

*San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council*

*c/o Muni*

*1 South Van Ness, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103*

*ph: 415.701.4485*

*fax: 415.701.4728*

*TTY: 415.701.4730*

**Minutes**

**PCC Executive Committee Meeting**

**March 27, 2013**

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

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Stu Smith, PCC Chair; Cheryl Damico, Vice Chair Laurie Graham, PCC Secretary; Adrienne Humphrey; Erma Brim; Fred Lein; Jeanne Lynch; Joseph Flanagan; Kaye Griffin; Kevin Lee; Pam Martinez; Ruach Graffis; Sue Cauthen; Ursula McGuire and John Lazar, Luxor Cab.

PCC Members and Guests: Joey Hogan; Diann Stevenson; Lurilla Harris, Sandra Fancher, Bruce Oka, Sam Alicia Duke, Rodney Lee, Athan Rebelos of Desoto Cab, and Dan Hines of National/Veterans Cab.

PCC Executive Committee Member Absent/Excused: Gilda Chico, Genevieve Bayan; Genya Ehrlich, Joseph Flanagan, Jacy Cohen, Roland Wong, PC&O Chair; Anna Krevets, Claudia Grubler, and Jane Redmond.

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; John Sanderson; Gregory Strecker

SFMTA: Annette Williams.

Stu Smith, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m.

**Read and Approve Agenda**

Stu Smith, PCC Chair, read the agenda. The agenda was motioned/seconded/passed.

**Approve Minutes of January 9 meeting**

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved with one amendment. Lurilla Harris explained that she had raised the issue of drivers not having assistive tools for frail-elderly and others to safely board vehicles. She wanted this noted in the minutes.

**Comments from the Chair**

Stu Smith began by saying he didn't have much to say under Chair's comments but wanted to raise the change in meeting location. Annette explained that at the last minute, the management of 711 Eddy Street had to cancel the reservation for the PCC meeting to accommodate another event. Annette explained that although the "711 Eddy" building management has the PCC's entire meeting schedule for the year, they cannot guarantee that every meeting can be accommodated. She apologized for the last-minute change. She said staff did everything possible to notify members and the public of the meeting location change. MV was also advised and asked to explain to PCC members making reservations and to change reservations already made. Lurilla Harris publicly announced that while she was not notified. She was made aware of the meeting location change thanks to James at MV who called her outside normal business

hours to assure her that her trip was accommodated at the new drop off location. She gave him public acknowledgement for this act. Others comments some positive and others not-so-positive about the short notice of the meeting location change were noted. Stu asked if others liked the 1 South Van Ness, headquarters of the SFMTA, for future PCC Executive Meetings. There was mixed reaction. Fred Lein mentioned that access for riders like Gilda Chico who need escorting to the meeting could be challenging. He mentioned this was why Gilda was not at today's meeting. Annette remarked that it was possible that loading could occur through the bank's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor garage facility.

Stu also remarked about the lack of direct service to San Francisco International Airport by SF Paratransit, which had been discussed at the February PCC meeting. He said he had discussed this with a number of people including an attorney who said this didn't sound right. They promised to look further into it and he said he would report back.

The chair at this point ended comment and called for the next item.

### **Accessibility Workshops related to SFMTA's Bicycle Program**

Annette reported on recent SFMTA-sponsored workshops to discuss events and activities related to SFMTA's bicycle program. She explained that the workshops were held to obtain input on impacts to access for pedestrians including seniors and persons with disabilities and vehicular traffic. The workshops were designed to brainstorm possible solutions to challenges and to foster more dialogue between all the groups. She mentioned names of some of the participants in recent workshops. When asked who from the PCC was invited, she reminded the group that the chair had picked PCC members for participation and that those were invited. The Chair acknowledged this.

Annette further reported that the February workshop focused on design guidelines. As an example, the design for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor between Market and King Streets was the focus in the last meeting. Discussed in particular were traffic flow, installation of bike lanes, landscaping and relocation of disabled parking spaces. She also went into some detail about track ways on that corridor. She announced that another 2<sup>nd</sup> Street meeting is TENTATIVELY scheduled for April 17 and that proper notifications would be made.

