

Agenda Item: 3

Staff Report and Commissioner Announcements [INFORMATION]



TO: Honorable Commissioners
FROM: Jordanna Thigpen
RE: Staff Report 05.27.08
Date: May 20, 2008

Administration/Policy

- **Meter Increase to Assist Drivers:** There are two parts to reporting to the Commission on the state of the meter and flag drop charges in the City. Part I is the Controller's Report. Since the Controller's Report will not be finished in time for the June 10 hearing, I will be providing the Commission with Part II, a historical analysis of San Francisco rates and comparison of our rates to those of other jurisdictions, on June 10, 2008.
- **Clean Air Taxi Program:** On May 1 sample plans went out, including a memorandum and a template for color schemes to use. Some color schemes have already begun to comply. Color schemes are encouraged to use our sample template. There are several outstanding questions. Companies want to know if spares are included in the fleet averages. The answer is yes, spares must comply with the fleet average of 38 tons of GHG per vehicle per year. Color schemes have also questioned whether they can use mileage scenarios other than the 75,000 miles per year that was contemplated by the legislation. The answer is no. The Clean Air Taxi Program needs several comprehensive rule changes to be properly administered, which will be noticed in time for the May 27, 2008 hearing, for adoption at the June 10, 2008 hearing, or potentially at the July 8 meeting if absolutely necessary.
- **Merger:** The Board of Supervisors' Government Audit and Oversight Committee continued the item to a special hearing on May 12 and forwarded a resolution signaling the formal intent to merge in 180 days provided SFMTA submits a plan demonstrating its ability to ensure the continued operation of the City's taxi regulation program.
- **Budget:** Our budget is being considered before the BOS Budget Committee on May 22, 2008 along with FY 2009 Proposed Fees.
- **Annual Inspections:** These have begun at GTU.
- **Camera Program:** Once the amendments to Rule 5.C.34 are adopted, staff will proceed with implementation of specifications and testing for all taxicab safety cameras. All Raywood cameras must be replaced, so those companies utilizing those cameras need to contact my office immediately. Official notice is forthcoming.
- **Outreach:** Tamara Odisho, Outreach Coordinator, participated in an outreach fair produced by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. I held Open Forum on Friday May 16, 2008 and another forum will occur this Friday May 30, 2008 at 2 PM. We are in the process of setting up some refresher training programs for the month of July for color schemes of all sizes and for medallion holders. We intend to conduct a service-related Town Hall meeting with members of the public in August 2008. We are also conducting an online survey which we have forwarded to members of the public for distribution to their email lists, which addresses the issue of neighborhood taxi stands.

- **Commendation Program for SFPD officers:** For now this program will consist of an official letter from my office addressed to the Police Commission. We are in the process of establishing a more formal program.
- **March 2007 Grant Funding:** Yellow Cab was able to take 9 grants of \$4,000 each, but we now have 6 grants at \$4,000 remaining for CNG vehicles.
- **June 2007 Grant Funding:** The Commission and the Department of the Environment are still waiting for the June 2007 grant agreement to be signed. There is funding for 51 hybrids in that particular grant. Those companies receiving funds for that grant need to get their purchase orders and other documents ready and make sure they have sufficient inventory so that they can actually utilize the grant funding and do not jeopardize future funding.
- **Annual Filings (MPC §§ 1095, 1147.4):** Four have not filed, but one was granted a 30-day extension. Additionally, there are still 55 incomplete 1095 filings. Staff has contacted all incomplete filers in an attempt to obtain a complete filing. All non-filers will receive official notices for revocation and will be scheduled for July 8, 2008. Other charges may appear besides failure to file the form. All incomplete filers have been provided an additional two weeks to comply with the filing requirement, but any who still have not completed the forms will appear on the calendar for May 27, 2008. There are two companies that did not file worker's compensation statements as required by MPC § 1147.4: Central and Lucky. These companies are also non-participants in the City's paratransit program and have been suspended by the paratransit broker since 2006. Complaints for revocation as to both companies are being drafted and will shortly issue. They will also appear on the July 8, 2008 calendar.
- **A-cards:** The deadline was April 30. By May 8, 2008, the Treasurer's Office will provide the Taxi Commission with the names of those with expired A-cards. Now, the process must begin all over again for those individuals with expired A-cards, who must attend taxi school. Some taxi schools are offering discounts for individuals who were ill or disabled for the past five months and neglected to renew their A-card.
- **Paratransit Coordinating Council:** I attended the May 21, 2008 meeting of the PCC. The PCC will be implementing a Ramped Taxi Driver Incentive Program soon and more information will be forthcoming when it is available.
- **Rules & Regulations Subcommittee:** The next meeting for the Rules & Regs Subcommittee will be announced at the May 27 Commission hearing.
- **Charter Reform Working Group:** The May 20, 2008 meeting was cancelled. The next hearing will be June 6, 2008.

Enforcement/Regulation

- **2006 Proposition K Audit:** Due to staffing shortages in the office, we have been delayed in finishing the 2006 Proposition K Audit, but it will be finished in time for a comprehensive report on July 8, 2008. The report will outline the results of the 2006 Audit and provide an update on overall discipline and enforcement with regards to the driving requirement on non-disabled Post-K medallion holders.
- **Peter Witt's summary suspension:** Pursuant to Commissioner Breslin's request, here is an update on Peter Witt's summary suspension: Mr. Witt is no longer on summary suspension. The criminal charges pending against him were dropped by the District Attorney.
- **Special Event Taxi Service and Illegal Limousine Enforcement:**
 - The new plan to ensure proper service at AT&T Park involves additional officers at the taxi stand location. SFMTA will not be providing additional PCOs to the area.
 - The Taxi Commission continues to fund enforcement teams on a weekly basis to combat illegal limousines and conduct general street enforcement on out of town taxicabs.
 - Supervisor Sandoval conducted a special hearing at the Board of Supervisors' City Operations and Neighborhood Services Committee on May 15, 2008 on the issue of illegal limousines. I represented the office and was joined by representatives from the CPUC, Sgt. Greenfield of SFMTA Security & Enforcement, and Lt. Schlotz of the SFPD Taxi Detail.

- **Administrative hearings:** A hearing for driver Yakub Mahmudoglu was supposed to occur on May 16, but Mr. Mahmudoglu was out of the country and has yet to return.
- **Board of Appeals:** We have several upcoming cases, including Robert Friedman, Grasshopper, and the 8th hearing for the KSJ revocation proceedings.
- **Sunshine Task Force:** President Gillespie and I will appear on May 27, 2008 to defend the Commission's position in Peter Witt v. Taxi Commission, a Sunshine Task Force complaint.
- All Taxi Commission staff is working towards preparing a 2008 Color Scheme Compliance report to be presented June 10, 2008 describing regulatory compliance, in an effort to provide as much information as possible on each color scheme. This will include the results of the 2008 Color Scheme Audit.