

San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council

c/o Muni

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Minutes

PCC Executive Committee Meeting

August 13, 2014

1 South Van Ness Avenue, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference Room

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Cheryl Damico, PCC Chair; John Lazar; PCC Vice Chair; Jane Redmond, PCC Secretary; Marty Smith; PC&O Chair, Adrienne Humphrey; Aisha Jackson; Claudia Grubler; Fred Lein; Gilda Chico; Jacy Cohen; Jean Marie Green; Michael Zaugg; Rodney Lee; Roland Wong; Ruach Graffis; Sandra Fancher; Wanee Ratanasanguan

PCC Members and Guests: Lurilla Harris; Sam Alicia Duke; Denise Jacques; Diann Stevensen; Efren Alarcon; Kerry Brown; Mary Mclain; Ron Bushman; Lisa Capizzi; Simon Bertrang

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: Laurie Graham; Linda Murley

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; Dick Foiles; Kent Hinton; Jason Quon; Gregory Strecker; Marie Marchese

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Jonathan Cheng; Gida Alvarez; Britt Tanner

Cheryl Damico, PCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Read and Approve Agenda

Cheryl Damico, PCC Chair, read the agenda. Item #7 was removed as it was a duplicate agenda item. The agenda was approved as amended.

Approve Minutes of May 8 meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Better Market Street Project

Britt Tanner, the Better Market Street project manager, gave a presentation on the proposed project. This project, which is focused on Market Street between Octavia and the Embarcadero, is aimed at improving Market Street to better meet the growing needs of San Francisco. Among the goals include improving transit, reducing pedestrian fatalities (as part of Vision Zero), increasing bicycling mode share, and making the overall street more vibrant and inclusive. There are three options for this project that will achieve these goals. One design has a shared transit and bike lane while a second design has an elevated cycletrack and transit lanes and the third design has a shared transit and bike lane on Market Street while also have an elevated cycletrack on Mission Street. While the designs of each of these three proposals differ, there are some features that the final design will have. Among them include an increase of 1,000 feet between the center boarding islands, which are primarily used for rapid and limited buses, as well as a slight increase of 200 feet between curbside stop, which are mainly served by local buses. In addition, the center boarding islands will be lengthened, to allow for more buses to load and unload

passengers. Another change is that all private vehicles and buses will be banned from using Market Street. Public buses, taxis, bikes, commercial vehicles, and paratransit vehicles will be allowed to use Market Street. In addition, staff has been working with the public as well as businesses to determine the location of commercial and passenger loading zones.

Rodney Lee asked if private vehicles will be allowed to drop off individuals with seniors and persons with disabilities. Britt Tanner said that this is a question that is still being investigated. Rodney followed up by asking if taxis would be able to pick up and drop off passengers on Market Street. Britt affirmed that taxis will be allowed to load and unload seniors and persons with disabilities. Fred Lein asked how restrictions regarding private vehicles will be enforced. Britt answered that there is currently not a definitive plan in terms of enforcement but expects parking control officers (PCOs) to help enforce this restriction. She noted that when required right turns were added on 10th Street and 6th Street, there was a high compliance rate when PCOs were monitoring the situation. While in the beginning of the project, PCOs may be present to enforce the restrictions against private vehicles; however, in long term, various other options are being considered including using the cameras on transit buses to capture moving violations

Jean Marie Green would like to see either a ban or time restriction of bicyclists along Market Street. Britt Tanner stated that they have heard this recommendation before but this project wants to embrace this mode and help facilitate growth. Simon Bertrang, a project manager from Department of Public Works, added that the city is focused on increasing the percentage of trips completed by bicycles and this project is one step towards providing infrastructure to encourage growth. Simon recognized the need to improve the existing bicycling facilities to encourage better behavior among bicyclists. Jane Redmond said that many seniors and persons with disabilities will not be able to use a bicycle regardless of the new facilities. Simon stated that while this presentation highlights increasing bicycling share mode, these improvements to Market Street will also make the street safer for pedestrians. Jane said that she would like bicycles to be licensed. Britt said while she has not looked into licensing bicycles, she believes that the licensing of bicycles has been primarily for theft prevention and recovery. John Lazar recommended investing in an elevated bikeway in anticipation for the increased share of bicyclists in San Francisco.

Lurilla Harris questioned the necessity of having longer buses for certain routes. Britt Tanner answered that the recommendations is based on data is collected as well as projected growth of these bus routes. Some buses may continue to use the same vehicles; however, there are some bus routes that are experiencing heavier loads and increased crowding are require larger, 60 feet long buses.

John Lazar asked if there are considerations as to the times in which businesses can load and unload. Britt Tanner replied that they are still determining what the loading zone hours will be and are working with merchants. Staff is looking to see which businesses have rear loading areas to allow for these businesses to do their loading and unloading on other streets.

Transdev Transitional Plan

Marc Soto led the discussion on the transitional plan from MV Transportation to Transdev (formerly known as Veolia Transportation). He introduced Ron Bushman, the regional vice president, and Mary Mclain, the general manager for the San Francisco operations of Transdev.

