

Friday, October 18, 2002

Honorable Mayor and Members of
The Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular meeting of
October 22, 2002

**REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE
TAXI VOUCHER PROGRAM IN THE CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council:

1. Approve the continuation of the Taxi Voucher Program.
2. Approve staff recommendations to modify the program by:
 - a. Eliminating the satellite locations and establishing physical boundaries for eligible trips.
 - b. Eliminating the flat rate fare charged to the City of \$14.00 and paying the actual meter rate of the trip.

BACKGROUND

In March of 2002, the taxi voucher program was started in the City of Hermosa Beach. This is a pilot program for senior and disabled citizens of Hermosa Beach to buy vouchers from the City at the cost of \$1.00 per voucher. The voucher enables the rider to travel with South Bay Yellow Cab to any location in Hermosa and Redondo Beach and any of the satellite locations included in the WAVE program

Month	Number of Vouchers Purchased	Number of Vouchers Used	Amount Paid to Taxi Company	Average Miles Per Trip
March	200	22	\$308.00	1.57
April	220	75	\$1,050.00	2.82
May	210	118	\$1,652.00	3.03
June	280	162	\$2,268.00	2.16
July	120	148	\$2,072.00	2.38
August	350	201	\$2,814.00	2.72

Totals: 1380 726 \$10,164.00 Average: 2.45

It would appear that the program has increased in popularity over the first 6 months. The vouchers do not expire and do not have to be used in the month they are purchased. (Only 20 vouchers can be purchased per month.) The program has received a lot of praise and there have been many compliments about the good level of service participants have received.

There have been some complaints about the program and they all seem to be concerned about the same issue. People have complained about the inflexibility of vouchers and limited number of locations that a rider can travel to. Currently, eligible riders can travel to anywhere in Hermosa and Redondo Beach. Additionally, they can also travel to designated satellite locations currently included in the WAVE program. Many of these locations are in Torrance

with one location in Manhattan Beach. Staff has received many complaints regarding the fact that these satellite locations do not represent all of the desired locations that riders wish to go to. For example, the current program is inflexible in that if a person wanted to stop at a location that was perhaps a few blocks nearby a particular satellite location, the driver could not stop at that location but only at the satellite location designated in the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to rectify these problems, staff recommends that actual boundaries be set to include the cities of Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, Lawndale and parts of Torrance, El Segundo and Hawthorne. It is proposed that the boundaries be established with El Segundo Boulevard as the north boundary, Crenshaw Boulevard as the east boundary and Pacific Coast Highway as the south boundary. This should provide a greater amount of flexibility to the program and satisfy many if not all of the desired locations of the participants.

Additionally, staff recommends that the flat rate payment of \$14.00 per voucher be eliminated. Staff recommends that the City pay the metered rate as calculated by each trip. In analyzing the statistics of the first six months, it was determined that the average miles traveled per trip was 2.45 miles. The metered fee for this type of trip would cost in the neighborhood of \$8-\$9. There were however a number of shorter trips including one trip at 0.2 mile and the longest at 3.0 miles. It is therefore recommended that the flat fee of \$14 be eliminated and that the City pay the metered rate of each trip. It should be noted that under the new boundaries described above, the longest distance that could be traveled would be up to 7 miles. This would represent a trip from Hermosa Beach to either El Segundo Blvd and Crenshaw Blvd or Pacific Coast Highway and Crenshaw Blvd. If this trip were undertaken and completed in about 27 minutes (MapQuest estimate), the cost of this trip would be about \$17-\$18 dollars on average. While there is the possibility of the City paying more than \$14 for some vouchers, it appears that based on past performance, most trips would cost less than \$14.

Staff recommends no other changes to the program.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Lavin, Chief of Police
Hermosa Beach Police Department

Concur:

Stephen Burrell
City Manager

Noted for Fiscal Impact:

Viki Copeland