

San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council

c/o Muni

1 South Van Ness, 7th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103

ph: 415.701.4485

fax: 415.701.4728

TTY: 415.701.4730

Minutes

PCC Executive Committee Meeting

September 18, 2013

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

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Stu Smith, PCC Chair; Cheryl Damico, Vice Chair
Laurie Graham, PCC Secretary; Roland Wong, PC&O Chair; Adrienne Humphrey; Anna
Krevets; Fred Lein; Jacy Cohen; Jane Redmond; Jeanne Lynch; Kaye Griffin; Olivia Santiago;
Ruach Graffis; Sandra Fancher; Sue Cauthen; Wane Ratanasanguan

PCC Members and Guests: Diann Stevenson; Sam Alicia Duke; Rodney Lee; C. Mike Stewman,
MV Transportation; Kerry Brown; Aisha Jackson; Efren Alarcon

PCC Executive Committee Members Excused: Gilda Chico; Kevin Lee; Pam Martinez

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

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Kate Toran; Jonathan Cheng; Samantha Roberts; Andreas Walters

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

Read and Approve Agenda

Laurie Graham, PCC Secretary, read the agenda. The agenda was motioned/seconded/passed.

Approve Minutes of August 7 meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Stu Smith stated that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is expected to make a ruling soon on the status of the Transportation Network Companies (TNC). He mentioned that the CPUC will be meeting with taxi representatives later this afternoon and that the letter the PCC wrote to the commission will be presented for consideration.

2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey

Jon Canapary, from Corey, Canapary & Galanis Research, summarized the findings from the 2013 Customer Satisfaction. The survey was conducted from May 11, through May 24, 2013. Over the past years, Corey, Canapary & Galanis Research has tracked the responses to the same questions and has made slight changes to the questions as needed. All modes of paratransit were surveyed. When conducting the survey, participants were asked about their most recent paratransit trip. Some of the important findings are:

- The quantitative findings from the current study (2013) indicate that a high share (83%) of San Francisco Paratransit enrollees are very or somewhat satisfied with the Paratransit Transportation Services provided to them during the last year. This is the same as in 2012, but is an increase compared to 2010.
- Nearly every rider segment surveyed showed an increase or remained the same in overall satisfaction:
 - Taxi users: 86% are satisfied, compared to 88% in 2012.
 - Ramp Taxi users: 81% are satisfied, compared to 72% in 2010.
 - SF Access (WC) users: 72% are satisfied, compared to 72% in 2010.
 - SF Access (AMB) users: 84% are satisfied, compared to 77% in 2010.
 - Group Van Riders: 92% are satisfied, compared to 91% in 2010.
 - Group Van Coordinators/Directors; 75% are satisfied, compared to 63% in 2010.
- Satisfaction on the surveyed trip also saw a slight increase. In 2012, 90% of users rated the trip excellent or good, compared to 93% in 2013.
- Overall, nearly nine in ten (88%) indicate that they are very or somewhat satisfied with the services provided by the San Francisco Paratransit Broker.
- Over two thirds (69%) of SF Access and Group Van riders said that they were at least somewhat likely to use a service that provides an automatic call when their van is five minutes away.

Jeanne Lynch asked who provides the contact information of paratransit riders for the survey. Mr. Canapary replied that they get a full list from recent paratransit riders and then randomly select individuals to be surveyed. Multiple calls are made to these riders to encourage their participation. Olivia Santiago asked whether the 548 riders surveyed is an adequate sample size given the entire number of clients in the paratransit program. Mr. Canapary answered that although the results may not be exact, there is a slight margin of error and that the sample size is very robust given the number of clients in the paratransit program. Sam Alicia Duke inquired as to whether a “Very Satisfied” response can be included in the next survey. Mr. Canapary stated that they do include it as one of the possible survey responses and that the presentation combined the “Very Satisfied” and “Somewhat Satisfied” responses together. Kate Toran reiterated that there is a high level of customer satisfaction among all active paratransit riders and expressed her gratitude to the Broker’s staff.