Stu Smith raised similar public meetings regarding Polk Street. He said in the most recent meeting, over 400 people attended. Stu wants PCC & MAAC members, and others to attend meetings if possible and weigh in on these issues. Lurilla Harris stated that all bicycles needed to be licensed. Ruach urged the PCC Executive Committee to begin taking policy positions and making recommendations which advocate for the disability community. Stu agreed and said that while he supports bicycles, he didn't want cyclists to be the only group heard or that the Board of Supervisors takes actions only favorable to cyclists. Kaye Griffin asked that there needed some way to get all these meetings posted.

### **5310 Grant Update**

Annette Williams also gave this report. She stated that this funding, formerly 16(b) funding, was designed to provide funding for vehicles that serve the elderly and disabled populations. She said historically in San Francisco, local non-profit organizations apply for the funds. She mentioned that one good thing this year is that no match is required to obtain funding but those

applicants still have to develop a good plan and complete the complex application process. She further reported that this year, six local non-profits submitted applications. They included Laguna Honda, Stepping Stone, Self-Help for the Elderly, Edgewood, Institute on Aging and On-Lok. She also thanked the PCC members and staff that volunteered to complete the arduous tasks of reading, discussing and evaluating all applications and proposals submitted. She said the six were hefty applications and that the committee composed of staff members Kate Toran and Aaron Bonfilio of the SF Paratransit office and PCC members Adrienne Humphrey, Ruach Graffis and Jane Redmond had worked diligently on the review process. She said this review and its results will be made to Caltrans through MTC.

There being no questions, the Chair called for the next Agenda item.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

In Jonathan Cheng's and Jane Redmond's absence, Marc Soto made both reports:

#### **1. PC&O Ad Hoc Rules Committee Report**

Marc reported that the Ad-Hoc committee convened on March 5, 2013, at 1 pm at 1 South Van Ness. In attendance were Stu Smith, Roland Wong, Jacy Cohen, Olivia Santiago, Sue Cauthen, Jeanne Lynch and Jane Redmond. From the staff attendees included Marc Soto, Jonathan Cheng, Aaron Bonfilio and Kate Toran. Marc began by providing background which included the initial approval of the rules for paratransit completed by the PCC in 2002 which led to the development of the SF Paratransit *Riders' Guides* for all services, van services and taxis and the subsequent adoption of rules specifically for the debit card program. The effort by this committee is to consolidate and update the rules so they can be presented to the PCC for adoption. Marc reported that at the first meeting, the committee went through about 70% of the rules and discussed proposed updates. The next meeting to complete the review and comment is scheduled for April 15 at 1 pm at SFMTA Headquarters, 1 South Van Ness Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Noe Valley Conference Room.

#### **2. PC&O SF Access Committee Meeting**

Marc reported that the PC&O SF Access Committee Meeting met on Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at the SF Paratransit office at 10:30 am. The first item of business was the election of a new Vice Chair. Cheryl Damico nominated Jane Redmond for re-election as Chair. Jane accepted and was re-elected as Chair of this subcommittee. SF Paratransit staff gave a report on the SF Access Service and Group Van service. In his report, it was noted that MV had experienced a decrease in service quality (based on formal complaints and on-time performance) since experiencing a slight increase in December. This was attributed to numerous maintenance failures and deficiencies identified by SFMTA and Veolia and its 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor in their January vehicle fleets inspections. The committee had a lot of discussion with MV regarding this topic. MV accepted responsibility for this and said they were trying to keep service from further deteriorating while taking steps to address their maintenance problems including staffing. Under the service provider report, MV apologized for the maintenance problems which have impacted service and promised they would be addressed and also explained that they would be looking to taking measures in scheduling and routing to address on time performance issues.

Under this report, numerous public comments (about 30 minutes) regarding MV service were raised. The Chair allowed these comments to staff regarding MV service. These comments included complaints about backtracking, schedule quality, recent degradation in on-time performance and the increase in formal complaints. There was also discussion regarding no-shows to which Marc Soto specifically and in detail explained what had to happen before SF Paratransit would call a no-show including the interaction by the dispatcher with the driver, the attempts by the dispatcher to call the rider and the requirement of the driver to place a “no-show” door hanger at the residence of the trip if the no-show is at the home of the rider. A few PCC members commented that they had never seen or were familiar with the no-show door hanger.

