

MEETING OF THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM
TAXICAB ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101

MINUTES

October 14, 2020

[Clerk's note: Except where noted, public, staff and committee member comments are paraphrased. Meeting conducted via webinar to comply with public health orders].

1. Roll Call

Chris Ward, Chair of the Committee, called the Taxicab Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting to order at 10:08 am. A roll call sheet listing the Taxicab Advisory Committee member attendance is attached.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2020 and July 15, 2020.

Mr. Hueso moved for approval of the meeting minutes of the January 3, 2020 and July 15, 2020 TAC Meeting, with a second by Mr. Hussein. The vote was 12 to 0 in favor with Mr. Abraham, Mr. Morquecho and Mr. Nahavandian absent.

3. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There were no non-agenda public comments.

Mr. Fewell introduced Ms. Nancy Gudino from Cross Border X-Press and Mr. Michael Trimble from the San Diego Gaslamp Quarter Association.

4. Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Amended Budget Forecast

Gordon Meyer, MTS Operating Budget Supervisor, conducted a presentation on preliminary budget reports for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 amended budget for the For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) Administration. Based on the current forecast, significant declines in operating revenue suggest that reserves could be depleted as early as FY21, and likely by end of FY22, without significant decreases to expenditures or increases to revenues. MTS is currently evaluating options and possible strategies to reduce the projected operating deficit and maintain contingency reserves at current levels. Currently, total operating expenses are projected to be \$887,000, with operating revenue projected at \$757,000 and a resulting projected net operating deficit of \$130,000 for FY21. Mr. Meyer said staff was evaluating cost saving alternatives that included personnel reductions, vacating the vehicle inspection facility and fee increases. Both summary and detailed reports of the FY21 Budget and the Contingency Reserve Balance report was provided with the original meeting packet.

Committee Member Comment

Mr. Ward said there was awareness of the adverse impact COVID-19 has had on the Taxicab industry. He was interested in the increase in fees suggestion and expressed interest in attaining more information on how to stabilize the budget for future fiscal years.

Mr. Hueso said the road to recovery will be long and suggested MTS prepares for future budget adjustments if needed. He is looking forward to discussing them at the next January TAC meeting.

Ms. Tanguay said the issue is that many medallions were voided. She agreed with Mr. Hueso's comment that further discussions are needed for budget adjustments.

Mr. Hussein said he agreed with Mr. Hueso and expressed concerns that many taxicab drivers are not working and would struggle to pay the regulatory fee. He said TAC needs to figure out a way to waive the regulatory fee for next year and incentivize drivers to keep their permits.

Mr. Ward asked Mr. Fewell to cover this issue once again at the next January TAC meeting.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

5. Active and Surrendered Permits Report

Mr. Fewell provided a status report on the current number of active and surrendered vehicles. In 2020, 1,433 operating permits were billed. As of October 8, 2020, 22% of permits, a total of 318 permits across permit types, were voided for non-payment. The current number of active permits, across all permit types, stands at 1,127 with 33% of valid permits on "surrender" status. Mr. Fewell stated MTS continues to assist permit holders by allowing them to bring their vehicles back in to service at no charge.

Committee Member Comment

Mr. Ward said it was discouraging to see the permit loss numbers and supported the permit reinstatement procedures.

Mr. Hussein thanked Mr. Fewell and staff for communicating this information to the industry.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

6. Permit Reinstatement and Department Name Change

Mr. Fewell spoke on the approval of a permit reinstatement fee of \$100 allowing permit holders to reinstate all permits that were voided or unable to pay the 2020 regulatory fee, so long as the regulatory fee for 2020 is also paid in full. He said that as of October 8, 2020, a total of eight permits had been reinstated.

Additionally, he announced that MTS Taxicab Administration has changed its business name to MTS For-Hire Vehicle Administration. As the regulatory agency for taxicab, non-emergency, charter, sightseeing, jitney and low-speed vehicles, this name change will better reflect the different types of MTS regulated for-hire vehicles. He did note that the department name change has no business impact between MTS and current permit holders.

Committee Member Comment

Mr. Hussein requested for the December 1, 2020 permit re-instatement deadline to be pushed out to future months, allowing permit holders to keep their permits.

