

Minutes
PCC Executive Committee Meeting
October 4, 2023

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Marty Smith, PCC Chair; Jane Redmond, PCC Vice Chair; Cheryl Damico, PCC Secretary; Mara Math, PC&O Chair, Craig Nelson; Jane Redmond; Jessica Felix; Joan Kwansa; Mary McLain; Olivia Santiago; Roland Wong; Sam Alicia Duke; Susan Kitazawa

PCC Members and Guests: Stella Scott; James Greenblatt; Chris Margaronis; Connie Marie Bigasan; Raagini Gupta; John Duke; Darlene Jefferson; Angel Ng; Barry Taranto; Geraldine da Luz; Jon Gaffney; Linda Greenberg; Ruth Grevit; Silvia velar de Camargo; Ynez Banks; Juanita Washington; Shelly Terry; Mike Poma; Margarita Medina; Christian Gutierrez; Julie Fong; Carolyn Kimp; Ismael de Souza; Clemencia Abreco; Kim Mak; Julia and Lester

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused:

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Kevin McDonald; Justin Leong; Carol Osorio; Matthew Teixeira; Cheryl Hac; Catherine Callahan; Rico Auga; Imogen Budetti; Wen Xu; Wayland Li; Kenneth Richardson; Charles Posejpal

SFMTA: Erin McAuliff; Fiona Yim

Marty Smith, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

Marty Smith, PCC Chair, read the agenda. The agenda were motioned/seconded/approved.

Approve Minutes of August 16th meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Marty Smith welcomed Charles Posejpal to his first PCC Executive Committee meeting as the new General Manager for SF Access Operations. He also made comments about upfront pricing nationwide.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Report

Mary McLain read the following report:

- **Service Quality Issues**

Mary McLain reported they continue to hire and train new drivers, since the last meeting they had a high number of trainees, most have graduated into the program. Bus inspections for new vehicles have been taking place, and five out of six fully passed inspection by SFMTA.

- **Rider Issues**

Riders discussed recent experiences with reservations, including getting estimated arrival time information, assistance in finding addresses when riders are unclear on their destination, and challenges in getting negotiated times that fit their preferred schedule.

- **Broker Report**

Justin Leong of the Brokers Office reported on service statistics:

- SF Access trip counts in June just under 13,000 Trips and around 12,400 Trips in July. August saw a rebound at 13,600 Trips.
- SF Access On-Time Performance was 97% in June and hovered around 99% in July and August.
- Complaints per 1,000 trips were 0.3 in June and 0.4 in July and 0.8 in August.
- Justin thanked the ad hoc PCC Recruitment Committee and his team for their work on the recent recruitment initiatives.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting date is December 6, 2023.

PC&O Ad Hoc (Membership Recruitment) Subcommittee Report

Mara Math was thrilled to see so many people at the meeting today. The committee has updated on-hold messages, mailed informational postcards to all active riders, and posted a recruitment message to the SFMTA.com Paratransit page. Additionally, the committee is working sending an outreach letter to disability organizations, asking their members to get involved, a poster to advertise the PCC Executive Committee on the Paratransit vehicles and plan to send a notice to organizations with newsletters through which they can recruit. Mara asked the new participants to introduce themselves and asked what brought people to the meeting. Six people reported seeing the postcard. Marty Smith thanked the ad hoc committee for their work.

Susan Kitazawa heard that people recruited via postcard had trouble figuring out how to get the zoom link. She also thinks that the voice message should have provided mobility management's phone number. She says this is not criticism and thinks the effort has been wonderful. John G said we should provide a "click here" note next to the zoom link. Silvia Velar de Camargo said that she thinks a phone call would be useful to reach out to riders, as well as a postcard, because sometimes mail is not delivered promptly. She also appreciated the hybrid option. Marc replied that our contact details for riders are dependent on the information riders provide us. He commented that often a postcard or email is the best way of reaching many people. Silvia said that mail makes sense and that she does not want to miss interesting mail. She said that she has an email address and Marc recommended she add that to her client information. Marc described how this first round of recruitment was only done by mail, but we may in the future communicate via email. Carolyn Kimp commented that the postcard should have provided an address for the meeting as she went to 68 12th St. Kevin McDonald apologized and explained that a location had not been set yet but that the goal was to direct people to our website and the Mobility Management Center. He answered that in the future, plans will be confirmed sooner and that it will be included in any outreach material.

Paratransit Broker Report

Marc Soto, Justin Leong, and Mary McLain reported as follow:

- **Service Level Statistics**

High-level statistics today and that we will provide in-depth stats at committee meetings. He provides OTP stats. He says ridership is holding steady. Complaints have been steady as well with a small increase in SFA complaints. Only one group van complaint. Taxi complaints are trending downward.

- **SF Paratransit Staffing Update**

Charles Posejpal was introduced as the new General Manager for the SF Access operations. He has experience with SF Paratransit, having previously served as the Maintenance Manager and Assistant General Manager. This will be Mary McLain's final meeting. Her transition to retirement has taken extra time to ensure a smooth transition. She thanked the committee for being so active and contributing to the community.

Marc Soto thanked Mary McLain for her work for the past nine years. She has worked a lot on our facilities. He thanked the PCC for being by their side throughout everything. Cheryl Damico stated that Mary "stopped the revolving door" of general managers and thanked her. Olivia Santiago thanked Mary for her time here.

