

MARIN GENERAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 2014
TO: MGSA Board of Directors
FROM: Paul Berlant, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM D: Taxicab Regulation Program Update

Recommendation

Accept this update regarding the Marin County Taxi Regulation Program. No action is requested.

Inventory Update and Permit Fees

As of mid-April there were 29 companies using 31 names. This total is the same as March, but one company has quit business and another one has started. There were 109 vehicles permitted verses 115 reported in March (this decline is mostly from one large company). Lastly, there were 180 drivers, an increase of four from March. There continues to be constant turnover among the drivers.

Most of the companies have renewed for 2014 with a few more pending. This is the first year that all companies have paid the same fees. In previous years the older, initial companies were granted five-year permits for their company permit, and a reduced fee for vehicle permits. All of the initial five-year permits have now expired and all the older, operating companies' permits have been renewed. The MGSA's fee structure is well understood by the taxicab companies. The workload for staff is stable with driver turnover, vehicles being replaced, and new companies applying for operating permits.

Other Issues

As we have noted in the past, with the possible exception of the Golden Gate Transit Center in San Rafael, the City of Sausalito has more taxicabs congregating in the city than any other location in Marin. The Sausalito Police Department conducted one meeting with the taxicab operators in an effort to work together to alleviate traffic and encourage taxicab transportation of bicycles from downtown during the tourist season. MGSA staff has also met several times with the Sausalito officials and the Sausalito Chamber of Commerce to address taxicab congestion and operations. The City of Sausalito also moved a taxicab stand location several times over the last few years in order to better control and organize the taxicab access for customers.

Communication with the Sausalito Police Department over the last few years has also related to their concern that too many cabs were lining up at their taxi stand and taking police time and resources to control. MGSA does not limit the number of taxicab

company permits we issue, nor regulate the location in which the cabs operate. Therefore the number of taxicabs that attempt to pick up fares in Sausalito is not an issue MGSA staff has been able to resolve for the city. On the other hand, the Sausalito Chamber of Commerce has stated they need more taxicabs to pick up customers from local establishments. Staff does not have any recommendation on this issue, but feels it is noteworthy enough to bring it to the Board's attention.

Staff continues to monitor "Uber ride-share" type activities. Other than occasional questions and comments from drivers and company representatives, we have seen little of this type of activity.

We have again looked at revenues versus program costs, with an eye toward a balance. Attached are the latest data regarding permit revenues. We continue to show a small excess of revenue over projected costs, with the potentially large variables being legal costs due to pending litigation and the variation of revenue due to business cycles. As we have noted in each bi-monthly program update, the inventory of companies, drivers and vehicles is constantly changing and the smaller companies seem to be subject to the volatility of the market place, leading one to conclude that some variation of revenues can continue to be expected. Our conclusion remains that fees should remain as currently set.

Attachment

Taxi Permit Fee Revenues 2013- 2014