

San Diego Metropolitan Transit System  
Taxicab Advisory Committee  
Workshop On Regulatory Matters

May 26, 2017

10:00 a.m.

Taxicab Administration Building  
Conference Room  
1501 National Avenue, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92113

1. Roll Call

Mr. Leonardo Fewell, Interim Taxi Administration Manager, called the Workshop On Regulatory Matters meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. A roll call sheet listing WORM subcommittee member attendance is attached.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 21, 2016

Mr. Antonio Hueso moved for approval of the minutes of the July 21, 2016, Workshop On Regulatory Matters meeting. Mr. George Abraham seconded the motion, and the vote was 8 to 0 in favor with Mr. Akbar Majid and Mr. Medhanie Weldegiorgis absent.

3. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There were no non-agenda public comments.

4. MTS Approved Driver Training Course Provider Contract Expiration

Public Comment:

Abebe Antallo – Representing the United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) inquired if the driver training is necessary. He expressed he believes it should be eliminated as there are no new drivers coming into the industry and it is his opinion that the driver training is a waste of time and money for those drivers such as himself whom have been driving for over 15 years.

William Johnson – Representing the United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) shared his opinion regarding having individual radio services provide the training, but believes it should be open for the drivers to go to whichever radio service the driver prefers or has access to. Mr. Johnson shared the system which the state of New York taxi industry utilizes, which consist of the taxi union offering the training to the drivers, and the drivers can go to any training they chose to as long as the training meets the standards. Mr. Johnson believes their system is a somewhat better fitting to the industry as the radio services would not have to be paying for the training as well and the testing, instead the fees would go to the drivers.

The subcommittee discussed at length the MTS Approved Driver Training Course contractual agreement with Foundation Community Services (FCS) which is to expire on

November 21, 2017. The subcommittee discussed possible options contractual extension, renewal and possibilities for new organization to take over to provide the training.

Mr. Hueso expressed concerns regarding the existing time remaining on the existing contract as well as the current training content as to not just safety driving training but also customer service and training on new equipment.

Mr. Banks is concern that drivers might not have enough time to get their training done within the 6 remaining months of the contract and inquired if there are any current bids from providers or if anyone within the industry is interested in providing such training. Mr. Banks stated that customer service training is not the most important component, but instead driver safety should come first and focus on the customer service at a later time. He attributes this to the lack of demand of taxicab services.

Mr. Seifu stated some of the drivers have expressed to him they do not feel they are benefiting from such training and they feel they are wasting their time and money, therefore he recommended removal of this training.

Mr. Palmeri expressed and shares Mr. Hueso's concerns regarding contractual expiration, driver safety training content as well as concerns regarding price. Mr. Palmeri is concerned regarding the decline of demand in the taxicab industry also emphasizes the importance of including a customer service component to the training. Mr. Palmeri is also concerned that if each radio service provides the training, that the driver may be limited on what type of equipment the driver is being trained at. Mr. Palmeri emphasizes the importance of a training that is universal for all drivers as well as a training that is approved by MTS.

Mr. Afifi suggested for each radio service or perhaps the United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) could provide the training to drivers who need to be certified or recertified.

After further discussion among the subcommittee members, Mr. Fewell called for a motion on the (3) options provided by members of the board. The options are as follow:

Option #1: To keep it the training neutral and have bids out for providers to come out with proposals as to how to implement the program.

Option #2: To have each company provide their or be open to anybody that would like to acquire the program to their radio service this will also accommodate individual companies that will not be able to provide the program on their own.

Option #3: To seek a contract extension 3 or 6 months, if no decision is made in between the contract expiration (11/21/17) and the next TAC meeting.

#### Action Taken

Mr. Palmeri proposed to keep the options discussed and further pursue a 6 month extension. Ms. Tanguay moved to seconded the motion, and the vote was 7 to 1 in favor with Mr. Majid and Mr. Weldegiorgis absent and Mr. Seifu abstaining.

#### 5. MTS Approved Driver Training Course Content Update/Revision

The subcommittee members discussed the content of the driver training. Much of the content was covered during discussion of agenda item #3 however; further ideas and recommendations were shared by the members of this board.

Mr. Palmeri expressed he is not able to make a judgement at this time as he does not know what the outline of the training consist of. He suggested 2 scenarios. 1) Have another WORM committee meeting to further discuss the outline of the class/training or 2) let the TAC committee go to a class together as a group (ONLY TAC members) and once they go through the class, the TAC members may have an idea what the class consist of and they can see what should be implemented in the class/training.

Mr. Afifi recommended for the San Diego Airport to collaborate with MTS to set in place a set of procedures or outline for drivers to be trained and educated on how to proceed while at the San Diego Airport.

Mr. Banks agrees with the recommendation of Mr. Afifi for the airport to have training for drivers.

Mr. Nichols stated the airport currently has "memorandums of agreements" which are shared with the drivers, but would be happy to include elements on how the driver should operate at the airport and provide this to MTS for the training program.

Mr. Fewell will provide each WORM committee member a copy of the current training program for them to review and further discuss updates and changes of the program on our the next WORM meeting.

#### Action Taken

Motion: None. Second: None and no vote was taken with Mr. Majid and Mr. Weldegiorgis absent.

