

**MONTEREY COUNTY REGIONAL TAXI AUTHORITY
MINUTES**

July 22, 2013

10:00 a.m.

One Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey

Present:	Fernando Armenta	County of Monterey (10:02 am)
	Tony Barrera	City of Salinas
	Victoria Beach	City of Carmel-by-the-Sea (10:01am)
	Kristin Clark	City of Del Rey Oaks
	Libby Downey	City of Monterey
	Alvin Edwards	City of Seaside
	Mary Ann Leffel	Monterey Peninsula Airport District (10:02am)
	David Pendergrass	City of Sand City
Absent:	Alan Cohen	City of Pacific Grove
Staff:	Hunter Harvath	Asst. General Manager/Finance & Administration
	Carl Sedoryk	General Manager/CEO
	Michael Hernandez	Asst. General Manager/COO
	Mark Eccles	Director of IT
	Tom Hicks	CTSA Manager
	Dave Laredo	De Lay & Laredo
Public:	Karen Furot	MPD
	Tom Mancini	TAC Representative
	Ken Griggs	Monterey Peninsula Airport District
	Neil Gabrielson	Monterey Peninsula Airport District
	Mike Cardinalli	Monterey Peninsula Checker Cab
	Roy Graham	TAC Representative
	Kathi Krystal	TAC Representative/Associated Taxi

1. CALL TO ORDER

1-1. Roll call.

1-2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Downey called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and Roll Call followed. Director Barrera led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2-1. Review highlights of Agenda.

Carl Sedoryk reviewed the highlights of the agenda.

- 2-2. Informational minutes from regular meeting of April 22, 2013.
- 2-3. Receive April - June 2013 Financial Statements.
- 2-4. Adopt RTA Resolution 2014-01 formally adopting schedule of fines for operating taxis without RTA permits.
- 2-5. Report from Monterey Police Department regarding RTA Administration and permit process.

Public Comment – none.

Director Pendergrass made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and was seconded by Director Edwards. The motion carried unanimously.

3. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No public comment.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 5-1. Receive update from RTA staff.

Hunter Harvath summarized administrative activities performed by RTA staff over the last quarter. Staff has been working with law enforcement from the city of Salinas, Pajaro, and the County of Monterey to respond to complaints and noncompliance issues. An officer volunteered to respond to RTA complaints on behalf of the Salinas Police Department. RTA General Counsel has issued several Cease and Desist letters to taxicab companies for permit and/or insurance non-compliance. Two companies in particular, Green Cab and Castroville White Cab, have been slow to respond to requests for complete documentation. Until Green Cab complies with insurance requests, their Senior Voucher refunds are being withheld.

RTA staff completed one Public Records Request from Coastal Yellow Cab for taxicab insurance information. Coastal Yellow Cab ceased operations within the RTA as of April, 2013. Monterey Peninsula Checker Cab (formerly Yellow Cab of Monterey Peninsula) has changed its color scheme and Doing Business As name as a result of continued negotiations with Salinas Yellow Cab.

Staff has met with Monterey County Weights and Measures to streamline the meter documentation process. Staff has held two Administrative Hearings regarding two taxi driver permit denials.

Recent Senior Voucher data confirms that RTA taxicabs have processed over twelve thousand senior vouchers since the program's inception. Approximately half of these rides were provided to former MST RIDES customers and the other half were provided to seniors in participating jurisdictions. Beginning in September, 2013, local matching funds for the vouchers will not be required. Grants obtained through MST will now be able to cover this match requirement, saving local jurisdictions this expense.

The grant for three new accessible taxi vans has been extended to allow time for the vans to be built by an authorized company. A Request for Qualifications will be issued soon to seek new RTA authorized taxicab inspection sites. Additional drug testing facilities will also be added as one facility recently went out of business.

Bills for Fiscal Year 2014 Taxicab Company Permits will be issued this month. RTA staff has changed its billing date to get all companies on the same billing schedule.

Director Armenta expressed disappointment in the problems with regulating Salinas cab companies. He stated that if companies do not comply with requirements they should not be allowed to operate and all MST accessible vehicles should be pulled from their fleets. Director Armenta stated that he would take this issue to the Board of Supervisors if Salinas cab companies were still non-compliant at the next RTA Board meeting, as he takes the RTA's role seriously and wants to ensure that the public is riding in properly permitted and insured vehicles.