Lurilla Harris stated that she has cut way back on her filing of formal complaints and believe if she kept calling these in, the on-time performance rate would further reflect degradation. Sue Cauthen raised concerns with backtracking. She said on one recent trip, the driver was three blocks from her house and could have dropped her off but kept her on board for an extra 35 minutes while the driver went to another location to make a pick up. She questioned the motive for this. Several similar comments were made by Diann Stevenson and Ruach Graffis. Lurilla Harris stated that it was imperative that MV promote their best drivers into dispatchers so the dispatcher will know the City.

Marc asked Joey Hogan of MV to comment. Joey went into a lengthy overview of the scheduling process at MV. He explained the various reviews of schedules and efforts to accommodate all trip requests (about 958 just on that day) and the need to end the day with as few unscheduled trips as possible. He said that the few unscheduled trips they start the morning with are accommodated by the over 120 daily cancellations MV receives.

Marc Soto made the following remarks after Joey Hogan. Marc stated that he believed that there still was much work to be done in the area of scheduling including better optimization of routes and the need for a Planner position at MV to dedicate himself/herself to full time anchoring of standing orders and to “paly” with Trapeze PASS scheduling parameters to result in the best, most efficient schedules. Marc further stated that he was not sure he would see this at MV under the current contract but that he would keep trying and eventually this would be a requirement. He also said a person needs to be reviewing schedules BEFORE they are final and given to the drivers. Marc said that when he ran a scheduling department, he would ask drivers to always review their schedules before they left the garage and to notify dispatch of trips they felt were misplaced and would need to be covered some other way so the dispatchers could get a head start on reviewing those and determining if alternate arrangements had to be made.

Marc Soto also gave Lurilla a gold star for her recommendation and further added that he believed the best road supervisors and best dispatchers and schedulers were former excellent drivers. He said MV should be looking to attract, retain and even promote good drivers into these positions. Lurilla agreed.

Lurilla asked why she would be sent a sedan for transport when she clearly stated she cannot board a sedan because of the type of walker she uses which cannot easily collapse. Joey

shrugged and simply said he was familiar with her request. Lurilla thanked MV and SF Paratransit for contributing to the heart failure her doctor says she suffers with. Marc Soto commented that under their contract, MV is not permitted to use sedans but are using them currently because of the high number of failures experienced by MV with their SFMTA-owned rolling fleet in recent maintenance inspections. Marc apologized for contributing to her heart failure and asked Joey how much longer MV would be using sedans. Joey promised that sedans would cease being used in 7 days. Marc asked Joey if he would personally check Lurilla's rides for each day for the next 7 days to be sure she was not routed in a sedan. Joey agreed to do this.

After several more remarks from PCC members and the public about various concerns with MV's service, the Chair closed the comment period and asked for the next item.

### **Paratransit Broker Report**

John reported as follows:

- **SF Access Service Quality Report:** John began by providing a brief explanation on how the On-time performance each month is calculated. He wanted to dispel concerns that might have been raised by Lurilla's comments that the on-time performance relied on the filing of formal complaints. It does not. He explained that through the MDC's or manual trip check in from the driver manifests entered into Trapeze PASS, on time performance is generated for each trip and for all trips on an aggregate basis. He reported that MV's on-time performance is still way below the goal of 92% and is closer to the 80 to 82% mark. He also reported that for March 2013 (so far), formal complaints are at about 45 and not the goal of 30 for the month. He noted that a high number of complaints against drivers (which is unusual) were experienced in March. He said these complaints included loud music, driver demeanor and driver responses to scheduling concerns including lateness. Lurilla Harris commented that service quality is an on-going concern.

Sue Cauthen raised the matter of some MV drivers averse to reaching her home in a big van because of her narrow street near Union and Montgomery. John Sanderson responded saying he was familiar with this aversion but that MV could route a minivan to her if the MV drivers concerns are valid. A number of attendees commented about WhistleStop Wheels, the Marin County Paratransit service provider, being able to get their buses into tight spots in San Francisco. Marc Soto asked that Gregory Strecker and Joey at MV make a site visit at Sue's house to see if the use of a minivan for Sue's trips is called for. Both agreed to do this. He also said that providing Sue with taxi service could also be an option.