#### 6. 2017 Rates of Fare, San Diego Airport

##### Public Comment:

Karman Hamidi – is concerned about the current state of the taxicab industry and recommended freezing the airport rates of fares. Mr. Hamidi stated that he is aware of the difficulty of the taxicab industry rates competing with Uber and Lyft rates and therefore recommends for the airport rates to stay the same in an effort to preserve any current taxi customers.

Mr. Palmeri agrees with Mr. Hamidi's proposal to freeze the rates as lowering the rates it will ultimately cost all the owners money to lower your rates. Mr. Palmeri stated that whatever rate taxi drivers lower, Uber & Lyft will also lower and taxi owners/drivers could never bring the rates down to match Uber/Lyft.

#### Action Taken

Mr. Palmeri moved to freeze the April 2016 rates of fare as they are and make the recommendation to the TAC to accept the rates. Mr. Banks seconded the motion, and the vote was 8 to 0 in favor with Mr. Majid and Mr. Weldegiorgis.

7. Management and Committee Member Communications

a. Agreement for Administration of Taxicab and for-hire vehicles between MTS and the City of National City

Mr. Fewell stated MTS came to a contractual agreement with the city of National City as of April 2017 to administer their taxicabs and their for-hire vehicles. A meeting between Mr. Fewell and city of National City representatives took place on Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to clarify MTS responsibilities and functions. The meeting was productive and Mr. Fewell will meet with City Works to see if MTS is able to implement taxicab stands in the city of National City to better service our the public as well as drivers. It was communicated to MTS that there is only currently 6 taxicabs operating in the city and they all belong to USA Cab. An official announcement will be made on the upcoming TAC and a memo will be sent out requesting for it to be displayed in conspicuous place for the radio services for all drivers to be advised that they can now operate in the city of National City as an MTS contract city.

b. 2017 Reconciliation of Fees Statement

Mr. Fewell reviewed the 2016 Reconciliation of Fees Statement. There were 141 permits that were abandoned or void due to nonpayment of the regulatory fee, not for any another reason. The loss of revenue resulted in those 141 permits came to be for \$42,300.00; almost 10% of the vehicles that we currently regulate. We are going forward, and it is already been reconsolidated by our finance department.

c. MTS Taxicab Administration Staffing update: Not discussed.

d. USA, Silver/Chase Radio Services share of resources, business location

Mr. Fewell informed the subcommittee members of MTS granting permission for USA Radio Service and Silver/Chase Radio Services to share resources as to the same business location and trial basis for 90-days as part of concerns to the industry to addressing increasing cost and overhead operational cost, MTS is considering amending the Ordinance 11 in the near future at the request of the TAC to pursue that option, to share resources in cut overhead cost for radio series as long as customer service, public safety, and all other elements required in the Ordinance are not affected. That should be something the TAC would welcome in the future and would alleviate a lot of the expenses the industry is going through.

e. Port of San Diego intention on removing taxicab stand located at Kettner Av (Grand Manchester Hyatt due to Taxi driver noncompliance with traffic rules

Mr. Fewell informed the subcommittee members that the Port of San Diego has expressed intention on removing several taxicab stands; in particular the one on Kettner/Manchester due to taxi drivers not complying with traffic rules. Mr. Fewell has asked Ms. Kristine Love (director of real estate assets for Port of San Diego), to provide MTS with a presentation/pictures again, which were presented at the last TAC meeting. That way, as a team, we can all unite efforts to correct this situation.


Mr. Fewell states that as an advocate for the industry MTS has been exploring new possibilities for installing taxicab stands so the drivers can have a place to safely park and gain more business. The Port of San Diego is contemplating providing us the opportunity to install additional cab stands on their property; Humphries by the Bay, as well as along Harbor drive. There are major improvement projects for the North Embarcadero there is one that is underway for the Manchester project in front of the Midway. Once those projects are completed, it would be beneficial to see that we are able to install several taxicab stands along the way to better service the public. This is certainly something we can later address at the next WORM meeting or in between, but I will have a presentation on the next TAC committee about this issue.

8. Next Meeting – TBD


9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Accepted:

  
Leonardo Fewell, Interim Manager  
MTS Taxicab Administration

Filed by:

  
Betty Brown, Clerk of the Committee  
MTS Taxicab Administration

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet

SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM  
WORKSHOP ON REGULATORY MATTERS (WORM) MEETING  
ROLL CALL

MEETING OF (DATE): MAY 26, 2017

CALL TO ORDER (TIME): 10:05 a.m. ADJOURN: 11:35 a.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBER (Alternate)		ORGANIZATION	PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
George Abraham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Owner/Eritrean Cab Co.	9:45 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Tarek Afifi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Lease Driver	10:18 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Alfred Banks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Lease Driver	9:50 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Marc Nichols	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Anderson <input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	10:03 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Tony Hueso	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alfredo Hueso <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Owner/USA Cab, LTD	9:45 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Akbar Majid	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Owner/SDYC Holdings, LLC		
Tony Palmeri	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michel Anderson <input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego Travelers Aid Society	9:45 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Able Seifu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Lease Driver	9:50 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Margo Tanguay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Lease Driver	9:45 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Medhanie Weldegiorgis	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxicab Owner/"A" Transportation, LLC		
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Sharon Cooney	<input type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Chief of Staff		
Leonardo Fewell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Taxicab Administration Interim Manager		
Samantha Leslie	<input type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Staff Attorney/Regulatory Compliance		

CLERK OF THE TAC:  TAXICAB ADMINISTRATION MANAGER: 