Director Barrera asked staff why they have not exercised their administrative authority and enforced the requirements more stringently and speedily. Mr. Harvath stated that it has taken a while to get the process in place and staff has worked with legal counsel to follow due process. Mr. Sedoryk confirmed that staff has tried to work with companies over the last year rather than to implement the harsher fines and penalties because the RTA was initially considered to be a threat to taxi business and, rather than pulling permits, staff has given a bit of room for everyone to comply.

Mr. Harvath stated that the Cities of Monterey and Seaside have made their first installment payments to the RTA for start-up costs. The cities of Salinas and Sand City have paid in full. The cities of Salinas and Sand City have informed staff that they do not request reimbursement for initial start-up funds.

Director Armenta requested that staff provide an enforcement report at the next meeting.

Director Edwards stated that the RTA should be enforcing RTA requirements speedily and uniformly.

Director Beach suggested a public awareness campaign to inform the public how to be alerted to proper taxi protocol.

Director Leffel agreed that companies who do not comply should not be allowed to operate MST-owned accessible vehicles.

Public Comment

Mr. Graham stated that Salinas cab companies were initially happy to join the RTA, but since its inception they have struggled. The RTA allowed new companies to be permitted which created more competition. The companies have also experienced higher insurance fees and permit fees than prior to the formation of the RTA.

Tom Mancini stated that if the RTA is withholding voucher payments, they are hurting the drivers.

Kathi Krystal stated that Yellow Cab is stealing drivers from smaller companies by charging a lower line fee to the drivers. She stated that drivers who are denied a permit do not receive refunds for the permit fees. She is happy that there will be more inspection locations.

Close Public Comment

Chair Downey asked Karen Faurot of the Monterey Police Department to address the issue of permit fees. Ms. Faurot stated that all drivers are provided information on infractions that could result in permit denial. If fees were returned upon denial, the Police Department would still incur the fees for administrative work associated with background checks. She confirmed the fee to be two-hundred and fifty-eight dollars (\$258).

Mr. Barrera asked if he could set up a meeting with Salinas cab companies. RTA general counsel, Dave Laredo, stated that as a city councilmember, he was free to meet with his constituents at his discretion.

5-2. Receive Finance Committee minutes from April 22, 2013.

6. BIDS/PROPOSALS

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8-1. Adopt FY 2014 Operating Budget.

Hunter Harvath stated that revenues for FY 14 are higher than FY 13 as there are more cab operating now than in previous years. Administrative costs have decreased and the expense for comment cards has been eliminated as the Monterey Airport has taken it upon themselves to issue the program.

Director Leffel believes the budget is still fragile and urged caution with anticipating reserves until the end of fiscal year.

Director Beach asked if the labor expense is accurate as it seems the work the RTA does would require higher costs. If MST is donating staff time, she would like to see an accurate amount of in-kind donation recorded in the budget.

Public Comment

Kathi Krystal asked if Coastal Yellow Cab was included in the budget revenue. Mr. Harvath stated they were not included.

Close Public Comment

Director Leffel made a motion to approve the FY 2014 Budget and was seconded by Director Clark. The motion carried unanimously.

8-2 Conduct Election of Officers.

Director Pendergrass stated that the Nominating Committee recommends Libby Downey for another term as Chair of the Board and Alan Cohen for another term as Vice-Chair. The committee also recommends that all non-elected officers be appointed for another term.

Public Comment – none.

Director Armenta made a motion to accept the recommended slate of officers for the FY 2014 term and was seconded by Director Leffel. The motion carried unanimously.

9. NEW BUSINESS

10. REPORTS & INFORMATION ITEMS

10-1. Receive April – June 2013 report from RTA Administrator.

11. COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

11-1. Reports on meetings attended by Board members at RTA expense.

11-2. Board Member Comments.

Director Armenta suggested the RTA create some kind of recognition program for cab companies and/or drivers who display exemplary service. He complimented the cab companies who do comply and provide excellent service.

Mr. Sedoryk said staff has been discussing methods of recognition and will continue to develop a program.

11-3. Board Member Announcements.

11-4. Board Member Referrals to TAC or future agendas.

Director Armenta requested that the RTA Board establish a recognition program for taxicab companies and drivers.

Director Armenta requested that staff provide an enforcement report at the next board meeting.

Mr. Sedoryk will present a comprehensive update on the RTA permitting process and enforcement issues at the next meeting.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

14. CLOSED SESSION

15. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

16. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chair Downey adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m. in memory of Daniel Garcia Huerta who was murdered while operating his cab in Monterey and offered condolences to the taxi driver who was injured in an attack while operating his cab in Salinas.

Prepared by:


Deanna Smith, Deputy Secretary