

San Francisco Paratransit Coordinating Council

c/o Muni

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Minutes

PCC Executive Committee Meeting

May 28, 2014

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

PCC Executive Committee Members Present: Cheryl Damico, PCC Chair, Jane Redmond, PCC Secretary; Adrienne Humphrey; Aisha Jackson; Fred Lein; Jacy Cohen; Jeanne Lynch; Jean Marie Green; Kevin Lee; Linda Murley; Olivia Santiago; Rodney Lee; Roland Wong; Ruach Graffis; Sandra Fancher; Sue Cauthen; Wanee Ratanasanguan

PCC Members and Guests: Lurilla Harris; Alice Young McMillian; John Murphy; Phil McGarth; Sam Alicia Duke; Denise Jacques; Hilario Reyes; Michael Zaugg; Bruce Oka; Diann Stevensen; Efrén Alarcon; Kathryn Simpson; Sam Simpson; Kerry Brown

PCC Executive Committee Member Excused: John Lazar, PCC Vice Chair; Pam Martinez

SF Paratransit Staff: Marc Soto; John Sanderson; Casey Estorga; Jason Quon; Gregory Strecker

SFMTA: Annette Williams; Kate Toran; Jonathan Cheng

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.

Approve Minutes of April 16 meeting

The minutes were motioned/seconded/approved.

Comments from the Chair

Cheryl Damico permitted Kate Toran to make announcements regarding members of the PCC. Kate Toran welcomed Michael Zaugg, who will be representing DAAS, and announced that Christian Got has left his position at On Lok and there will be a vacant seat that can be filled by any representative on On Lok.

MV Transportation Contract Update

Marc Soto provided the committee with an update about the status of the contract negotiations between MV Transportation and drivers. Over the past few months, MV Transportation and their drivers had been negotiating a new contract. However, there was a lack of progress and Local 853, the union representing the drivers, informed the SF Paratransit office that there was a possibility of a strike as a result of the failed discussions. In addition, MV Transportation requested to be released from their contract with Veolia. Staff from the SF Paratransit office were able to resolve both situations. MV Transportation has been granted a release from their contract and will be exiting the SF Paratransit program on September 1, 2014. The new contract with the drivers will in place through the end of the year. Marc is working on a transition plan to

ensure that there is a smooth transition between MV Transportation and the new service provider. This situation also gives SFMTA and SF Paratransit a new opportunity look a different service model for the program that may provide for better service quality for riders. Marc added that he has heard the feedback from the public and thanks them for their comments.

Annette Williams added that she spoke with Cheryl Damico to form a small working group of PCC members to advise the SFMTA on the transitional plans. Cheryl appointed Jacy Cohen to represent group van riders and Olivia Santiago to represent SF Access rider. Cost effectiveness and service quality are two priority issues that will be considered when reviewing potential service models. Annette added that SFMTA owns all the Trapeze software, most of the vehicles currently operated by MV Transportation, and MV Transportation has allowed for Veolia to take over the facilities. The drivers will be able to work under the newly agreed upon contract with the new service provider until the end of the year.

Denise Jacques requested a clarification regarding the September and December dates. Annette Williams replied that the September date is regarding the date when the new service provider will replace MV Transportation and the December date is regarding the end date of the new driver contract. Kathryn Simpson asked what will happen to stair assist during a strike. Marc Soto answered that during a strike, medical and dialysis trips will be prioritized. Star assist service requires two individuals and during a strike, SF Paratransit may not be able to accommodate every trip at the same level of service as during a non strike period. Kevin Lee asked that if there are service disruptions during the transition, what kind of impact will it have on riders. Marc said that although September 1st is quickly approaching, staff at the SF Paratransit office is working to ensure that there is a smooth transition. He also acknowledged that the SF Access service is only one third of the overall SF Paratransit program. Kevin then asked that if a strike were to happen, could SF Paratransit clients get a temporary increase in their taxi allotment. Kate Toran said that SFMTA and SF Paratransit is taking this opportunity to look at our existing service model and potential new ones to ensure that we are using our resources are being expended effectively in the delivery of transportation services to our riders. One idea is to open the taxi program up to new and existing clients. Bruce Oka asked if there has been any thoughts to taxi companies provide some transportation services for the SF Paratransit program during a strike. Marc answered that when there was a recent possibility of a strike, staff at SF Paratransit office was communicating with taxi companies for back up service and both parties were cooperative. Efren Alarcon stated that his drivers are happy about the new contract and that there is ample time for a new contract to be finalized with the new service provider. He hopes that this new contract will improve driver morale and lead to better service for riders.

