

**Minutes**  
**PCC Executive Committee Meeting**  
**October 6, 2021**

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Fred Lein, PCC Chair; Bob Planthold, PCC Vice Chair; Marty Smith, PCC Secretary; Roland Wong, PC&O Chair; Cheryl Damico; Kevin Lee; Mara Math; Mary McLain; Susan Kitazawa

PCC Members and Guests: Drennen Shelton; Helen Walsh; Daveed Mandell; Joanna Huitt; Jon Gaffney; Barry Taranto

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: Jacy Cohen

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Kent Hinton; Cheryl Hac; Kevin McDonald; Justin Leong; Carol Osorio; Matthew Teixeira; Gabriel Chan; Catherine Callahan

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Jonathan Cheng

Fred Lein, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**Read and Approve Agenda**

Fred Lein, PCC Chair, read the agenda. The agenda were motioned/seconded/approved.

**Approve Minutes of August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

**Comments from the Chair**

Fred Lein had no comments except to cheer on the San Francisco Giants.

**Update on the MTC Coordinated Plan**

Drennen Shelton from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) provided background about the MTC Coordinated Plan. She explained that this report focuses on transportation needs of low income, seniors, and persons with disabilities. She encouraged members to read the most current update of MTC Coordinated Plan, which summarizes the transportation gaps and possible solutions regionally. She then described the top five strategies recommended by MTC during the last report based on the transportation needs across the regional. Drennen then opened the floor to members to provide feedback about what works and what doesn't work when they travel.

Bob Planthold would like to ensure that only projects that ensure full accessibility are funded, mentioning a last mile project in Alameda County that was inaccessible. Annette Williams added that she wants any service to have comparable service/wait times for both ambulatory and wheelchair users. She specifically mentioned that she would like to see autonomous vehicles provide equivalent service to wheelchair users as ambulatory riders. Helen Walsh added that she wants all modes of transportation to be equal, especially in the shared economy.

Roland Wong mentioned that there are situations where a wheelchair may go out of commission and the rider would need transportation so he would like to see alternative on-demand transportation available if Paratransit is unable to transport for emergency situations. Annette Williams clarified that in San Francisco, we have an emergency service for similar situations. Roland the clarified that he would like to see a similar arrangement in other counties to provide emergency backup service.

Mara Math would like to see drivers be able to provide change to riders for fares. She would also like to have Paratransit allow riders to make short stops during their trip. In addition, she would like to see Paratransit be free like Muni; she mentioned that someone spoke of a time in which there were no fares charged for Paratransit trips. Annette Williams clarified that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Paratransit systems can charge twice the adult fare, however, in San Francisco, the city has maintained the policy of charging the same as the adult fare. She also clarified that Paratransit is always charged a fare. Helen Walsh would like to see better intercounty transportation for disabled people.

Susan Kitazawa advocated for the importance of same day service for seniors and persons with disabilities, recognizing that San Francisco is special because we do have same day service through the taxi program. She would like to have same day service on Paratransit available in other counties, especially for last minute medical appointments. In addition, she would like the ramp taxi program strengthened.

Drennen Shelton mentioned that a survey may be distributed and sent out. Bob Planthold asked if there was a deadline for the survey and report. Drennen replied that once the survey is distributed, there will be a deadline. She also mentioned that will be returning at a later date to review the report with the committee and confirm the findings.

### **Mobility Management Presentation**

Catherine Callahan provided an update on the Mobility Management function at SF Paratransit. In her presentation, she described the work of mobility management and recognized the achievements of its steering committee in helping to shape its direction. She also spoke about the future of the steering committee and indicated that she would like it to become a subcommittee, comprised of both PCC and MAAC members.

Bob Planthold asked what the timeframe for relaunching the steering committee and how many non-PCC members would be on the subcommittee. Marc Soto responded that the subcommittee would meet in early 2022. He would also like to reach out previous members of the steering committee to gauge their interest in continuing to participate. Annette Williams added that the meetings would be able open to the public as well. Kevin Lee would like to ensure that some of the spots are filled by wheelchair users. Mara Math asked for clarification about MAAC and how is the steering committee differs from the PCC. Annette explained that MAAC is the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee that advises SFMTA on accessibility issues on Muni and other transportation modes and described that mobility management is a larger function that engages beyond the PCC and MAAC committees individually. Roland Wong wanted clarification if this is a new PC&O subcommittee or ad-hoc. Marc stated that the intent is to have

a permanent subcommittee but may not meet as regularly as the current PC&O subcommittees. Susan Kitazawa thinks it would be beneficial to have PCC and MAAC work together on this steering committee

### **PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Report**

The summary report of the September 1 SF Access Subcommittee meeting is as follows:

- **Service Quality Update**

Earnesha Scott, Assistant General Manager for the Transdev operating division, gave an update on driver recruitment efforts. They have a total of 102 drivers, of which 95 are actively in service, 7 inactive, and 15 in training. Additionally, an open road supervisor position has been filled, as has one of two open dispatcher positions. Recruiting efforts continue for the one remaining open dispatcher position. Transdev continues to engage employees in various activities intended to keep moral high.

- **SF Paratransit Broker's Report**

Kent Hinton reported SF Access service demand is holding in a range of 50-60% of pre pandemic service levels. Taxi service is continuing to operate at 70-80% of what they were operating pre-pandemic. Group van services have grown to 15% of what it was pre-pandemic.

