

Minutes
PCC Executive Committee Meeting
October 19, 2022

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Marty Smith, PCC Chair; Cheryl Damico, PCC Secretary; Fred Lein; Jessica Felix; Joan Kwansa; Kevin Lee; Mara Math; Susan Kitazawa

PCC Members and Guests: Tracey Gamedah; Maria Lombardo, Ellen Lo, Michelle Beaulieu, Jon Gaffney, Valerie Coleman, Alex Madrid

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: Roland Wong; Mary McLain

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Joe Skelton; Kevin McDonald; Justin Leong; Carol Osorio; Matthew Teixeira; Catherine Callahan; Mikael Garcia

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Jonathan Cheng; Erin McAuliff

Marty Smith, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

Marty Smith read the agenda. The agenda was motioned/seconded/approved.

Approve Minutes of August 17th meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

The Chair had no comments.

Update on Half-Cent Sales Tax: 2022 Transportation Expenditure Plan

Maria Lombardo led a discussion on the SFCTA Transportation Expenditure Plan for the upcoming proposed half cent sales tax that will be voted on in November 2022 as Proposition L. She acknowledged that she presented the plan earlier this year and today would provide another opportunity for members to ask any questions.

Giving a brief history of the transportation sales tax, a half-cent sales tax was first passed in 1989. The current iteration of this half cent sales tax dedicated for transportation is referred to as Proposition K, which was passed on 2003; this extended the sales tax for another 30 years. Among some projects that this sales tax funded include the replacement of Paratransit vehicles, enhanced connections between regional transportation providers, and traffic signals improvements. In addition, this sales tax provides approximately 40 percent of annual Paratransit budget and has funded other incentives pertaining to Paratransit, including ramp taxi vehicle incentives.

It was explained that although the sales tax has not expired yet, voters are being asked to extend it no as some projects funded by sales tax have been completed, like Presidio Parkway, while some ongoing projects are running out of funds. In addition, there are new projects are emerging

as priorities but do not have any funding. Among the new projects that an extended sales tax would fund include major transit projects, such as the Caltrain extension to downtown San Francisco, increases to the Muni/BART core capacity, transit maintenance and enhancement, Paratransit, street and freeway paving and redesigning, and transportation system development and management. It was reiterated that Proposition L will extend the half cent sales tax and is not a tax increase.

Alex Madrid requested clarification about how much of this sales tax funds the SF Paratransit program. Annette Williams replied that this sales tax is one of the primary funding resources for Paratransit, accounting for about 40 percent of the annual budget. Alex then asked why these funds could not be used to subsidize the additional cost from the proposed taxi meter rate increase. Annette answered that these funds help pay for 80 percent of the operating expenses of the Paratransit taxi program and the Helping Wheels fund is available for those with emergency economic hardship. She also acknowledged that these are the first taxi meter rate increases since 2011. Cheryl Damico inquired if taxi riders could request an additional allotment due to the taxi meter rate increase. Annette responded that it is available to riders upon request.

SFMTA Accessibility Strategy

Erin McAuliff led the discussion on the SFMTA Accessibility Strategy. She provided an overview of the Accessible Services Program, stating that the department serves as a support function for all modes of the agency to ensure that all transportation modes are accessible to older adults and people with disabilities. A brief overview of the history of the SF Paratransit program was provided, with its establishment in 1978, having completed 78,000 trips.

The Accessibility Strategy will help SFMTA Accessible Services to assess both our short- and long-term progress towards high level goals and achieve agencywide goals of improved accessibility. The development of the strategy was discussed as well as the outreach process to other agency departments. A SWOT analysis was conducted with PCC members with Erin leading the discussion with the committee. Next steps were described, and PCC members were encouraged to provide any other feedback about any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the Paratransit program.

PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Report

Marty Smith read the following report:

- **Service Quality Update**

Mary McLain reported out that on the Access side they are seeing numbers increase. She is focusing on driver hiring and they are planning training classes for the next couple of weeks. Her team is working with group Agencies to accommodate them in the upcoming months as they plan to reopen.

- **SF Paratransit Broker's Report**

Joe Skelton reported on this quarter's statistics. SF Access in August had the highest number of trips in the past 12 months with around 13,400 trips. SF Access On Time Performance was in line with previous months, with an On Time performance of 98% in July and 97% in August. SF Access had a total of 8 complaints in August, which is down from previous months. Joe has added a permanent staff member on the Customer Service

team named Ryan, and currently has a temporary staff member named Richard who is also helping the department and answering phone calls.

The next PC&O SF Access Subcommittee Meeting date is December 7, 2022

PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Report

Marty Smith read the following report:

- **SF Paratransit Status Update**

Joe Skelton reported on this quarter's statistics.

