

MONTEREY REGIONAL TAXI AUTHORITY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
June 23, 2011

2:00 p.m.

TAMC
55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901

TAC Members:

Alma Almanza	Disability
Beronica Carriedo (alt)	Public Transit
Chris Sommers	Hospitality/Resort
Christine Erickson	Education
John Narigi	Hospitality/Lodging
Kathy Krystal	Taxi/Driver
Ken Griggs (alt)	Airport
Mike Cardinalli (alt)	Taxi/Company Owner
Roy G. Graham	Taxi/Independent
Tom Greer	Airport
Tom Mancini	Seniors

Absent:

COL Darcy Brewer	Military
Eddie Estrada	Hospitality/Restaurant
Phil Penko	Law Enforcement
Steve Cardinalli	Taxi/Company Owner
Tom Hicks	Public Transit

RTA Staff:

Deanna Smith	Deputy Secretary to the Board
Hunter Harvath	Assistant General Manager for Finance & Admin
Sonia Bannister	Office Administrator

Public:

Alex Lorca	De Lay & Laredo
Lance Atencio	MVT
Sam Martinez	Taxi Driver
Greg Akins	Public

Vice-Chair Greer called the meeting to order at 2:27 p.m.

Apology is made for any misspelling of a name.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Sam Martinez stated that he believes all MST employees should be removed from all TAC and RTA involvement. He asked for a necessity study to support proposed fees and for information into who authorized the June 20, 2011 letter that went out to all TAC and RTA members. He also requested a 30-day notice and public hearing for all fee and fare changes.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Narigi motioned to approve the minutes of April 19, 2011 and was seconded by Dr. Erickson. Ms. Almanza abstained. The motion so carried.

Mr. Mancini motioned to approve the minutes of May 17, 2011 and was seconded by Ms. Almanza. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Mancini mentioned that a board member may vote to approve the minutes of a meeting at which they were absent, provided they have read the minutes.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4-1 Review Taxi Fare Structure and provide comment.

Mr. Harvath stated that the RTA Board requests comments from the TAC to establish a fare structure for the RTA. He noted that items to discuss were setting maximum, minimum, or open fares; initial/flag drop charges; per mile fares; wait time fares; and other surcharges for fuel, airport, or special events.

Mr. Harvath provided clarification on how to read the Comparison Chart.

Ms. Krystal noted that Airport Fees are not on the Comparison Sheet. Mr. Harvath and Vice-Chair Greer noted that the Airport District will be presenting proposed fees at the RTA meeting on Monday, June 27, 2011, and that the RTA cannot impose a rate on their behalf. The proposed fees will be provided after this meeting.

After some discussion, Mr. Graham stated that it was difficult to make a taxi fare recommendation before discussing proposed permit fees.

Vice-Chair Greer tabled the item until item 5-1 was discussed.

After Agenda Item 5-1 was discussed, Chair Greer returned to discussion of Agenda Item 4-1

Ms. Krystal confirmed that the last time taxi fares were increased was in 2005 and 2006.

Public Comment

Mr. Martinez stated that a necessity study should be done before rates or fees are established.

Close Public Comment

Ms. Krystal made a motion to set a maximum limit for all taxi fares within the RTA jurisdictions at \$3.50 for flag drop/initial charge, \$3.50 per mile, \$35.00 per hour for wait time, and a \$3.50 surcharge for Airport Fees. Taxi cab companies may not charge more than the maximum allowable fares, but may charge less as deemed appropriate by each individual dispatching company. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mancini.

Mr. Narigi amended the motion to remove the Airport surcharge until further discussion of their proposed fees is received. Ms. Krystal and Mr. Mancini accepted the motion as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Harvath asked if the maximum recommended fare would be set by each company and calibrated in fare boxes to be visible to passengers. The Committee agreed that this would be the procedure. The consensus was that the recommended maximum fee protected the public and allowed Taxi Drivers and Companies to recover their annual fees. They believed that companies should be allowed to charge less if they desired to maintain an environment of competition.

