

San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council

c/o Muni

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Minutes

PCC Executive Committee Meeting

February 25, 2015

1 South Van Ness Avenue, 2nd Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference Room

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: John Lazar, PCC Chair; Bruce Oka; PCC Vice Chair; Adrienne Humphrey; Aisha Jackson; Jacy Cohen; Jane Redmond; Jeanne Lynch; Jean Marie Green; John Han; Kaye Griffin; Mary McLain; Marty Smith; Olivia Santiago; Pam Martinez; Rodney Lee; Ruach Graffis; Sam Alicia Duke; Sandra Fancher

PCC Members and Guests: Laurie Graham; Ursula McGuire; LaShonti Woods; Annie Young; Kerry Brown; Efren Alarcon; Hilario Reyes

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: Cheryl Damico, PCC Secretary; Fred Lein; Gilda Chico; Roland Wong

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Kent Hinton; Richard Foiles; Jason Quon; Kevin McDonald

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Jonathan Cheng; Gida Alvarez

John Lazar, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

John Lazar, PCC Chair, read the agenda.

Approve Minutes of December 10th meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

John Lazar introduced himself to the committee as the new chair of the PCC. He is eager to lead this committee and work to improve transportation for all seniors and persons with disabilities. He recognizes that the senior population is growing and aging longer and understands the important element that transportation plays in their lives. While the transportation system in San Francisco is excellent, there is also room for improvement. He is interested in visiting all medical centers and senior centers in order to allow for more efficient transportation. He also recognizes the important role of technology and how it can help better connect patrons with taxis and streamline payment.

Election of PC&O Chair

Annette Williams announced that at the last meeting, there was a tie in the election for the PC&O Chair between Roland Wong and Marty Smith. Annette mentioned that at the past meeting, the idea was floated to have Roland and Marty serve as co-chairs of the PC&O. Kaye Griffin motioned to have co-chairs on the PC&O. John Lazar seconded it and brought it up to a vote. A

majority of PCC members present vote for to make Roland and Marty co-chairs of the PC&O. Marty Smith congratulated Roland Wong and himself on their election to this shared position.

Transdev Progress Report

Kent Hinton provided a report on the service quality for Transdev. He stated that the positive on-time performance trend for SF Access has continued onto January. In January, the on-time performance was at 85 percent with the first half of February trending at slightly above 85 percent on-time as well. Kent also reported that complaints are significant down from December. He noted that the spike in complaints in December was likely related to the Internet outage at the Brisbane operations facilities that hinder service delivery for about a week. In January, there were 69 complaints and in February, there were 57 complaints. Kent also noted that there was an increase in compliments in January and February.

Mary McLain stated that Transdev is continuing its efforts to focus on three areas: safety, on-time performance, and customer service quality. Staff from Brisbane participated in a national conference that focused on pay attention to pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Within the SFMTA Group Van, management has been working with staff to receive additional training to ensure that standard record keeping procedures are used among staff. By doing so, it limits the need to backtrack and fill in missing data. All driver training classes have been filled. There are still two road supervisor positions that are unfilled. In addition, there is a new dispatcher being trained with another two vacancies in that position. There is also a new interim call center supervisor who had previous experience serving as a dispatcher and scheduler.

Recent changes in the Shop-a-Round, including a free fares promotion and new afternoon trips, have dramatically increase demand for the service. In January, the first month in which all these service enhancements were introduced, Transdev completed over 500 trips. In comparison, for the previous month, only 260 Shop-a-Round van trips were completed.

John Lazar asked about the other 15 percent of trips there were no considered to be not on-time. Kent Hinton explained that for those 15 percent of trips, the vehicle may have arrived early, which is five minutes before the promised pick up time, or late, which is 15 minutes after the promised pick up time. John asked if traffic played a role in some of the late pick ups. Kent affirmed this statement. Aisha Jackson added that many drivers are told to wait at their location for up to 20 minutes before a no-show is marked and the driver being given permission to leave. Kent said that one of the actions being taken to address this issue is the hiring of a new staff member whose primary responsibility would be to take no-shows and help expedite the process. Aisha asked what the no-show procedure is. Mary McLain answered that should a driver arrive at a location and attempt to contact the rider but is unsuccessful, they must notify dispatcher and can proceed with the no-show procedure. However, if the rider does being their boarding process within five minutes of the vehicle's arrival, the driver does stay but various delays may increase the dwell time. Mary emphasized that drivers are told to stay and complete the onboarding process. Rodney Lee pondered if there are different wait times for dialysis patients. Marc Soto replied that the vehicle scheduling is sensitive to the needs of the rider and additional time is given if needed.