Ridership levels for SF Access are up approximately 28% in July and 22% in August over the prior fiscal year monthly average. Taxi ridership for the month was up 7% in July and 5.5% in August. The group van numbers are up 500% in July and up 880% in August compared to the prior fiscal year average – Group Van suspended operations in April 2020 due to the pandemic, except for limited DAS shopping shuttle services.

On-time performance for SF Access was 97% in July and just under 99% in August. Taxi on-time performance was 92% in July and 91% in August. Group van on-time performance was 85% in July and the August numbers were not ready yet.

SFA complaints in July were up 70% and then down 15% in August compared to the previous year. Taxi complaints were up 39% in July and down 38% in August. Group van service received one complaint.

The SF Access Online website soft launched in very late June. To date 15 unique riders have scheduled 183 trips via the website.

Justin Leong provided a brief update on the solicitation on Transdev's IT services contract, with a new agreement anticipated by November of this year. This process will be completely transparent for the riders.

Additionally, Justin reported that Transdev is still awaiting a pilot test vehicle for an order of 22 class B cutaway vans, which are very similar to the 900-series. The vehicle procurement has been impacted by the national microchip shortage. Once the test vehicle is delivered, it will undergo SFMTA inspections.

Catherine Callahan reported that Transdev's is searching for a mobility management specialist to round out the mobility management team. A temporary employee has been hired on an interim, part-time basis until a fulltime employee is hired.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting date is December 1, 2021.

Cheryl Damico reported having difficulties using the SF Access Online while Roland Wong would like to use this tool to reserve trips. Kent Hinton indicated that he would connect with both after the meeting. Both Cheryl and Mara Math also stated that they experience instances in which their driver couldn't reach dispatch and asked if there is there a dedicated line for communication. Mary McLain said that the driver has direct communications through their Nextel device but will monitor the situation to ensure that this is not a reoccurring issue. Marty Smith asked if the Clipper Card be used for all SF Paratransit modes. Marc responded that it will be available for van service but not taxi. Kevin Lee questioned if there was any way to implement a call back button through the tablets. Kent answered that they are currently converting to FirstNet and are in process of replacing the push-to-talk radio to a more advanced system to give more enhanced, robust communication networks, especially during emergencies. Susan Kitazawa wanted to know what the timeline for the transition is. Kent stated it is currently in process and is expected to be completed within two months.

### **Paratransit Broker Report**

Kent Hinton, Mary McLain, Gabriel Chan, and Marc Soto reported as follow:

- **Service Level Statistics**  
SF Access is operating at about 60 percent of pre-pandemic levels on weekdays; slightly higher on Saturdays due to dialysis service. Paratransit taxis are approximately 75 percent of pre-pandemic levels while Group Van is at around 20 percent. Transportation services for the Department of Disabled and Aging Services resumed in September 2021 and is at 10 percent of pre-pandemic levels.
- **On Time Performance**  
On-time performance continued to perform about 98 percent for SF Access, 91 percent for taxis, and 95 percent for the Group Van service. The slight dip in the on-time performance may be due to cyberattack and reliance on paper manifest due lack of inoperability of tablets.
- **SF Paratransit Staffing Update**  
Staff is continuing to recruit for drivers; currently there are 22 drivers in various stages of training. In addition to drivers, there have been some difficulties with hiring dispatchers and reservation agents. Some of the issues with retaining the new recruits is that some are testing positive for banned substances.
- **Vehicle Procurement**  
Transdev recently received one new bus and are working on DriveCam and Mobile Eye installation. New vehicles are expected to arrive but are being delayed due to the worldwide chip shortage.

- **Broker IT Solicitation**

Transdev is undergoing a solicitation for its IT functions. There a lot of IT software and infrastructure needed to operate the Paratransit program. In addition, there are new projects occurring including enhancing cybersecurity, transitioning the communications system to FirstNet, and new PC equipment being procured and installed.

- **Clipper 2.0 Implementation**

Ant agency is being identified to pilot the Paratransit component for an updated Clipper Card. The pilot would start in second half of 2022; if pilot is successful, it would be implemented regionwide in 2023.

Marty Smith asked what the starting wage for SF Access drivers is. Mary McLain answered that hourly wages start at \$23.50 with wage increases based on years of experience. Kevin Lee asked how Clipper 2.0, would be used in the Paratransit program. Marc Soto stated that the new version of the Clipper Card would make available another payment method for Paratransit riders to pay for their rides. Mara Math wanted to know if cannabis is one of the banned substances that is disqualifying new recruits. Mary explained that these substances are regulated at the federal level and cannabis is one of them.

### **Public Comments**

Jonathan Cheng announced that the PCC Annual Meeting, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 6, will be held remotely. He announced that the PC&O Planning and Review subcommittee will meet next Wednesday, October 20, where we would discuss the logistics of the event as well as the member awards. Mara Math asked if members could nominate not only drivers but employees. Kent Hinton responded that any staff member could be nominated.

Mara Math commented that she was having difficulties getting taxi rides from her residence and would like an incentive program in place to encourage drivers. Marty Smith offered to provide the trip if she calls him. Kevin Lee encouraged Mara to be patient when requesting taxis. Barry Taranto suggested that due to the increasing cost of gas, drivers may be hesitant to go out of their way to pick up trips and indicated that more time is required to provide assistance. He would like to see the tip amount increase. Marty noticed, based on his trip, that tipping has been generous and that there are some riders who have tipped out of pocket, in addition to the Paratransit tip amount. Helen Walsh said that she understood the taxi drivers' perspective and would like this service inequity addressed.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

**The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**