- Group Van provided an average of 590 trips in the months of July, August, and September
- Group Van On Time Performance was 88% on time for June
- No Complaints for Group Van in September

- **Group Van Service Reintroduction Task Force**

Mary McLain's team are working on Group Van requests. They had a Catholic Charities request that has been completed. Staff is awaiting a response from the Russian American Center, Bayview Hunter's Point, and L'Chaim. Mary informed the committee that they are reviewing an update from IOA. They are planning on reaching out to the Stepping Stones representative soon about the four centers requests and schedules.

- **Agency Status Reports**

- Self-Help's advised its business as usual currently. The unofficial trip count for September is 2,023 trips, which is lower than August's, but they anticipate higher numbers as the Adult Day Services branch has reopened.
- Kimochi advised that they reopen for dine in services as of 10/11/22 but their vans are still missing catalytic converters as they are waiting to get secured parking before replacing them.
- The Arc SF reported they are currently opened on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and they have a request being processed by Mary's team. They plan to be opened five days a week by the start of 2023.
- On Lok advised that they have a few classes opened and the garden café is also opened. Currently, they have case management visits by appointment only.
- Russian American Center reopened their dining room and has some clients returning for meal programs. They are communicating with Mary about their scheduler request.
- Stepping Stone is awaiting updates from Mary's team about the four centers' individual schedules.

The next PC&O Group Van Subcommittee Meeting date is January 11, 2023.

PCC Ad Hoc Committee - Driver Recruitment

Jessica Felix provided an update on the recent committee meeting of an ad hoc group that was formed to discuss ongoing, industrywide issues regarding the taxi program. She indicated that she as well as several PCC members met and identified the following issues:

- Taxi Safety: Not enough preventative maintenance on the vehicles, especially spares.
- Taxi Quality: Old dirty vehicles are being put on the road, making passengers feel unsafe and is a turn off to new customers to the taxi program
- Not enough drivers: The wait time for rides has been steadily increasing and no one is trying to recruit drivers.
- Increase wages to drivers: Not enough money goes to drivers and there are delays in payments from the companies. While the taxi meter fares should be increased, they would like language included that puts a cap on gas and gas drivers
- Upfront pricing: Disagree with SFMTA's recent approval to allow upfront pricing as there are concerns about it will result in lower wages for drivers
- Ramp Cab Service: Improvements still need to be made as there is a lack of availability at nighttime as well as weekends. Taxi companies need to be more proactive in maintenance providing spares to ramp taxi drivers. Companies are no longer repairing and replacing ramps they are allowing them to disappear.
- Dispatch: There is no oversight of the service quality with unreliable service.

No solutions were proposed as the committee felt that in order to formulate real solutions, all entities, including taxi companies, passengers, and SFMTA need to engage in dialogue. They would like the introduction of a Taxi Task Force as they did not feel that the quarterly meetings where the SFMTA provides update about initiatives and hears public comment is enough.

Tracey Gamedah agreed that more oversight is needed, particularly with complaints. Susan Kitazawa stated that she takes a picture of the taxi number, which is helpful to identify the driver if she has a complaint.

Paratransit Broker Report

Joe Skelton and Justin Leong reported as follow:

- **Service Level Statistics**
Trip volume was up about 10 percent for SF Access with increases for Group Van and remaining steady for taxi.
- **On Time Performance**
On-time performance for all modes (SF Access, Group Van, and taxi) continue to exceed the performance standards.
- **Technological Improvements**
Staff continues to work upgrading the Trapeze software to version 21. It is still on pace to be fully implemented by early 2023.
- **Employee Recruitment**
The position of the SF Access maintenance manager is being recruited. Transdev is continuing to actively recruit drivers.
- **Riders' Guide**

An update of the Riders' Guide was given at the August PCC meeting with feedback from the committee. Staff is working with the consultant to integrate the changes and hope to get new guides completed by early 2023

Ocean Dialysis

Issues have been raised from a group of neighbors from the surrounding Dorado Terrace area regarding paratransit vehicles blocking the lane of traffic. Staff have met with staff from Ocean Dialysis and will continue to work toward alternatives to mitigate this issue

Susan Kitazawa would like the Broker's on-hold messages to include information about the PCC and to be included in the Riders' Guide as well. Cheryl Damico stated that the location of the Ocean Dialysis clinic has been an ongoing issue. Ellen Lo indicated that one of the more persistent issues has been paratransit vehicles blocking the lane of traffic, resulting in cars behind it being stuck. Marty Smith commented that the same issues face taxis regarding blocking the lane of traffic.

Public Comments

Jonathan Cheng announced the PCC Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 5th.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 14th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.