Mr. Hueso asked for clarification on the permit reinstatement conditions and asked about the Airport's procedure for reinstating ground transportation permits, and if MTS had communicated the procedures to the Airport. Mr. Fewell stated MTS had communicated the procedures to the Airport.

Mr. Nichols intervened and spoke on the Airport's permit renewal procedures and stated Airport's staff is working full time to assist all permit holders who wish to renew their Airport Ground Transportation permits.

Mr. Banks asked if permit status with MTS will impact the ability to work at the airport. Mr. Fewell said that as long as the MTS permit is paid and valid, even if the vehicle is temporarily surrendered, they are still eligible to apply for an airport permit.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

7. Taxicab Advisory Committee (TAC) Proposed 2021 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Fewell presented the proposed 2021 Taxicab Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule as:

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 10:00am

Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:00 am

Wednesday, July 7, 2021 10:00 am

Wednesday October 27, 2021 10:00 am

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

8. Nominations for Workshop on Regulatory Matters (WORM) Subcommittee Membership

Mr. Fewell explained the Workshop of Regulatory Matters (WORM) is a standing subcommittee for TAC and is subject to the Brown Act. It has been over three years since nominations were received for WORM. WORM is currently comprised of 13 voting members and four nonvoting members. There are currently two vacant seats for the voting member category. To ensure a quorum is attained at WORM meetings, staff is requesting nominations to establish a five to seven member WORM subcommittee for the remainder of the TAC term (current members of TAC are set to expire on July 1, 2021). Staff recommends members from each permit holder, lease driver, and organization categories be nominated.

Committee Member Comment

Mr. Ward asked for clarification on the number of nominations requested to comprise a WORM subcommittee and when TAC would like to receive the nominations. Mr. Fewell said the nomination could be immediately taken.

Mr. Majid expressed interest in participating and self-nominated himself as well as Mr. Hussein, who invited the representative from Cross Border X-Press (CBX) to join the WORM.

Ms. Gudino from CBX accepted and volunteered to join.

Mr. Hueso and Ms. Tanguay also self-nominated and requested to join.

Mr. Fewell stated these nominations established equal representation from organizational, driver, and permit holder categories.

Mr. Tasem made a last-minute request to participate in the WORM.

Mr. Hussein then nominated permit holder Abebe Anatallo to be the seventh WORM member.

Mr. Fewell said the higher the membership number for WORM, the higher the required quorum, and requested all participants to commit to their attendance.

Action Taken

Mr. Ward moved for approval of the Nominations for the WORM subcommittee, with a second by Mr. Hueso. The vote was 12 to 0 in favor with Mr. Abraham, Mr. Morquecho and Mr. Nahavandian absent.

9. Proposed Ordinance No. 11 Revisions

Mr. Fewell presented proposed changes to various sections of Ordinance No. 11. The proposed revisions, if approved by City of San Diego City Council, include policy 500-02, 6 month driving experience removal, removal of physical duty/presence of 24 hour dispatch, allowance of Dispatch company or PO Box for business address, removal of off street parking restriction for taxicabs updated to reliance on City parking regulation, cell phone utilization for Global Positioning System (GPS), removal of model age and vehicle title restriction, removal of wheelchair accessible vehicle requirements for permit holders with two or more vehicles, and removal of customer service plan requirement. The proposed changes also include pull-notice program participation by Corporation, LLC's, multi-vehicle owners, employer/contractor of lease drivers and/or multi-driver vehicles. Also proposed is jitney route revision of guidelines to allow jitneys to operate flexible routes within specific boundaries and timeframes, and the requirement to provide this information to the public. Lastly, permit holder notification of changes to the MTS Fee schedule will occur electronically rather than via mail. All other proposed revisions to MTS Ordinance No. 11 that are not described here are minor and not substantive.

Committee Member Comment

Mr. Ward said he would sponsor the City Council 500-02 policy revisions on the October 27, 2020 City Council meeting.

Mr. Majid asked what prompted the requirement to enroll drivers on pull notices. Mr. Fewell said it was required by AB 1069.

Mr. Tasem asked if MTS had e-mail addresses for every permit holder. Mr. Fewell stated MTS does have e-mails for permit holders as they are required to provide them in their annual statement.