Update on Proposed Paratransit Fare Increases

Kate Toran gave an update on the proposed fare increases for paratransit service. In the previous meeting, it was mentioned that the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year will increase the cost of a trip on our van and taxi service. The proposed cost for a ride on the SF Access van service will increase from the current \$2.00 to \$2.25 for each SF Access one way trip. In addition, the value for one unit of paratransit taxi debit card value will decrease from the current \$5.00 for \$30.00 worth of taxi services to \$5.50 for \$30.00 worth of taxi services. The next steps are to introduce the proposed budget to the San Francisco Board of Supervisor to vote upon. This vote is anticipated to happen during the summer. If these proposed fare increases are approved, which is expected, they will be implemented on September 1, 2014. The SF Paratransit office

will currently working to ensure that all riders are informed of this increase and update the software.

Lurilla Harris objected to the proposed fare increases, as it will increase her cost of travel and reduce the number of trips she can take based on her transportation budget. Denise Jacques requested clarification regarding the proposed new fares. Kate Toran replied that the cost for a ride on the van service will increase from the current \$2.00 to \$2.25 for each SF Access one way trip and riders will have to pay \$5.50 for \$30.00 word of value on their paratransit taxi debit card.

PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee Meeting

Fred Lein read the following report:

1. Comments from the Chair

Vice Chair Fred Lein spoke about the election of a new Vice Chair. He has termed out and cannot run again. He hopes someone can step up to the position.

2. Election of new Vice Chair

Max Lazar of Luxor Cab was nominated to be the Vice Chair. He was the only person nominated. He will be the new Vice Chair of the PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi Subcommittee.

3. CPUC Activity - Update

Chris Hayashi of SFMTA gave an update regarding the CPUC and TNCs. She mentioned how the Seattle City Council passed legislation limiting the number of TNCs that can be on the streets. She also stated the CPUC's requirements of the TNCs to submit reports. The CPUC ruling requires the TNCs to submit reports of what they are doing with respect to disability services.

4. Letter Regarding TNC to neighborhood Newspapers

Jane Redmond wrote a letter regarding how the TNCs have impacted San Francisco from a consumer point of view. She will be mailing the letter to the 15 neighborhood newspapers throughout the city. She asked for input and suggestions regarding the letter before sending it out.

5. Service Quality issues

Many riders have had their problems trying to get a taxi. Jane Redmond was denied service because she had a paratransit card. First time guest James Robinson had problems getting a taxi from the taxi lines at the hotels. He would line up at the hotel and the taxis would still not take him.

6. SF Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson of SFPT/Veolia mentioned that the taxi on-time performance is good, around mid to high 90%. There is an on-going enforcement of weekly warning letters that have been sent out to riders who violate program rules. If a rider continues to violate the SF Paratransit rules, they could be suspended from the program. Also, John stated the new ramp incentive program is up and running. Companies have been paid for the incentives thru first quarter of this year.

The next PC&O Taxi/Ramp Taxi subcommittee meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2014 from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Broker's office, 68 12th Street, San Francisco.

Cheryl Damico asked for an explanation of what "TNC" means. Fred Lein replied that "TNC" refers Transportation Network Companies and refers to companies like Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar. Roland Wong added that the Mayor's Office on Disability is planning on hosting a discussion on the effect of TNCs at the next Mayor's Disability Council on June 20, from 1-4 at City Hall. Kate Toran stated that she has copies of the letter from Jane Redmond regarding effect of TNC on the senior and disabled community. She also said that Bob Planthold passed her an article stating that the California State Assembly has passed a bill requiring TNCs to provide their driver with commercial liability insurance. Kevin Lee recounted a time when he had to walk a far distance, after getting knee surgery, to his taxi because an Uber car was occupying the loading zone.

Jewel McGinnis Luncheon

Jonathan Cheng announced the details for the upcoming Jewel McGinnis luncheon. This luncheon recognizes the hard work of PCC members and volunteers over the past year. The luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 20th at the Asian Art Museum. The group will meet at 11:00AM at Café Asia inside the museum for lunch. Following the lunch, attendees will be able to go on a self guided tour of the exhibit called "Enter the Mandala: Cosmic Centers and Mental Maps of Himalayan Buddhism." Kate Toran passed out the invitations to members and Jonathan stated that he will email and mail out invitations to PCC members who were unable to attend today's meeting.

