

**Minutes**  
**PCC Executive Committee Meeting**  
**December 11, 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; Craig Nelson; Sam Alicia Duke; Susan Kitawaza; Yvette McNeese

PCC Members and Guests: Bani Bhattacharya; Barry Taranto; Jon Canapary; Evelyn Engel; Jon Gaffney; Tracey Gamedah

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: Roland Wong

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Kevin McDonald; Justin Leong; Carol Osorio; Matthew Teixeira; Catherine Callahan; Rico Auga; Wayland Wu; Randy Hac; Nichelle Williams

SFMTA: Jonathan Cheng; Mona Chiu

Mara Math, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

**Read and Approve Agenda**

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

**Approve Minutes of October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting**

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

**Comments from the Chair**

Mara Math mentioned that she is on the ad hoc committee to recruit new members and she would like to encourage more trust with Paratransit. This perspective is due to incidents in which she has received inaccurate TripInfo calls regarding a vehicle's imminent arrival. Susan Kitawaza echoed the same concerns about the Imminent Arrival Call. Additionally, she would like the language of the phone tree to be modified.

**General Public Comments**

Bani Bhattacharya stated that SF Access drivers are generally nice and helpful but she receives the most attentive assistance from drivers who are familiar with her; she usually needs to direct new drivers as to how they can assist her. Marty Smith commented that he often sees SF Access drivers at SF General and all are accommodating and helpful. Yvette McNeese will see if there could be better training to encourage drivers to proactively ask riders if they need assistance.

Susan Kitawaza asked about the tipping policy for SF Access. Kevin McDonald stated that it is not allowed but encouraged riders to file compliments. Susan followed up and asked if a rider could bring a companion in addition to a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) on SF Access. Jonathan Cheng replied that a companion can travel with a rider and PCA, space permitting and encouraged rider to include this in their reservation request.

Susan Kitazawa inquired if the no strand policy applies for riders who do not take SF Access to their destination. Justin Leong answered that if SF Access took a rider to a location, a SF Access vehicle will provide a return trip even if a rider misses their scheduled return. For instances in which a rider used another mode of transport to reach their destination, such as a taxi or Muni and miss their scheduled SF Access return trip, the no-strand policy does not apply and a same day request can be made and may be accommodated, if there is availability. Marty Smith suggested using taxis to accommodate no-strand trips or same day requests. Marc Soto responded that there is no arrangement for this type of service.

Barry Taranto reiterated his recommendation that a per-trip incentive to be provided to ambulatory paratransit taxi trips performed at night time.

### **2025 PCC Executive Committee and PC&O Subcommittee Meeting Dates**

Mara introduced the proposed 2025 Executive Committee and PC&O subcommittee meetings dates. Mara suggested amending the date for the the Jewel McGinnis luncheon to June 11<sup>th</sup>.

The 2025 PCC Executive Committee and PC&O Subcommittee meeting dates were approved as amended.

### **2024 Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey**

Jon Canapary gave a presentation on the results from the 2024 Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey. A random selection of 517 Paratransit riders were surveyed in May 2024. This survey was a telephone survey and asked a multitude of questions regarding their most recent SF Paratransit trip as well as satisfaction of the Broker's activities and the SF Paratransit program. Surveys were conducted in the interviewee's preferred language and allowed for attendant assisted interviews.

Among the findings include:

- 92% overall satisfaction with SF Paratransit, an increase from 2022 survey
- 93% satisfaction with the surveyed trip, which continues a positive trend since 2001
- 96% satisfaction with the Broker's service, equal from 2022 survey
- Medical appointments, social visits, and running errands were the top reported trip purpose
- High ratings for the skills of the driver
- High on-time performance reported from surveyed taxi and SF Access riders
- An increasing number of riders reported having a cell phone that is a smartphones as well as are familiar with smartphone apps to schedule on-demand trips.
- Approximately half of those surveyed use email and Internet
- 98% of riders who received TripInfo call indicated that those calls are helpful

Mara Math applauded Jon Canapary for the simplicity of the graphs and charts.

Zuhair Sinada asked what is being evaluated regarding a driver's skills. Jon Canapary responded that the questions are specific on the rider's perception of the driver's skills. Marty Smith commented that from his observations, a more experienced driver usually has stronger driver

skills. Susan Kitazawa would like those with mobility aids to be asked about their experience in receiving driver's assistance. Tracey Gamedah wanted to know the specific questions that were asked regarding driver's skill. Jon commented that examples of the questions were asked about the courtesy of driver, drivers understanding to understand disability, and the driver's ability to provide assistance to the rider. He also acknowledge that all of these specific quality had high ratings

Cheryl Damico stated that she had participated in the survey in previous years and mentioned that she believes that satisfaction with their surveyed trip would correlate with a rider's overall satisfaction with the SF Paratransit program. Zuhair Sinada asked what comments were made from those who were dissatisfied with their surveyed trip or the overall SF Paratransit program. Jon Canapary answered that he would need to follow up on that specific question but that the overall number of riders who were dissatisfied was very low.