Pilot “Cabpool” Program

Andreas Walters, SFMTA Taxi Services, gave a presentation on the proposed “cabpool” pilot program. Similar to a jitney service, the goal of this pilot is to serve as an alternative to the bus service. Currently, the pilot is scheduled to occur along the 38 Geary bus route. There will be several primary pick up location along the route, where customers can line up and get into a taxi. Along the route, the taxi driver can pick up and drop off customers. Each customer will pay a flat fee to the taxi driver. Currently, SFMTA Taxi Services is trying to identify the times in which this pilot will operate. Also they are trying to getting appropriate signage made that taxis will have on their vehicles that designates them as a shared cab. The goal is to have the pilot begin in November or December and to run for three to six months.

Marc Soto stated that from his experience in other cities like Miami, there have been concerns about jitney service. Andreas replied that most jitney services ended due to the regulation imposed upon them. Marc Soto also added whether rideshare companies, such as Uber and Sidecar, could participate. Andreas said they would not be able to. Stu Smith asked how many taxis will participate. Andreas answered that participation will be voluntary among taxi drivers and he anticipates approximately 500 taxis will join. He added that the first person that enters the taxi may decide to pay the full meter. Cheryl Damico wondered whether or not this pilot will have ramp taxis in order to make it accessible to wheelchair users. Andreas said this shared cab program is voluntary but that he would like to have ramp taxis included in this pilot.

Marty Smith questioned the fare payment for this program, as all taxis have to turn on their meters when in service. Andreas stated that they have to devise a way to alter the meters as to allow for a flat fare to be charged. Andreas replied that the customer could pay for the flat fare through the second meter rate. Fred Lein asked whether or not the paratransit debit card could be used to pay for the fare. Andreas said that since the paratransit debit card requires meter activation and this is a flat rate service, it wasn't likely that payment via the paratransit debit card would be accepted.

Laurie Graham inquired as to the amount of outreach that will occur to inform the public about this pilot program. Andreas answered that this presentation is the first of many that will occur to various interested parties, including merchant associations along the Geary corridor. Laurie then asked about where these pick up locations will be relative to the MUNI bus stops. Andreas said that parking spots near the selected bus stops will be converted to temporary taxi stands. Roland Wong wondered as to whether a list of these designated pick up zones will be made public to people. Andreas replied that they would once these locations are finalized. Marty said he would like to see an increase in the overall number of taxis in San Francisco.

MV Driver Union Report

Efren Alarcon, Teamster's union representative for the over 150 drivers and mechanics from MV Transportation in San Francisco, gave an update about the progress with MV management. Since his last appearance, there has been a change in management at MV Transportation. They have been meeting with the management to discuss issues and work to improve on time performance and customer service at least once a week. He reiterated that many of the drivers are hardworking employees who would like to stay long term. There is a goal to continue to work to improve the working conditions to ensure that the employees are satisfied and continue to work for MV Transportation. Efren said that he looks forward to continue to provide updates to the committee in terms of the progress between the drivers and MV management.

Kate Toran expressed her gratitude to both Efren and management at MV Transportation that there have been positive steps taken to address some of the driver's biggest concerns. She also mentioned that in the 2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey, there was a 95 percent satisfaction rate with the drivers' courtesy and knowledge of the city as well as a 93 percent satisfaction rate in terms of the drivers' understanding of passengers' disabilities. Sue Cauthen reiterated this sentiment but did mention the occasional poor service.

5310 Program Update

Annette Williams presented on the 5310 program update. The 5310 program is a federal program which helps non profit agencies to purchase vehicles to help transport seniors and persons with disabilities. The SFMTA has played a role in reviewing and scoring the application for these funds. While these are federal funds, MTC plays a role in managing the distribution of the funds. Currently, under MAP-21, they will combine the 5310 program and the New Freedom Grants together and give more leeway to local jurisdiction in terms of how the funds are distributed. There have been discussions as to how this program will be managed moving forward. Caltrans will allow regional agencies to have a larger role; however, they will continue to assist in the procurement of vehicles. Regional agencies will help play a larger role in the funding distribution decisionmaking.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Meeting

Fred Lein read the following report:

1. Comments from the Chair

Vice Chair Fred Lein said the taxi industry has its challenges and concerns. All that he can do personally is do his job and everything will be OK. He said there is plenty of business for everyone.