Regarding the transition from MV Transportation to Transdev as the service operator for the SF Access program, there are several ongoing issues that are being addressed. Marc recognized the importance of working with the existing labor force to ensure that both parties are aware of the changes. He has been discussing with existing employees to ensure lines of communication are in place and that they are aware of the changes that are occurring to ensure that Transdev can smoothly take over the work currently provided by MV Transportation. In addition, Transdev will be taking over the existing MV Transportation facilities. Also, some equipment is being purchased from MV Transportation. Marc added that there is priority to create and promote an environment of respect and provide promotional opportunities for employees/

Mary McLain said that the past several weeks has been busy but that the transition plan is very thorough and has required constant communication between corporate, regional, and local staff. Ensuring that employees are trained and have the correct paperwork has been the most time consuming part of the transition. In addition, she has been working hard to establish procedures for the day-to-day operations as well as meeting with vendors. All employees are undergoing refresher training as well as learning new methods of using the equipment. The management team is being hired on an ongoing basis. Ron Bushman thanked the committee for their support and believes that the transition will be smooth for both employees and riders.

Efren Alarcon, a representative from the Local 853, stated employees are being transitioned to Transdev and he hopes that the process is smooth. He stated that he has concerns that drivers who are currently out sick are rehired and wants assurance that drivers are hired pending a drug and background check.

Kerry Brown questioned how Transdev will manage the programming of routes to ensure that riders are picked up and dropped off on time. Marc Soto stated that there is much work that needs to be done on the existing routing and scheduling. While some of the dispatchers will be moving over from MV Transportation, there will be new training to have them better utilize the existing program. Lisa Capazzi stated that while she has been undergoing training, she does not feel that there is enough time for training for employees who have not been able to completed background and drug test. Mary McLain stated that there are multiple training sessions scheduled on weekends and nights to work around the schedule of existing employees. Lurilla Harris emphasized the need for drivers to be informed about the neighborhood of San Francisco in order to be aware of where the rider needs to be transported. Diann Stevensen stated that reservationists and dispatchers need to be retrained be more polite to the riders.

Rodney Lee mentioned an incident where a driver had to stop to get gasoline during his trip. Marc Soto stated that they will have tighter fueling procedures to ensure that these types of incidences do not occur. Jacy Cohen noted that there is no management team from MV Transportation at the meeting today. Jane Redmond welcomed Mary McLain and Ron Bushman to San Francisco and thanked the team for their hard work during this transition period.

PC&O SF Access Meeting

Marty Smith read the following report:

1. Service Quality Discussion

John Sanderson reported that SF Access On-time Performance increased from April to May from 79.69% to 85.8%. John Murphy said that MV has been taking many steps to increase on-time performance.

2. MV Transportation Contact Discussion

The Group discussed the recent agreement between Veolia and MV transportation to part ways. Kate Toran said that the PCC executive council created a subcommittee to explore all options in terms of the overall model of Paratransit Service in San Francisco. This is in the hopes of improving SF Access service.

3. MV Transportation Provider Report

Phil Garth of MV said that they have been hiring additional drivers who are in various stages of training. Kate Toran thanked MV for the good increase in on-time performance.

4. SF Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson said that the broker has been working hard on gathering all the data needed for the transition. John announced that the new Ramp Taxi incentives have begun to be paid out and the broker has noticed an increase in the number of ramp trips being provided. In addition, John announced that the SF Access and Taxi fares are scheduled to increase. For SF Access the fares will increase from \$2.00 to \$2.25, for taxi the fares will increase from \$5 for \$30 dollars value of taxi fare to \$5.50 for \$30 dollars value of taxi fare. These fares are scheduled to be implemented September 1st, 2014.

5. Public Comment

Kate Toran said that she has been working closely with the broker staff on looking into peer escorts on the Group Van Service for routes that have particularly frail clients. SFMTA is looking at what is the current need for the program in San Francisco so that a grant request can be made.

The next SF Access PC&O meeting is September 3, 2014.

PC&O Group Van Meeting

Jacy Cohen read the following report:

1. Service Quality Discussion

a) Stepping Stone – Stepping stone did an audit recently on all of their routes and discovered that they had 45 riders in June who were on the bus greater than 90 minutes. Baymed said they are working with Stepping stone to combine routes to help alleviate this ride time issue. Also a new automated phone call is going to be made to homes of ATR clients so caregivers can be outside and ready to receive clients when the bus arrives.

b) SFAD – SFAD reported that their buses now do double drop offs to help alleviate the long ride times. She said that communication is important because when good communication happens the service runs much smoother.

c) Arc Howard/Bay- Most issues have been occurring with the Arc Bay mid-day routes. These routes have had the issue of not having enough vans to accommodate the amount of people needing rides. Arc is going to set up a meeting with the broker and their provider to discuss ways to improve the Arc mid-day route service.

