
VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

CITY OF EDMONTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

MEETING NO. 7

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

MEMBERS

L. Lubin, Chairman
R. Clarke
C. Khehra
M. Fysh
C. Leahey
B. Katz

PRESENT

L. Lubin

C. Khehra
M. Fysh
C. Leahey
B. Katz

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

R. Myers	Acting Secretary
P. Fearon	Administrator
S. Callioux	Edmonton Police Services
G. Stewart-Palmer	Shores Jardine LLP
D. MacDonald	Transportation

1. Call to Order

Chairman called the meeting to order at **1:40 p.m.**

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH

#1-7-10

That the agenda be approved as presented.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED: FYSH/LEAHEY

#2-7-10

That the minutes from the regular meeting held on July 14, 2010 be approved.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

4. New taxi broker color and markings request for approval

- Airport Taxi Service is requesting new Taxi Broker color markings of red and white – the doors, hood and trunk will be red the rest of the car white – same scheme to be followed on mini vans. Coloured pictures supplied.
- Question were asked about impact with 24/7 Taxi colors and how many of the cars will be painted with those colors
- Mr. Ali Shaik of Airport Taxi is confident the colors and markings are unique. Only the cars licensed to do pick ups inside the COE will be painted red and white, all other Airport Taxi vehicles will keep the solid white color they now have. At time of licensing the vehicles will pass all inspections both mechanical and safety according to the Bylaw and any markings that are currently in the wrong place according to the Bylaw or Regulations will be moved to the correct positions as required by the bylaw. All drivers using the red and white taxis will be properly licensed by the City of Edmonton.
- Question. Is Airport Taxi prepared to make that as a commitment for the existence of your license that no other taxis in the Airport Taxi fleet will be painted to match this color? Will you give us a guarantee of that?
- Answer: Yes. At least 20 percent of the fleet will be painted red and white all of which will meet all Bylaw and Regulation requirements.

MOVED: KATZ/LEAHEY

#3-7-10

We adjourn the decision with respect to this matter until the next meeting so as to allow our solicitor to determine whether or not we can impose conditions so as to require that only the taxis that are licensed for the city of Edmonton display the red and white colors as are provided to this Commission. Also that Mr. Fearon determine if there are any other municipalities with similar issues and how they handle it from an enforcement perspective.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

5. Public Involvement

Mr. Naboulsi, former Chairman of the Commission requested to address the Commission and the audience.

He thanked the Commission and the industry from the bottom of his heart and promised to be there for future support if needed. After working with the Commission

for so long he considers them family – their honesty and hard work making things go well. Wishing all involved the best in the future.

The following individuals requested to speak:

Steve Alvanos, Abdullahi Abdi, Husni Al-Khateeb, Greg Macdonald, Alaa Chebli, Jatinder Deol, Jessy Halabi, Chris Atkinson, Phil Strong, Mo Chebli, Balraj Manhas, Ian Lee

The above persons made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Summary of comments/concerns raised:

- Color scheme proposed by Airport Taxi Service was objected to by several speakers.
- Reserved Taxi Broker colors are mid-brown and skyline blue – although the Commission is not restricted by that.
- Accessible drivers are not getting enough wheelchair trips.
- Security clearances and the time it is taking for the clearances to be finished by the RCMP. As the COE will only accept clearances through EPS, delays of 4 months and more are being created for fingerprint checks. As the RCMP who do the fingerprint checks are wanting their efforts paid for. Can temporary permits be issued in the interim or another solution found? Or can we deal directly with the RCMP for security checks.
- Deadline for driver nominations for awards is October 15, 2010.
- Increased competition for a depressed market in side the city – owner operators having to not only compete with each other for fares, will now have to compete with an outside group, most of whom do not own their own cars.
- Will Airport Taxi ensure that only the drivers licensed by the COE be the only ones to drive the cabs licensed for customer pick-up inside the city.
- Objections have been made with regards to parking enforcement issuing tickets to drivers in loading zones. They are being singled out in front of places like HUB Mall and the library and the bus depot etc. Drivers are getting tired of being ticketed by parking enforcement officers while they are loading and unloading passengers.

- Is there a conflict of interest in Airport Taxi being licensed in the COE? They are already servicing an area outside of the COE – all their business currently originates outside of the city's jurisdiction – their drivers were refused chauffeurs permits because of this – now the company wants to license the cars.
- Where are the plates going to come from? As there are currently no new plates available – current plate owners will have to go over to Airport Taxi or transfer plates to them.
- Mr. Macdonald was refused an exemption by the province for illuminating advertising on top of vehicles. He requested a copy of the exemption for Umbrella Media and was directed to a Provincial website where a copy is available. Mr. Leahey asked what other municipalities have approved the advertising and emergency flasher for 911 Mr. McDonald quoted Toronto and several cities in the States. Mr. Leahey also asked if insurance was being carried in case one of the advertising signs fell off and injured someone – reply 5 million in coverage. Installations are being done at Capital Taxi office location.
- How is the COE going to enforce that Airport Taxi only do pick ups within the city of Edmonton if they have the proper licensing – what measures is the City going to take to prevent airport only cabs from not making pick ups?
- On what basis can we turn down a brokerage if they meet all the requirements that are set out in the regulations?
- Will Airport Taxi be using meters or flat rates for fares to the airport?
- Concern about taxis not being permitted passed the park entry gate at Heritage Days. This was very hard on some persons with walking disabilities.

6. Business Arising

a. **Macdonald Outdoor Advertising.** All information covered in the update supplied by Mr. Macdonald today.

b. Status report regarding Inspector work scheduling. Written report is on the yellow sheet. Met with David Aitken and agreed to create Daily Activity Reports for all Inspectors to use. Will also be working with the Inspectors to change work schedules to cover more early morning and late night times. Will provide a status report to the Commission's November 17 meeting.