Mr. Banks requested MTS to ask the city for permission for Taxis to park in yellow marked commercial space curb. Mr. Fewell explained how Taxicabs, although commercially registered, should not park in commercial parking spaces, but should rather park in authorized taxicab stands. Mr. Banks made a late request to be part of the WORM committee. Mr. Fewell said the maximum number of WORM nominations had been received and denied Mr. Banks' request. Samantha Leslie, MTS Staff Attorney, reminded Mr. Banks he is welcome to participate at the WORM via public comment.

Mr. Hueso asked if the October 27, 2020 City Council meeting was for the purpose of continuing discussions for the proposed policy revisions or for a vote of approval. Mr. Ward stated a vote would take place at the meeting. Mr. Ward said information and instructions on how to participate at the upcoming meeting will be sent in the following days.

Mr. Hussein said that the United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) as a transportation advocate will remain vigilant for driver interests and invited MTS to do the same. Mr. Fewell said MTS valued the UTWSD participation in the committee.

Ms. Tanguay stated the light pole in front of the Greyhound bus stop needs repair and requested for MTS to install a taxicab stand pole. Mr. Fewell said all other taxicab stands in need of repair are being evaluated.

Mr. Ward stated this would be his last term as Chair of the TAC. He said he would continue to support the Taxicab Industry at the state level if he is elected to the Assembly.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

10. Committee Member Communications

No additional committee member communications were received.

11. Next Meeting: January 27, 2021 at 10:00 am.

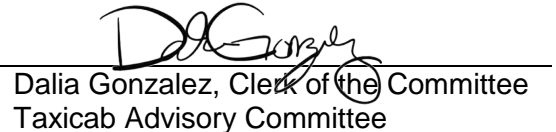
12. The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 am.

Accepted:

Filed by:



Sean Elo-Rivera
Chair of Taxicab Advisory Committee



Dalia Gonzalez, Clerk of the Committee
Taxicab Advisory Committee

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet

SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM
TAXICAB ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING
ROLL CALL

MEETING OF (DATE): October 14, 2020

CALL TO ORDER (TIME): 10:00 am

ADJOURN: 11:18 am

COMMITTEE MEMBER		(Alternate)		ORGANIZATION	PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
Christopher Ward	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			MTS Board of Directors/SD City Council	10:00 am	11:18 am
George Abraham	<input type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Owner/Eritrean Cab Co.		
Alfred Banks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Lease Driver	10:25 am	11:18 am
Nancy Gudiño	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Cross Border Xpress	10:00 am	11:18 am
Brian Hilemon	<input type="checkbox"/>			San Diego Tourism Authority		
Antonio Hueso	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alfredo Hueso	<input type="checkbox"/>	USA Cab, LTD	10:12 am	11:18 am
Mikail Hussein	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter Zschiesche	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Taxi Workers Federation San Diego	10:00 am	11:18 am
Daryl Mayekawa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Todd Temple	<input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego Convention Center	10:00 am	11:18 am
Akbar Majid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Owner/SDYC Holdings, LLC	10:00 am	11:18 am
Guillermo Morquecho	<input type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Lease Driver		
Houshang Nahavandian	<input type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Owner/ESM Corporation		
Marc Nichols	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Anderson	<input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	10:03 am	11:02 am
Margo Tanguay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Lease Driver	10:12 am	11:18 am
David Tasem	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Lease Driver	10:07 am	11:18 am
Nasser Tehrani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Taxicab Owner/N.A.T. Cab Co.	10:00 am	11:18 am
Michael Trimble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Gaslamp Quarter Association	10:14 am	11:18 am
Garret Cooper non-voting	<input type="checkbox"/>			San Diego Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures		
Edna Rains non-voting	<input type="checkbox"/>			San Diego County Sheriff's Department Licensing Division		
Sharon Cooney non-voting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			MTS Chief Executive Officer	10:00 am	11:18 am
Leonardo Fewell non-voting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			MTS Taxicab Administration Manager	10:00 am	11:18 am
Samantha Leslie non-voting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			MTS Staff Attorney/Regulatory Compliance	10:00 am	11:18 am

CLERK OF THE TAC

FOR-HIRE VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION MANAGER