2. SFMTA Taxi/Ramp reforms – Update

Annette Williams mentioned the proposed new incentives in the Ramp Taxi Program. These incentives will benefit both the color schemes and drivers. The proposed incentives will include new driver incentives, such as credit towards a future down payment towards a regular taxi medallion. For the color schemes, reducing the monthly lease payment for ramp medallions will help the companies to keep and operate the medallion profitably.

3. CPUC Activity - Update

Annette mentioned the CPUC proposed a rule on July 30th that will require the Transportation Network Companies, such as Lyft, Sidecar and Uber, to be licensed; perform background check for drivers and implement drug/alcohol tests. She also mentioned the CPUC rejects the idea of the TNCs payment as “donation” and not a fare. The CPUC also stated that the TNCs operate pre-arrange services, but the TNC’s claim they are not pre-arranged.

4. Service Quality issues

Cheryl Damico wants to encourage her fellow riders to wear a lap belt when taking a ramp taxi. A recent accident occurred when she was not properly strapped in and fell out of her wheelchair. SFMTA suggested outreach to let fellow riders know about the importance of wearing a lap belt.

5. SF Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson of SFPT/Veolia mentioned the increased enforcement on fraudulent activity on the taxi debit cards. There are regular Exception Reviews twice weekly to discuss possible enforcement of discipline with the patrons who out of are out of compliance with the rules.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2013, from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Broker’s office, 68 12th Street, San Francisco.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting

Cheryl Damico read the following report:

1. SF Access Service Quality Update

Everyone discussed the recent increase in on-time performance to above 85 percent from last month. However there were many comments about individual late trips that have occurred since the last SF Access subcommittee meeting in June.

2. SF Paratransit Provider Report

MV talked about a lot of the work they have been doing to try to bring their MDC usage up. This they believe will contribute to better on-time performance in the future.

3. PCC Annual Meeting

It was announced that the PCC's annual meeting will be held on November 2, 2013. In addition, Erma Brim announced she would not be running for a seat again this year. Everyone thanked her for many years of service to the disability community.

4. SF Paratransit Broker Report

SF Paratransit still has some concerns with MV maintenance and recently held new inspections. As of September 4th, two vehicles remained out of service as inspected. In addition the IVR system is still in the pilot stages and SF Paratransit is currently working on those issues which have occurred with the pilot participants before full IVR rollout.

5. Driver of the Year Nominations

Driver of the Year nominations are currently out and SF Paratransit would like to hear from you on who you believe deserves the Driver of the Year for Paratransit. We will have forms available for PCC members, please return to SF Paratransit no later than September 30th so we can finalize all nominations.

The next SF Access subcommittee meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2013, from 10:30 to 12:30 at the SF Paratransit office on 68 12th street.

PC&O Planning and Review Subcommittee Meeting

Jonathan Cheng reported on the September 10, PC&O Planning and Review subcommittee meeting. At this meeting, the attendees discussed the upcoming PCC Annual Meeting scheduled for November 2, 2013. One topic that was discussed was the location of the meeting. The usual location, 711 Eddy, was undergoing construction and unavailable for the meeting, Jeanne Lynch suggested the First Unitarian Church while Stu Smith mentioned the Urban Life Center as alternative choices. Also discussed was the catering of the event as well as the recipients for the awards. In addition, the names of the PCC members whose seats are up for re-election were announced.

Kate Toran added that there are proposed changes to the PCC By-Laws that will need to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting. There have been recent discussions to designate a seat on the PCC for a van driver so as to allow for greater knowledge of the issues drivers face on a daily basis. The proposed changes to the PCC By-Laws will shift one seat from the Non-Profit caucus to a

newly formed Driver's Caucus, which will be comprised of a ramp taxi driver, a taxi driver, and a van driver. The proposed changes to the By-Law will be included in the PCC Annual Meeting invitation for members to review. The changes to the By-Laws were approved and will move forward to the entire PCC body.