At 3:39 p.m. Vice-Chair Greer requested a motion to appoint Mr. Narigi to chair the meeting in his absence. Ms. Almanza made the motion and Mr. Graham seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Narigi returned to Agenda Item 5-2 for discussion.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Greer opened comment on Item 5-1.

5-1 Review Schedule of Taxi Fees and provide comment.

Mr. Harvath presented the current Interim Schedule of Fees, the Taxi Fee Comparison Chart of Orange County and San Diego Fees, and a handout of FY 2012 Licensing and Permit Fees as recommended by the RTA Finance Committee at their June 27, 2010 meeting. Mr. Harvath stated that because of TAC feedback, staff has approached the Cities of Monterey and Salinas to provide a budget to assume the permitting and some administrative duties for the RTA. The resulting costs reduced the amount of permitting fees to include:

- A total of \$550 per Taxi Driver to include a \$475 permit fee and a \$75 Vehicle Inspection Fee.
- A total of \$1,000 per Taxi Dispatching Company to include one dispatched vehicle and \$300 for each additional Taxi Cab dispatched by the Company.

Vice-Chair Greer noted that the fees do not include Airport fees.

Public Comment

Mr. Martinez stated that the \$550 fee does not include Airport fees and believes that the fees are still too high.

Mr. Harvath rose to a point of order and asked if Public Comment was closed for further Committee comment. Mr. Lorca recommended Vice-Chair Greer close Public Comment before receiving a response from staff or Committee.

Close Public Comment

Mr. Cardinalli stated that it seemed like Taxi Companies were bearing the burden of covering administrative costs through permitting fees.

Mr. Harvath stated that the costs of ongoing administration, the cost of recovering MST loans to the RTA to date, and the initial investment of the jurisdictions are set for FY 2012 and must be recouped through fees. He reminded the Committee that prior to establishing the RTA, municipalities were not recovering their costs, and some were not assessing permit fees at all. In order for all taxis to have the opportunity to operate within the RTA jurisdiction, real costs must be recouped by permit fees. He stated that municipalities no longer want to subsidize the taxi industry as has been done in the past. He stated that the RTA Finance Committee felt that if fees were to be equitably assessed, the burden of fees should be imposed on the segment of the industry that required the most administrative services. In the interest of equity, fees were lowered for Taxi Cab Drivers and raised for Taxi Cab Companies.

Dr. Erickson confirmed that the interim fees were not covering real administrative costs and the new fees will streamline the process and reduce overall fees.

Ms. Krystal asked if other industries are regulated and assessed to the same degree as the taxi industry.

Mr. Harvath stated that municipalities are moving toward “breaking even” with their services and are attempting to assess the real costs to the public who uses the service. He confirmed that reimbursing MST and the Cities for their initial investment is outlined in the RTA Joint Powers Agreement.

Mr. Sommers motioned to approve the proposed fees based on the RTA Finance Committee recommendation outlined in handout 8-1 from their June 27, 2011 meeting. Ms. Almanza seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Greer returned to Agenda Item 4-1 for discussion.

After Item 4-1 was discussed, Mr. Narigi returned to item 5-2 for discussion.

5-2 Review Taxi Administration Program Regulations referrals from Board of Directors and provide comment.

Mr. Harvath referred the Committee to four items requiring discussion by the TAC. The following comments and recommendations were made by the Committee to be provided to the RTA Board:

Item 4: Continued operation of authorized business required—exceptions to 24-hour operations.

- The Committee recommended that all Taxi Cab Companies must operate 24 hours per day. Exceptions could be made in occasional extreme circumstances (i.e., death in the family).

Item 21: Service to the general public—complaints against taxi drivers, trip prohibitions, trip requirements.

- The Committee recommended adding the verbiage “within reason or must refer to another cab company.”

Item 26: Mandatory controlled substance and alcohol testing program.

- The Committee recommended keeping the item as written with deletions.

Item 27:

- The Committee recommended deleting the first sentence in Item 27.1 and to defer to the County Department of Weights and Measures established standards.

There being no further comments, Mr. Narigi adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

Prepared by: _____
Deanna Smith, Deputy Secretary