Paratransit Broker Report

John Sanderson, Marc Soto, and Kate Toran reported as follow:

- **SF Access Service Quality Report:**
On-time performance is currently for May is about 85 percent. The on-time performance for April was 77.9%. Systemwide group van on-time performance has been over 90% this year. In addition, taxi on-time performance has been in the mid-90's this year as well.
- **Controller's Audit Recommendations:**
Staff at SF Paratransit have been conducting file audits of drivers as part of the recommendations by the Controller's office. All audits have been completed at the smaller service providers and an audit will be conducted once the new service provider for the SF Access program is determined. In the future, there will be quarterly file audits conducted. Kate added that SFMTA is working with SF Paratransit to implement the recommendations.
- **Ramp Taxi Incentive Awards:**
Under the new ramp taxi incentive scheme, SF Paratransit has awarded \$8,240 worth of incentives for the month of April, the highest to date.
- **Group Van Update:**

Self Help for the Elderly has expanded their role in the SF Paratransit program and has taken over the group van service to the Jackie Chan Center from MV Transportation. Currently, Self Help for the Elderly has taken over six of the seven routes formerly run to the Jackie Chan Center and have managed to consolidate it. SF Paratransit is working with Self Help for the Elderly on scheduling in order for them to take over the final remaining route from MV Transportation.

- **TripInfo Call Improvement:**

A new call type is being implemented in the TripInfo service. A phone call will be made to the destination for group van riders who are coded as “ATR.” These individuals require a hand-to-hand drop off of the rider due to their medical conditions. This phone call will be made as the vehicle is in route

- **New SF Paratransit Vehicles:**

SF Paratransit currently operates 87 SFMTA-owned vehicles. 35 700-series buses are scheduled to be replaced. Currently, they are finalizing the build of these new vehicles and there are plans to receive these vehicles by October or November. In addition, there are five minivans that have been delivered and will be in operation once the new service provider is chosen.

- **Paratransit Peer Escort Program:**

A working group is looking at funding a peer escort program to provide extra assistance for our group van service, particularly in assisting “ATR” riders. The idea is to use an existing program, “Senior Companion Program” which is through the Family Services Agency, to hire seniors who would accompany “ATR” riders. These escorts will be provided a stipend that will not affect any Social Security benefits received. This service will also benefit drivers as it will allow them to solely focus on driving and safety. Currently, there is work being conducted in terms of data collection to identify the routes with the highest number of “ATR” riders. Once all the information has been collected, this group will try to get this funded through a grant. PCC members are welcomed to attend the working group meetings.

Ruach Graffis would like see an improvement in the service of ramp taxis as she feels like it is not reflected in the on-time performance of taxis. Kate Toran replied that one of the recommendations from the Controller’s audit was to improve the on-time performance methodology for taxis. In addition, the increases in the incentive payments reflect an increase in the number of wheelchair trips completed by ramp taxis. Kate also recommended that riders file a complaint if there is a non-service for the ramp taxi request.

Jane Redmond asked for more information about the next meeting about Paratransit Peer Escort Program. Jacy Cohen said that the next meeting will be held on June 3 from 9:30-11:00AM at the SF Paratransit office. Kate Toran added that she can send information from previous meetings to all interested bodies.

Denise Jacques mentioned a situation where she felt threatened by a fellow passenger while being transported. Marc Soto said that any time there such an incident occurs, riders should contact the SF Paratransit office and report it so that staff can investigate the claim. John

Sanderson gave her the phone number for the SF Paratransit Quality Service department. Olivia Santiago asked what is the policy if a fight occurs on the vehicle. Marc replied that while drivers should intervene if possible, they should also assess the situation before taking any actions. The driver is also responsible for writing an incident report should there be a physical altercation. All SFMTA owned vehicles are also equipped with cameras.

Jacy Cohen reported that there have been many incidents where drivers are blocking the delivery entrance for Ted's Deli. She has received many phone calls and that last week, a driver attempted to get into a physical confrontation with the owner. Jacy requested that Gregory Strecker conduct more spot checks at this location.

Lurilla Harris stated that she is getting TripInfo calls on her home phone number and would like to be taken off the service. John Sanderson stated that he will do so.

Announcements

Marc Soto said that John Lazar called him prior to today's meeting to let him know that he is in meetings in Sacramento to advocate for stricter regulations against TNCs. He also wanted to ask members contact him to help him in his efforts.

Ruach Graffis announced that there will be a discussion on TNCs on July 23 at the 2940 16th Street at 7PM.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

**The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 13
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 1 South Van Ness, 6th Floor, Candlestick/Corona Conference
Room.**