Stu Smith mentioned that during this meeting, there was discussion as to the lack of attendance from one committee member. This individual's seat was up for re-election and it was suggested that should this individual run again, that PCC members should consider this fact before voting. Moving forward, it was suggested that a letter be written to any individuals with a substantial number of absences. Ruach Graffis inquired as to whether the union representative should run for a seat in the Non-Profit caucus.

Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson and Marc Soto reported as follows:

- **SF Access Service Quality Report:**

On time performance is slightly above 85 percent, which has been consistent and represents positive progress. In addition, MV Transportation is operating out of a new facility with an adequate and proper parking lot for all the vehicles. The MDC utilization among drivers has increased and has provided good data for dispatchers and SF Paratransit office.

Troy Barnes added that the MDC utilization rate is currently at 98 percent and that the new facility has allowed for better operations. A shift bid will be occurring soon and there has been an increase in the number of trips completed. In addition, there are 20 new drivers.

- **IVR Pilot and Roll Out:**

Currently, a pilot program of the IVR system has been ongoing. A number of PCC members are currently participating in this pilot. Their feedback has been important to making adjustments to the system as well as addressing some problems. Staff at both SF Paratransit and SFMTA have been working to correct these issues and have modified the scripts of the automated call. While there are still a few remaining problems that need to be addressed, the system is close to ready for launching system-wide.

- **DCCS Update:**

The Broker staff has been working on the design of the patron portal of the DCCS system. This portal will allow patrons to view certain information about their debit card account via the internet. The Broker has also been working with Bank of America to allow for acceptance of Visa/MasterCard credit cards for payment of fare coupons and debit card value at the Broker's office. They expect to begin accepting credit cards soon.

- **New Phone System:**

A new phone system is in the process of being procured for the Broker's office. The current phone system is over 13 years old and in need of replacement. Currently, staff at SF Paratransit is coordinating the logistical aspect of installing an entire new phone system. It will be an upgrade technologically with new features such as a limitless

voicemail capability. The Broker expects to have the new system fully deployed by the end of January 2014.

- **Taxi Fraud Monitoring:**

There has been great progress in terms of address the issue of misuse and fraud in the paratransit taxi debit card program. SF Paratranist and SFMTA Taxi Services have been working together to address cases of misuse and fraud. The implementation of the debit card system has been a great tool in tracking misuse and identifying potential fraud.

- **Ramp Mini Van Procurement**

SF Paratransit is close to replacing its current five minivans with new vehicles. Delays to the procurement have been due to a federal audit on a pension reform program at the state level. Once an order is placed, it takes an additional six to eight weeks to retrofit the vehicles at the plant.

- **FY '12-'13 Service Level Statistics and Goals Report:**

Over 777,000 paratransit trips were performed over the past fiscal year. There have been over 650 formal complaints filed, with a majority of these complaints filed against the SF Access service. In terms of on time reliability, group van and taxi service have provided the highest rate, at 91 and 88 percent. SF Access on time performance was slightly below 80 percent, well below the goal of 90%.

- **Credit Card Payment at SF Paratransit Office:**

After several inquiries by members of the public, the SF Paratransit office will soon be able to accept credit cards for the payment of taxi debit card value and van fare coupons. Staff at SF Paratransit is waiting for Bank of America to install the correct payment devices and train staff as to how to use the equipment. While credit card payment by phone and Internet are not yet available, staff at SF Paratransit is working to that happen possibly as part of the patron portal planned for 2014.

Ruach Graffis asked whether those with standing orders will be able to participate in the IVR system. She was told yes. Olivia Santiago had a question as to whether the survey asked questions about the satisfaction of the reservation and dispatch service. It did.

Public Comments

Roland Wong announced that he is the new community activities coordinator at the ILRC and handed out a flyer promoting his program "Explore San Francisco." John Sanderson added that the Van Gogh shuttle is currently in operation and that a brochure is being produced. Jeanne Lynch announced that the California Alliance of Retired Individuals Conference will be held soon.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

The PCC Annual meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2013 and the next PCC Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 11, 2013

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 1 South Van Ness, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference Rooms