Tracey Gamedah inquired as to whether the survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jon Canapary stated that the most recent survey was conducted in 2022 and all surveys are done by telephone. Tracey then questioned how participants are selected for this survey. Jon responded that riders who took a recent SF Paratransit trip are randomly selected to participate in the survey.

### **PC&O Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports**

Mara Math provided an update on the ad hoc committee focused on membership recruitment. Other than the usual activities, a new member who participated suggested that SF Paratransit provide a voucher to help cover the cost of transportation for potential members to attend.

Jonathan Cheng provided an update on another ad hoc committee focused on revising the PCC bylaws. This committee met last week and proposed several changes to the current bylaws, including addressing the quorum requirement. The updated PCC bylaws will be presented at an upcoming PCC Executive Committee meeting to be approved by the committee.

### **PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Report**

Below is a summary of the October 9<sup>th</sup> PC&O Group Van subcommittee meeting:

- **SF Paratransit Status Update**

Justin Leong reported Group Van service statistics. On-time performance was 99.6% in July and August, and 98.2% in September. Trip counts were consistent, approximately 8,729 in July, 9,168 in August, and 8,588 for September. There was only one Group Van complaint, regarding a driver in September. Randy Hac has joined the team as Contract Compliance Specialist for van services. Paratransit and SFMTA staff travelled to Indiana to conduct pilot bus inspections. A "meet and greet" at the operating division is being planned for early 2025. Procurement of a replacement phone system for the Broker and Operations is underway.

Jacob Williams of Transdev Operations reported their call center is fully staffed. They are seeking one window dispatcher. They have 104 drivers and a new class of 11 starting next week.

- **Agency Status Reports**

- Self-Help reported they are operating normally. They provided 3,624 trips in September. They are awaiting delivery of their 5310 funded replacement vehicles.
- Institute on Aging (IOA) complimented how amazing and responsive communication has been with the Group Van office. There was a hiccup in requesting a different drop off address on one of their recent requests.

The next PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting date is tentatively January 8, 2025

**PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Report**

Below is a summary of the November 13<sup>th</sup> PC&O Group Van subcommittee meeting:

- **Ramp Taxis Requirements & Standards:**

There were concerns about the short turnaround for driver feedback before implementing the updated ramp requirements, especially the exclusion of General Public wheelchair trips. Drivers felt that based on historical trip numbers there was not enough demand to enable drivers to meet requirements unless General Public trips were included. A single app or dispatch dedicated to ramps was suggested.

Riders suggested outreach to riders who had previously given up on ramp taxis, targeting them at outlying locations or through social media.

SFMTA noted the changes were previewed on August 30th and factored in concerns about ramp taxis sitting at SFO along with high General Public trip reporting. While there was consensus for a need to update the requirements, SFMTA recognizes they may need to adjust the requirements and will be monitoring the numbers.

The Paratransit Broker noted that in the 2024 customer satisfaction survey, taxi riders rated the ramp service, drivers, and dispatching all very high.

- **Broker Report** (numbers sent via email and due to time constraints not presented):

OTP Q3 2024		Minutes of Wait Time		
Month	% On Time	% <=10	% 11 to 20	% >21
<b>July</b>	95.70%	80.65%	10.75%	4.30%
<b>August</b>	98.92%	84.95%	8.60%	5.38%
<b>September</b>	97.78%	74.44%	16.67%	6.67%

- Taxi Driver Incentives paid: July \$17,895; Aug \$19,555
- Ramp Vehicle Incentives paid: July \$10,000; Aug \$11,000
- The SFPT trip count: July 26,013; Aug 26,716; Sept 25,610
- Qualifying SFPT WC trips: July 837; Aug 905; Sept 961 (no IVR included in Sept figure)
- Taxi Complaints (per 1,000 trips): July 0.24; Aug 0.16; Sept 0.29

- **Broker Initiatives & Updates**

The Paratransit Broker filled the vacant van Contract Compliance position and still has one opening in Mobility Management. They hope to host another PASS Train the Trainer class soon. There's testing with Cabconnect on a Ramp Driver Portal for IVR trip edits and a Ramp Driver Card to capture trip data and replace the manual General Public form. Work is ongoing on the new phone system replacement which is planned to occur in December.