MOVED: **FYSH/KHEHRA** **#4-7-10**
That the status report regarding Inspector work scheduling be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

7. Reports from Committees

a. Executive Committee

Planning on having a public information meeting on August 30, 2010 time likely to be 7 pm on a Monday and will advise where the meeting will be held at a future date.

MOVED: **FYSH/LEAHEY** **#5-7-10**
That the update report supplied by the Executive Committee be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

b. Operation & Program Committee

- Follow up on the Indy – general feeling gate 2 or gate 4 was not a good idea – created some confusion – will be re-evaluated for next year.
- Heritage Days – controversy over which taxi's could go there – no feed back on that one.
- Folk Festival – came out of 2 different exits on opening night creating confusion in the cue. Creating 2 lanes of traffic trying to get out of only one exit.
- Special foot ball games – laying on special parking whenever Calgary or Saskatchewan are playing the Eskimos – and again if we make it into the play offs and certainly when the Grey Cup is here.
- Hospitality Edmonton – clearing out 8 thousand people is a massive undertaking – meetings are ongoing about how it is to be done.

MOVED: **FYSH/KHEHRA** **#6-7-10**
That the status report supplied by the Operations and Program Committee be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

c. Safety

Will be asking EPS through Superintendent Campbell to provide an officer to briefly speak to our drivers about safety at the August 30 Public Involvement meeting.

MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH #7-7-10

That the status report supplied by the Safety Committee be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Katz

CARRIED

d. Driver Safety

MOVED: KHEHRA/LEAHEY #8-7-10

That the Taxi Brokers notify the Commission a minimum of 10 days in advance of their upcoming driver training courses and testing dates so that the Driver Training and Testing Committee members may observe the driver training courses and testing. Failure to provide such notification be made an offence and the Bylaw and Regulations be amended accordingly.

Chairman requested that Mr. Fearon take the Chair.

AMENDMENT MOVED: LUBIN/FYSH

That the last sentence of the proposed motion be removed.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the intent of making such a strict requirement for only one component of all that we regulate. The Operations & Program Committee would like to see a broader application of this form of requirement, along with a combination of monetary fines as well as the opportunity to launch a licence review, with the possible outcome of cancelling the operating licence totally for failure to comply.

MOVED: LUBIN/LEAHEY

Table this matter until the Driver Training & Testing Committee and the Operations & Program Committee have an opportunity to jointly meet, discuss the pertinent issues and draft appropriate motions that will meet the needs of both Committees on a go-forward basis.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh

CARRIED

Mr. Fearon returned the Chair to Mr. Lubin.

8. Administrative Matters

a. Vehicle For Hire Commission.

1. July Services Deliverables Report. Mr. Fearon provided a brief overview of the statistical report that was included with the agenda.
2. 2010 Commission Workplan. Fairly light over July and August. Reminder of the August 30 Public Involvement session. Venue and exact starting time still to be determined.
3. 2010 First ½ Year Budget Report. Mr. Fearon mentioned some highlights of this report that was also attached to the meeting agenda. Total expenses are \$37,000 (10%) less than forecast, in part due to the Administrators sick-leave. Revenue is presently ahead of what was forecast by \$92,000 (180%), only due to taxi licence renewal revenue being received one month earlier than forecast. We anticipate ending the year by adding some funds to the existing reserve fund.
4. 2011 Commission Budget. Mr. Fearon introduced the intended 2011 fees that will represent a 2% increase over the approved 2010 fees, as was approved by the Commission at their July 14 meeting. By example, a driver's licence renewal fee will increase by \$1, going from \$45 to \$46. Renewal of a taxi vehicle licence will increase by \$7, going from \$330 up to \$337.
5. General Matters. Mr. Fearon briefly described a recent meeting with the United Cabbies Association representatives. There was agreement on some matters throughout the discussion.

General questions were asked and responded to.

MOVED: FYSH/LEAHEY

#9-7-10

To accept the written reports attached to the agenda and the verbal update from Mr. Fearon for information.

FOR THE MOTION:

Lubin, Fysh, Khehra, Leahey

CARRIED

b. Edmonton Police Service

No report at this time.

c. Transportation

No report at this time.

9. News Articles

None this month.

10. General Correspondence

July 7, 2010 letter requesting to transfer 5 accessible taxi licences and vehicles to another fleet. This is a matter for the Administration to deal with, not the Commission.

July 12, 2010 e-mail from Robert Hay regarding various concerns within the taxi industry.

MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH #10-7-10

To receive the July 7 correspondence for information and to have the Administrator advise the accessible taxi operators that their issue is one for the Administration, not the Commission to deal with.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Fysh, Khehra, Leahey

CARRIED

11. In-Camera Items

None this month.

12. Adjournment

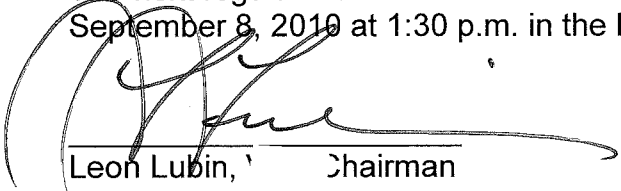
MOVED: FYSH/LEAHEY #11-7-10

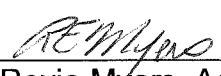
To adjourn the meeting.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Fysh, Khehra, Leahey

CARRIED

The next regular Vehicle For Hire Commission meeting will be held Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room, Main Floor, City Hall.


Leon Lubin, Chairman


Roxie Myers, Acting Secretary