- **MDC Project:** Regarding the Mobile Data Computer (MDC) project, John said it was moving forward. He said that while MV and Baymed Express are fluent on the use of MDC's, staff would be working with the three smaller service providers for DAAS services in the coming weeks. These are Centro Latino, Self-Help for the Elderly and Kimochi. Kaye Griffin asked for what DAAS was and John explained it was Department of Aging and Adult Services, formerly Office on Aging. He said this service was also group van service. John also explained that the staff would be working on the next phase of the IVR project. Kaye asked what IVR represented and John explained that this was the interactive voice response system which is part of the MDC project. He explained

that this is the system that will allow those who opt in to get a reminder phone call of a scheduled SF Access ride the day before and/or a status call on the day of service. He explained that the day of service status call would be made 10 minutes before the promised time. He said that while these calls would be made by a robot, painstaking efforts have been made to ensure the robots are nice robots. He said next week, technical work will be done to install some necessary hardware and software and to begin testing these as well as the telephone line access. John explained that this was necessary before the pilot testing of the system with riders could take place. Both Olivia Santiago and Sandra Fancher asked if they could participate in the pilot.

- **2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey:** John also gave an update on the 2013 customer satisfaction survey to be conducted this year. He said the Ad-Hoc subcommittee of the PCC and staff had met with Jon Canapary of Corey Research to review the survey instrument. He said minor changes had been made to the instrument based on the committee's discussion and input. Jon must modify the instrument and present it to SFMTA for their approval before the survey is performed. In the meantime, SF Paratransit staff and Corey Research staff have discussed the capturing of the rider populations and associated trips in anticipation of the survey. Some data capture and exchange testing is planned for weeks before the survey.

### **Public Comments**

The Chair opened up the public comment period and called on the following:

1. Bruce Oka stated that Paratransit is a service for people by people and asked everyone to remember this when they complained about service. He also stated that PCC and MAAC members should appear at SFMTA Board meetings to have their concerns heard. He also asked them to call Annette Williams if they need to request assistance to get to public meetings. Marc Soto asked the group to call Annette as they wished but if they needed help with transportation service to call him or his staff (not Annette) as this was their responsibility. And regarding taxis, Bruce urged the PCC to stand up for SF taxi services because the industry needed help to fend off Uber and illegal limousine services.
2. Ruach Graffis stated it was a bad idea to put all ramp taxis into only two or three SF Taxi Companies. Doing so would put medallion holders at the beck-n-call of color schemes and these might be color schemes that they are not comfortable working with.
3. Kaye Griffin asked the Chair if it was true that Jane Bolig was leaving town. Stu acknowledged that Jane was moving out of the city and that the PCC was moving a very important member. Kaye asked if the PCC could send a gift. Stu said a card was certainly in order. She also raised discussion about meeting notifications – possibly the SFMTA and/or SF Paratransit website and even Twitter. Annette said both SFMTA and SF Paratransit were revamping their websites and that posting meetings here was certainly a possibility.
4. Athan Rebelos of Desoto Cab remarked about the changes in medallions and ramp taxi medallions and the need for changes to the Ramp Enforcement and incentives program keeping pace. Annette acknowledged that it was moving fast and that sometimes, tweaking one thing meant something unsuspected was impacted. She assured everyone that they were trying to keep up with all the changes and proposed changes and addressing their impacts in other areas. She said she was noting comments and would be sure they were brought to Christiane Hayashi's attention. Fred Lein suggested that as an

incentive, gate fees for ramp taxis be lowered. Athan responded that this could not be done as long as lease payments were being made to medallion holders.

5. Lurilla Harris remarked that eligible patron tips for ramp taxis be immediately raised from 10% to 15%. She insisted that this should be on the table at least for discussion and consideration.
6. Kaye Griffin asked if anyone was familiar with any studies related to these new computer applications and programs like Uber and the impact to the industry including service availability and quality. Stu Smith said numerous studies were underway. Kaye asked where she could find information about this and Stu said he didn't think anything was yet published.

At this point, the Chair closed the public comment period.

### **Announcements**

Annette announced that at next Tuesday's (April 2) SFMTA Board meeting in room 400 at City Hall, the SFMTA Board of Directors will present awards to some special ramp taxi drivers. The item is scheduled during the early part of the meeting. She anticipates it will be around 1:15 pm. She encouraged as many members as possible to attend to show support for these drivers.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.

**The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2013  
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 711 Eddy Street**