2. SF Paratransit Broker's Report

a) John announced that a new automated phone call is going live to all centers. This call will make phone calls to homes of ATR (attendant required) clients to let the caregivers know the approximate time of the vans arrival. The hope is that caregivers can then be ready to receive the clients outside when the van arrives at an ATR client's home. John reported that Group van On-time performance for June was 93% however there is a lot to do in regards to ride times of clients.

b) John announced that MV is leaving SF on 9/1/14. After that point Veolia will be taking over the operation. Most of the drivers and staff will remain the same; there will be new corporate and management staff. The broker office will remain a separate entity from operations. John said the MV team has been very helpful and cooperative through the work of this transition.

c) Fares will be increasing starting 9/1. For SF Access the fare will increase from \$2 to \$2.25 per trip. In addition, the taxi fare subsidy is changing from \$5 for \$30 of taxi value to \$5.50 for \$30 of taxi value. Van Gogh and Shop-a-Round will also be increasing their fare to \$2.25.

The next Group Van PC&O meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at the SF Paratransit Broker's 1st floor conference room from 10:30-12:30pm.

Jacy Cohen added that the ARC has had issues with drivers block a loading zone of a nearby business. The ARC has six white passenger loading zones and the business owner says it has negatively impacted his business. Jacy mentioned that her agency has taken steps to try and fix the problem, including having more staff monitor the loading and unloading procedures as well as have drivers park further away once they complete the unloading process if they need to use the bathroom as to ensure that the white zones are clear. If this situation is not resolved soon, Jacy said that she has been instructed to have more parking control officers in the area. Kerry Brown thinks that better scheduling would help improve the situation. Lisa Capazzi mentioned that she has seen drivers idle at the white zones at the ARC to go into Ted's. Marc Soto stated that he is looking into the situation and that the ARC is not only served by our Group Van service but by regional services as well.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Meeting

Max Lazar read the following report:

1. Comments from the Chair

Vice Chair Max Lazar said he was excited to be elected as the new Vice Chair. He said he was looking forward to serving on the PC & O subcommittee for the year.

2. Service Quality issues

Many riders expressed their concerns with their debit cards not working all the time. Jane Redmond said that she has had problems with her debit card. She said the card does not show on the equipment and that the drivers take too long filling out the IVRs. The whole process is very time consuming. Kaye Griffin said her friend took a Luxor Cab and his card did not work. The driver swiped the card multiple times, but it still did not work. The driver demanded that Ms. Griffin's friend pay \$10 in cash.

3. SF Paratransit Broker Report

Marc Soto of SF Paratransit/Veolia Transportation announced some staffing changes. Casey Estorga resigned as Director of Finance & Administration. Dick Foiles has been brought in to oversee the responsibilities for the interim. Also, John Sanderson has r resigned as Director of Operations. Kent Hinton will be the Interim Director of Operations. John mentioned about the weekly enforcement of warning letters to riders who routinely cannot pay for taxi rides that cannot cover with their debit card. He said the process is going well and that most riders are mostly apologetic about it.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2014 from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Broker's office, 68 12th Street, San Francisco.

A member of the public stated that he was the individual whose driver demanded cash after his debit card failed to work. Max Lazar stated that all drivers are equipped with IVR slips that would have allowed the driver to get paid for the trip through the paratransit debit card. Ruach Graffis added that she would recommend that he call the police if a taxi driver demands money. John Lazar mentioned that he should call the company and he will get reimbursed for the fare. Diann Stevensen said that she also experienced the same incident with a taxi driver as well. Roland Wong would like to see the fare maximum to be raised.

Paratransit Broker Report

Marc Soto reported as follow:

- **Staffing Changes**

Casey Estorga, who was previously the Director of Finance and Administration, left in late July and has been replaced by Dick Foiles. John Sanderson, who was previously the Director of Operations, left in early August and has been interrimly replaced by Kent Hinton. The position being vacated by Kent Hinton, as contract administer, will be replaced by Raymond Chang.

- **Fare Increase Update**

Fare increases will begin on September 1, 2014. Fares for all van service, including SF Access, Group Van, Shop-a-Round, and Van Gogh will be \$2.25 one way. For all DAAS van service, the fare will increase to \$2.25 one way starting on October 1, 2014. For taxi debit card, the subsidy will decrease, with patrons now paying \$5.50 for \$30 worth of taxi services on their debit card. All patrons are receiving letters this week and phone calls are being made to visually impaired riders. The new fare information has been posted on the SF Paratransit website and in the lobby of the office. Phone calls have been made to agencies so that they are aware of the changes as well.

- **SF Access Service Quality Report:**

On-time performance for the SF Access service in July was about 85 percent. However, the on-time performance for the first weeks of August was 79.7 percent. There were 59 complaints filed regarding service in July as well.

Rodney Lee asked if the new fares were posted on the 511.org website. Jonathan Cheng said that he will check to see if the new fares were posted. Marc Soto added that the SFMTA has included the fare increase in their press releases. Rodney also added would like to confirm that drivers are made aware of his visual impairment on the schedule manifest. Marc stated that information like that is usually on the manifest if it has been entered in the Trapeze system. Gilda Chico also stated that she was “no-show” for a trip as a driver did not follow the correct procedure.

Announcements

Sam Alicia Duke announced that the Senior and Disabled Action has launched a new meeting focused on transit issues called “Transit Justice.” Jane Redmond added that several PCC members will be attending the meeting today.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

**The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 24
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 1 South Van Ness, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference
Room.**