Olivia Santiago asked if complaints and compliments are categorized. Kent Hinton replied that they are categorized, first by mode of service and then by type of complaint/compliments and the

read the number of complaints and compliments by category. Jean Marie Green asked if there are any general trends with the complaints or compliments. Kevin McDonald stated that based on his experience, most riders mention the driver's behavior. Lurilla Harris mentioned that she has been calling in all her complaints and that would likely increase the total number of complaints. Rodney Lee said that the call center, particularly the reservationists, have improved in promptness. Kaye Griffin thought that the number of wheelchair complaints were high and would like to see the figures. Kent replied that they can provide the numbers on a quarterly basis. Annie Young complimented the SF Access service she received yesterday as she was picked up on-time. Jane Remond has seen a vast improvement in service and recognizes that not all passengers can be pleased.

Free Muni for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Annette Williams stated that in the first six weeks since the start of the program, SFMTA has received over 30,000 applications for this program. She stated that any low to moderate income San Francisco resident that is 65 years or older or a holder of the RTC Discount ID card is eligible for this program. The high volume of applicants alludes to the high enthusiasm among the senior and disabled community and she encouraged members to tell individuals who would benefit from this program. Annette acknowledged that the high demand for this program has put more stress on members within her staff as they are responsible for processing applications for the RTC Discount ID card. However, Annette believes that this program will be a huge benefit for the senior and disabled community.

Jacy Cohen asked how would an applicant be notified if they are approved for the program. Annette Williams replied that letters are being sent to all applicants about their approval or the applicant can tag their Clipper Card on March 1st to check to see if the Free Muni pass has been loaded on. Olivia Santiago mentioned that students from City College of San Francisco are asking her what types of disabilities qualify for the program. Annette answered that as long as they qualify for the RTC Discount ID card, they would be able to apply for the Free Muni program.

Lurilla Harris asked if there was an increase in service capacity to accommodate the increased usage among seniors and persons with disabilities due to the program. Annette replied that there are no new service increases but there are several ongoing projects, such as Muni Forward, that will increase service capacity on certain high usage bus lines that would be able to absorb some of the increases in ridership due to the program.

PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting

Max Lazar read the following report in lieu of Roland Wong:

1. Comments from the Chair

Vice Chair Max Lazar was not in attendance for the meeting. PCC member Bruce Oka filled in as Interim Vice Chair. He commented that this will be a challenging year ahead of us with budget concerns and TNCs creating problems for taxis.

2. Nomination and Election for Vice Chair

Roland Wong was nominated and elected as the new Vice Chair for the Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee.

3. Service Quality Issues – Taxi Services

Jane Redmond of the PCC mentioned that she orders Yellow Cab online from her laptop. She said when she needs a ride in 5 minutes; Yellow Cab is there on time. Jeanne Lynch of the PCC said that she had an issue when making a reservation for a cab. She said she made the reservation the night before, but the person did not put in the reservation. Bruce Oka of the PCC spoke about the difficulties trying to get a cab. He said he would call the head of the company to get a cab and it can take up to an hour for a cab to show up.

4. SF Paratransit Broker Report

- Ramp Taxi Incentives - Kent Hinton of SFPT/Transdev gave a report regarding the ramp taxi incentive. In the month of December 2014, the broker paid a total of \$7,160 to drivers. Vina Cab won the fleet incentive for the month of December 2014.
- Taxi OTP – Kent continued by reporting the taxi on time performance (OTP). In January 2015, taxi OTP was at 94%. In November and December 2014, taxi OTP was at about 93%. In October 2014, taxi OTP was at 96% and September 2014 taxi OTP was at 100%.
- Complaints - In December 2014, there were 3 complaints. In November 2014, there were 7 complaints.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2015 from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Broker's office, 68 12th Street, San Francisco.
Paratransit Broker Report

PC&O Customer Satisfaction Survey Subcommittee Meeting

Annette Williams stated that on February 12, an ad-hoc subcommittee meeting was held to discuss the questions for the upcoming Customer Satisfaction Survey for the SF Paratransit program. She acknowledged Rodney Lee and Sam Alicia Duke for participating in this meeting. One important area of interest was the use of smartphones among paratransit users. In the previous survey, about 60 percent of riders used a cellphone, of which 17 percent use a smartphone. With the recent growth in technology and its ability to connect riders to vehicles through mobile applications, staff is interested seeing how we can use it to improve SF Paratransit. Marc Soto added that this survey gives an opportunity for individuals who use SF Paratransit but do not usually provide feedback to voice their opinions about service quality.