Juanita Washington asked if the Broker's office is aware of taxi drivers not wanting to take Paratransit taxi cards. Marc replied the office is aware and that this is illegal and inappropriate. He stated that when SF Paratransit receives a report and can identify the driver, there is a disciplinary process. He asked riders to notify the Broker's office of any reports of this. Craig Nelson shared that riders could call 311 or the cab company. Marty Smith recommended calling 311 and reiterated that this is against the law and that drivers should use an IVR or write the information down somewhere. Jane Redmond added that riders can make anonymous complaints to cab companies.

Public Comments

The question of service area comes up. Marc Soto provided information. He also explained how regional rides work and listed current one-seat rider agreements. James Greenblatt asks if one can take a taxi to the SF border and then make the ride an Uber trip (if a taxi is on Uber), Chris Margaronis says we would have to create a program that does that. Chris admits that Uber is not a reliable option for non-ambulatory riders. Barry Taranto says he has never heard of splitting a fare at the city line. He says we need to train riders to do this if riders are told to. He also notes that extra time must be provided. Marc responds this is not official SFMTA policy, riders informally do this, it is not new, and the riders guide does not educate riders on this method.

Julie Fong asked if it is true that to use RediWheels, you need to register and that there is an expiration date. Marc Soto replied to say that is not accurate. All operators in the San Francisco Bay Area will honor SF Paratransit registration and there is no expiration. Julie said that RediWheels told her that. Juanita Washington commented that when she recertifies with SF Paratransit, she also must recertify with East Bay Paratransit. Marc stated the standard eligibility is three years, though in the future it may change to five years.

Connie Marie Bigasan referenced the application and medical verification process. Marc Soto described how our eligibility is functionally based, rather than medical. He said there are centers

that can assist riders in through the application process. Sometimes, SF Paratransit may request a medical/professional verification process which helps the certification analyst make an eligibility determination. Susan Kitazawa asked if eligibility renewal will be now via a shorter process for people with conditions that do not change. Kevin McDonald replied that SF Paratransit are working on this and that those visual disabilities could be eligible. James Greenblatt described the eligibility process and coming into the broker's office to take his photo. Marc commented that photos are an important part of our process.

Silvia Velar de Camargo says the service is excellent, though she sometimes has trouble finding locations/vehicles. Patrick shared a negative experience with Flywheel. He stated he has taken 6-8 trips and five have been unsuccessful. A driver had accepted his ride and then canceled three times. He had also experienced incorrect arrival time estimates. Jessica Felix said that she has had better luck with the YoTaxi/Yellow Cab app. Mara Math commented that she calls Flywheel because the GPS in the app does not work well. Marc Soto shared that SF Paratransit does not endorse the apps because we do not have any control over them. He mentioned that if Patrick calls the cab companies and faces challenges there, SF Paratransit can intervene. Marc encouraged Patrick to go to the SF Paratransit website for a list of the cab company phone numbers. Patrick thanked everyone for the help.

Barry Taranto says each company has a different relationship with the SF Paratransit Broker. He commented that Yellow Cab does not pay drivers immediately. He asked the Broker's office to create a procedure for when a taxi driver loses an IVR slip as he has lost many slips and could not get reimbursed. He would also like SFMTA to increase the number of ramp taxi trips a driver must do to have access to the VQ from 10 to 20.

James Greenblatt said that he prefers to get picked up from Rainbow Grocery on Trainer Alley and dispatchers are not familiar with that road. He said people lining up to shop interfere with the vehicles. He also shops at Costco and likes to get picked up at the auto repair shop. He spoke to Lorris who was very helpful. He said that taxi drivers were automatically putting on the tip, but that he likes to tip with cash. He also asked about patient assist, 24-hour access to blood banks, and if we can extend the Shop-a-Round time at Westlake to over one hour. Mary McLain suggested that he complete his shopping trips via SF Access as there is no difference in price.

Stella Scott has used Paratransit for a while and shares that she is not technologically literate. She said she was verbally abused last Sunday by a dispatcher. She also wanted to know how you can get a cab from Colma to San Francisco. Marc directed her to the Rider's Guide which has all the phone numbers are written. Charles Posejpal says he will provide her with RediWheels information. A remote participant also said she has also dealt with this dispatcher. Marc Soto said that all phone calls are recorded and that if it happens again, she should report it for investigation. Stella thanks Mary and the entire Paratransit team.

Mike Poma shared that he assists somebody in his building book trips to dialysis. He has had challenges scheduling this ongoing trip. Mary McLain described how to book this trip as a subscription trip and suggested he request this. Angel Ng mentioned that he had a delayed ride. Marc Soto suggested he call the Broker's office to file a complaint. He also asks for a Paratransit application.

Mara Math says that she discussed addresses to parks with Kent Hinton and inquired about the status. Imogen Budetti has completed this project, and it has been incorporated in the mapping system. Susan Kitazawa said she has had heard a lot of coughing and encouraged people to wear a mask if they are coughing or sneezing.

Cheryl Damico said there is no chair for the PC&O Group Van subcommittee. She said attendance from agencies is strong but that there is a need to recruit a vice chair. Justin Leong mentioned that this could be one of the Ad Hoc Recruitment subcommittee's goals.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 pm.

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