- **Service Quality Issues**

Drivers & Cab Companies – Drivers mentioned receiving app orders with up-front fares that cannot be paid with the Paratransit Card. Paratransit advised it is an app issue and needs to be addressed with the app provider as Paratransit does not regulate the apps.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting date is pending finalization of the PCC Calendar for 2025.

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

Below is a summary of the December 4th PC&O SF Access subcommittee meeting:

- **Service Quality Update**

- Yevette McNeese of the Operating Division reported that nine operators have graduated, six (6) are currently in training, and there is an ongoing class with seven (7) participants. The goal is to hire 25 full-time drivers.
- Justin Leong of the Brokers Office reported on service statistics:
  - SF Access trip counts were approximately 12,900 in September, 13,000 in October, with a decrease in November to 12,100 due to the holiday.
  - SF Access On-Time Performance held steady in September at 94.84% and an increase to 96.03% in October and a slight decrease to 95.6% in November.
  - Complaints per 1,000 trips were 0.92 per 1,000 in September, 1.08 per 1,000 in October, and 0.9 per 1,000 in November.
  - Operations received five (5) new Turtle Top vehicles from Davey Coach.
  - On January 1st, 2025, the fare for all SF Paratransit van services will increase from \$2.50 to \$2.75.
- Marc Soto of the Brokers Office reported:
  - Working with Bay Area Partnership Accessibility Committee (BAPAC) on updating the Regional Eligibility Database which allows paratransit riders to seamlessly use the region's paratransit services.
  - The new phone system will be launched in January at the Broker's Office with Operations to follow.

- **Rider Service Feedback**

Riders discussed several topics including placing driver name plates on the buses, reservationists providing the pick up window times and not the negotiated time, driver training on confirming their location rather than relying on the GPS, updating park common locations, the five-minute no-show window, driver and dispatch interactions, and driver training on handling riders with cognitive conditions.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting is tentatively March 5, 2025.

### **Paratransit Broker Report**

Service level statistics were provided prior to the meeting. Justin Leong, Marc Soto, and Yevette McNeese reported the following:

- **Service Level Statistics**  
SF Access operated about 12,900 trips in September, 13,800 trips in October and 12,100 trips in November. Paratransit taxis completed approximately 25,200 trips in September, 27,500 in October, and 24,500 in November. About 6,800 Group Van trips were September, 7,400 in October, and 6,000 in November.
- **On Time Performance**  
The on-time performance for SF Access was 94 to 96 percent from June to August. The Group Van on-time performance was 98 to 99 percent for the same period while the taxi on-time performance was 97 to 99 percent.
- **SF Paratransit Van Fare Increase**  
All SF Paratransit van fare will increase from \$2.50 to \$2.75 starting on January 1, 2025. To inform riders, letters and emails are being mailed out, SF Paratransit staff is updating the Muzak on-hold messages, and reservationists will be reminding customers at the time of booking.
- **Paratransit Vehicle Procurements**  
New vehicles are being delivered and must undergo inspections before they are accepted and put into service.
- **PASS Training**  
SF Paratransit staff is planning on hosting another CTAA Train the Trainer class in 2025. SF Paratransit will encourage to all taxi companies to send participants in order to maximize participation
- **Paratransit Broker and Operations Phone System**  
SF Paratransit will be initiating work to update phone system at the Broker's office in January 2025. Following successful deployment in the Broker's office, staff will shift their focus on updating the phone system for the SF Access Call Center.
- **Clipper 2.0 for Paratransit**  
SFMTA and SF Paratransit staff will be working with MTC and Trapeze to initiate project kickoff. SF Paratransit will be the pilot program for allowing Clipper Card payment for SF Access trips.
- **Paratransit Taxi Debit Card**  
Staff will be engaging in discussion regarding specifications for the in taxi equipment, which are used to process payment for Paratransit taxi trips. This will guide policy regarding photos for the Paratransit taxi debit card.

- **Emergency Operations Plans Update**  
Staff will be hiring a consultant and begin work on updating the emergency operation plan for the SF Paratransit program.
- **SF Paratransit Staffing Update**  
Mobility Management Specialist position was offered to a candidate and accepted by candidate

Mara Math reiterated she would like nameplates on each vehicle so that a rider knows the driver's name. Yevette McNeese replied that they have documented that request. Jane Redmond asked how many vehicles are on the road at any moment. Nichelle Williams stated approximately 70 vehicles at any given time. Susan Kitazawa inquired about the current driver staffing levels. Yevette answered that they would like to hire an additional 15 drivers and acknowledged that there could be add-ons on existing routes if there are unexpected call outs from drivers. Marty Smith had a question about Bayview Shuttle.

### **Public Comments**

Marty Smith mentioned that there are unfilled ramp taxi requests and would like less ramp taxis at the airport.

### **Announcement**

No announcements.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.

**The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**