallion. Among his recommendations include limiting the hours in which a ramp taxi can use their Airport Short Pass, increase the minimum number of wheelchair trips performed to maintain their ramp medallion, and developing a rating system. Barry Taranto indicated that some of the proposals may be difficult to implement while others have already been addressed. Marty Smith concurred with those comments. Barry also mentioned that he would like a similar incentive program established for trips provided to ambulatory Paratransit taxi riders.

Marty Smith wanted clarification as to how ramp taxi trainers are certified. Justin Leong stated that all ramp taxi trainers must have completed the PASS Train-the-Trainer course to become certified trainers.

Marty Smith mentioned that Yellow Cab is allowing all ramp taxi drivers to access to their app. Jessica Felix indicated that the Yellow app isn't recording the driver's hours and want to make sure that drivers are properly credited. Fred Lein stated that if there are issues with the Yellow app, drivers should contact Pablo. Barry stated that Flywheel has started upfront fare pricing and stated that the upfront fare is not enough income for a trip.

Cheryl Damico recently had trouble getting a ramp taxi as some hospitals only contact a single taxi company. Jane Redmond would like to make sure that ramp taxi riders also are aware that SF Access is available.

Paratransit Broker Report

Service level statistics was provided prior to the meeting. Justin Leong, Marc Soto, and Yevette McNeese reported as follow:

- **Service Level Statistics**
SF Access operated about 13,100 trips in May, 12,000 trips in June and 12,400 trips in July. Paratransit taxis completed approximately 26,900 trips in May, 24,800 in June, and 22,800 in July. About 6,700 Group Van trips were May, 6,400 in June, and 5,900 in July.
- **On Time Performance**
The on-time performance for SF Access was 96 to 99 percent from May to July. The Group Van on-time performance was 93 to 99 percent for the same period while the taxi on-time performance was 93 to 100 percent.
- **PCC Memorial Decals**
All the decals are at Tunnel and are in the process of being placed onto new Paratransit vehicles.
- **Paratransit Broker and Operations Phone System**
SF Paratransit is in the process of updating their existing phone system for the Broker's and operating divisions. Interviews were conducted with two prospective vendors. SF Paratransit is looking for a cloud based solution. This is a priority project for the team as it is essential to update the phone system.
- **Paratransit Taxi Debit Card**
With changes in technology, SF Paratransit is exploring updating the existing paratransit taxi debit card to allow for tagless payment in addition to current swipe method. Additionally, staff is exploring alternative methods of obtaining the necessary photos for the taxi debit card, particularly for riders enrolled in the ETC program.
- **SF Paratransit Brokers Office Improvements**

Planning has started to convert the two existing conference rooms to support remote meetings. This will include new television screens, speakers, and cameras to support this functionality. The goal is to complete this project within the next two months.

- **2024 Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey**

The initial results from the 2024 Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey have been completed and needs review by SFMTA and SF Paratransit. The survey participants that requested that SF Paratransit follow up with their concerns were contacted. The results of the survey will be reported out at a future PCC Executive Committee meeting but survey results are promising and reflect the current service performance.

- **SF Paratransit Staffing Update**

Matthew Teixeira was promoted as the Transportation Planner. As a result, there is a vacancy as the contract compliance van monitor. Additionally, hiring continues for a new customer service representative for Mobility Management team. Gregorio Moreno was introduced as the new Safety Manager.

Mara Math asked the Broker's office could not handle all the photos for the Paratransit taxi debit card. Jonathan Cheng replied that none of the ETC riders enrolled during the COVID-19 pandemic have photos and as we plan to make the program permanent, SF Paratransit would like ensure that the taxi debit cards for this program align with the other taxi programs. This is a huge endeavor given that there are 3,500 active ETC riders and approximately 7,500 enrolled riders. Marty Smith stated that Yellow Cab allows for tagless credit and debit cards. James Greenblatt lauded several SF paratransit staff members for their work.

Public Comments

Barry Taranto praised the work of Marc Soto and Carol Osorio. James Greenblatt had an incident with a Flywheel taxi at Whole Foods on Ocean Avenue when the driver started meter before he entered the vehicle.

Announcement

There were no announcements.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 2nd from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.