Paratransit Broker's Report

Marc Soto reported as follow:

- **Staffing Changes**
Over the past six months, there has been some changes in staff. Samir Madhav, then Finance Manager, left and was filled on an interim basis by Karen Nguyen, a senior staff member in the finance department. In addition, Yvette Fang, Manager of Certification, retired and her position is being filled on an interim basis by Cheryl Hac, who is a senior eligibility analyst. In addition, the contracts administrator position was recently vacated.

The jobs were posted and interviews will be conducted shortly. If the individuals currently occupying the position on an interim basis are promoted, their previous positions will be filled.

- **Contract Extension**

Staff at SF Paratransit have been working to develop a one year budget to extend the current Broker contract with the SFMTA. Staff at SF Paratransit was particularly mindful to ensure that there were no redundancies and that every dollar will be spent effectively.

- **Emergency Preparedness Planning**

There has been discussion on the regional level concerning the emergency preparedness plans. Recently, East Bay Paratransit updated their emergency preparedness plan and SF Paratransit is interested in updating their plan to ensure that elements that were previously missing or not mentioned are properly addressed.

- **Group Van Ride Times**

Kent Hinton has been working with several ADHC to address concerns regarding long ride times by passengers on SFMTA Group Van service. One of the proposed solutions include rehabilitating several vehicles slated for retirement in order to extend their usage in the SF Paratransit program.

- **Mobile Data Computers (MDC) Procurement**

With the new 35 paratransit vehicles in service, SF Paratransit is trying to find MDCs for each vehicle. Staff at SF Paratransit is working with a transit system to transfer at least 13 MDCs, at no cost, over for use in the SF Paratransit program. There is also a new drive by the Broker for drivers to receive refresher training on how to properly use the MDCs. This is important for drivers are retrained about the process in order to acknowledge and accommodate riders who need additional time to board. In addition, it will allow staff to track riders who do not pay their fare.

- **Ramp Taxi Incentive Awards**

In December, \$7,760 worth of incentives were awarded and Vina received the companywide incentive for the highest number of wheelchair trips per ramp medallion. In January, \$8,360 worth of incentives were awarded and Luxor was awarded the companywide incentive for the highest number of wheelchair trips per ramp medallion.

- **Muni Mobile Application**

Staff at SF Paratransit and SFMTA Accessible Service were given a presentation on the oncoming Muni Mobile application. This mobile application will allow individuals to purchase tickets for all Muni services, including SF Paratransit. Individuals can buy as many tickets as they want and riders can activate each ticket they use and show the driver.

Jane Redmond inquired as to how schedulers know to include a bus aide on a route that includes a rider that requires stair assist. Marc Soto stated that all riders in the stair assist program are identified. Kent Hinton added that in order to be approved, staff from SF Paratransit look at the location and determines their approval.

Bruce Oka asked if SF Paratransit is tracking riders who are boarding late. Marc Soto answered that staff is focused on the fare collection and will soon address the issue with no shows among riders. Staff is calling individuals who do not pay their fare and will soon call riders who are marked as “no show.” Sam Alicia Duke questioned whether riders who are being suspended for abusing the SF Access service. Marc answered they are currently not suspending individuals; however, they will begin utilizing the suspension policy stated in the Paratransit Rules of Operations. Olivia Santiago said that on Rediwheel, for riders who do not pay their fare, drivers give the rider a ticket with instructions for them to mail the ticket back with payment. Failure to do so may result in a suspension of service. She encouraged them to enforce the service suspension for no shows but wanted assurance that there would be an appeals process as well. Annette Williams and Marc affirmed that there would be an appeals process. Aisha Jackson added that some riders say that they are “coming,” delaying their boarding process while other times, riders will claim they called in their cancellation already but that it was not relayed. Mary Mclain mentioned that sometimes a person call a staff member’s personal number and leave a trip cancellation, resulting in the scheduler not receiving this information.

Jeanne Lynch stated that she received a call from a taxi user who wanted to load money onto her paratransit debit card but was told that she could not add until the 15th of the month. She wanted to add money since she had a lot of unexpected trips this past month. Marc Soto replied that based on the information provided, it is likely that the person’s purchase date is the 15th of the month. It should have been explained to the person that in addition to riding a taxi, they are welcomed to utilize the SF Access service should they be low on taxi funds. In addition, they could have asked for a one time taxi increase to meet their trip needs.

Announcements

Sam Alicia Duke announced that TODCO has a new facility open and will begin to publish a newsletter.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 1st from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 1 South Van Ness, 2nd Floor Conference Room.