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VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

**CITY OF EDMONTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION**

**MEETING NO. 11**

**Wednesday, December 8, 2010**

**MEMBERS**

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

**PRESENT**

L. Lubin  
R. Clarke  
C. Khehra  
M. Fysh  
C. Leahey

**Also in attendance**

Vehicle For Hire Secretary

J. Arlia

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman called the meeting to order at **1:38 p.m.**

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED: Clarke/Khehra**

**#1-11-10**

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Clarke, Leahey, Fysh  
**CARRIED**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**MOVED: FYSH/CLARKE**

**#2-11-10**

That the minutes from the regular meeting held on November 17, 2010 be approved.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Clarke, Leahey, Fysh  
**CARRIED**

**MOVED: FYSH/CLARKE**

**#3-11-10**

**Notice to withdraw the following motion:**

**Fysh**

Notice to withdraw the motion of Annual Review of Taxi and Accessible taxi license numbers.

The Commission now recommends 50 additional licenses will not be issued.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Clarke, Leahey, Fysh  
**CARRIED**

#### **4. Vehicle For Hire Driver Appreciation Event**

**Chaired by Charan Khehra**

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Driver Appreciation award event (PART #2). On behalf of the Vehicle For Hire Commission members we want to thank all drivers for their hard work in providing excellent and safe customer service on a daily basis.

**Commission Chair, Leon Lubin**

Chairman apologizes for the error in receiving driver nominations which were missed at the last meeting. He gives appreciation to the industry for their understanding and continued support during this event.

**Commission Chair, Leon Lubin and Charan Khehra presented awards to:**

Best Taxi Driver Customer Service Award:

**JATINDER SINGH and JOSE RESENDES**

Best Wheelchair Accessible Customer Service Award:

**JIMMY HUSSAIN**

Best Dressed Taxi Driver Award:

**PARAMJIT CHAHAL and HARBHAJAN SINGH**

Best Vehicle Appearance Award:

**SYDII HOW and JOHN BARRIGAN**

Best Limousine Driver Customer Service Award:

**MATHEW PIESCYNski**

## **5. Public Involvement**

### ***The following individuals requested to speak:***

Mr. Abouzar Aslam, Mr. George Psychoff, Mr. Husni Al-Khateeb, Mr. Moe Chebli, Mr. Acco Kurd, Mr. Allah Chebli, Mr. Ed Robinson, Mr. Balraj Manhas.

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

### ***Summary of comments/concerns raised:***

#### **Abouzar Aslam**

- Requests the Commission take a better look at the Hara report and pay close attention to the population vs taxi vehicles in different cities.
- Request that the Commission get the Airport taxi contract back for all drivers to provide more business for the amount of taxis already licensed.
- Disagrees with an age limit on vehicles for Emission Reduction purposes.

#### **George Psychoff**

- Taxi industry is not a subsidized public transportation as is the ETS service. Please reconsider the age limit restrictions.
- He feels that the Commission is not involving the industry in the quick decision making of putting an age limit restriction to a well kept fleet.

#### **Husni Al-Khateeb**

- Suggest that the City of Edmonton should clean their back yard before coming after the poor taxi drivers to have age limitations on vehicles.
- Requests clarification on the 10 accessible taxi plates that are to be release to the industry, he wants to know when and how they will be distributed.
- Recommended that the Hara report be addressed to City council and have a few licenses revoked because of lack of income.

#### **Moe Chebli**

- Issue regarding the accessible taxi drivers that are dispatched to regular fares instead of only accessible trips. These vehicles should only be used for the purpose of accessible trips.
- There is not enough business to put more accessible plates to be released.

#### **Acco Kurd**

- Agreed that the adding more taxi plates were unnecessary as there is not enough business for more drivers.

#### **Allah Chebli**

- The drivers don't have a voice in the Commission decisions
- Hara report. Is the 200 day issue final instead of 100 day is not acceptable.
- Disagree that the broker does not single out accessible trips.
- Other brokers shift their accessible calls to CO-OP taxi line instead of taking the accessible trips.

**Ed Robinson**

- Disagrees with an age limit on vehicles for Emission Reduction purposes, he finds that if an older vehicle in good working order and is well maintained the two year limitation is irrelevant.
- Economically the drivers can not afford to up keep what they have already let alone a two year old or newer vehicle.
- The public asks for a safe and clean vehicle not a brand new vehicle.

**Balraj Manhas**

- Thank you to Chairman for his support throughout the years.
- The bylaw and regulations need to be amended as there needs to be a more strict guideline in who can purchase a City of Edmonton taxi plate.
- The Hara report reflects the 2007 year that was a very busy economic times.
- Hold onto the accessible taxi plates that were approved over a year ago as there is no need to have more plates on the road because there is not enough work available.
- Renewing the taxi driver's license every two years is a good decision and well accepted in the industry.

**6. Business Arising**

- None at this time.

**7. Reports from Committees**

**Executive Committee**

- Chairman has spoken to a senior bank member at one bank and is looking into using taxi licenses as collateral for loans. This collaboration is to be continued.

**MOVED: LUBIN/LEAHEY**

**#4-11-10**

To accept the report as presented.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke  
**CARRIED**

**b) Operation & Program Committee**

- a) Notice of Motion for Regulation amendments currently to be updated in office.
- b) Notice of Motion for taxi age restrictions to be approved as follows:

1. Commencing November 1, 2011 no taxi vehicle 8 model years or older will be permitted to operate on Edmonton's taxi fleet. The current year is not to be included in this calculation. Starting November 1, 2011, any vehicle 2003 or older must be retired.

Accessible taxi vehicles and all hybrid vehicles may continue to operate until they are 11 model years old, provided that the vehicle continues to meet all mechanical inspection requirements.

2. Commencing November 1, 2013 no taxi vehicle 6 model years or older will be permitted to operate on Edmonton's taxi fleet. The current year is not to be included in this calculation. Starting November 1, 2013, any vehicle 2007 or older must be retired.

Wheelchair accessible and all hybrid vehicles may continue to operate until they are 9 model years old, provided that the vehicle continues to meet all mechanical inspection requirements.

3. Notwithstanding Motions 1 and 2, above commencing November 1, 2012 every taxi vehicle substituted into service must be no more than 2 model years old. The current year is not to be included in this calculation. Therefore, starting November 1, 2012, only 2010 or newer vehicles may be placed into service.

Wheelchair accessible vehicles and all hybrid vehicles put into service may be up to five model years old, provided that all mechanical inspection requirements are met.

**MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH**

**#5-11-10**

To approve the 3 separate taxi vehicle age limitations for 2011, 2012, & 2013 as presented.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke  
**CARRIED**

**c) Safety**

The Safety Committee would like to report on the following three areas:

1. Evaluation of Criminal Criteria to obtain a Vehicle for Hire license
  - This Evaluation of Criminal Criteria will be addressed subject to the extension of the drivers' license and security clearances to two years. The new license condition states that a person possessing a VFH license must advise the Chief Livery Officer if they are charged with any criminal offence. Failure to do so will result in the Chief Livery Officer suspending, revoking or placing conditions on their license. All charges will be evaluated by the Chief Livery Officer to determine the relevance pertaining to a VFH license.

2. Uniforms for Vehicle for Hire Inspectors

- The Safety Committee supports the implementation of providing VFH Inspectors with uniforms. In discussions with the Chief Livery Officer it would appear this is moving forward in the near future.
3. The use of cameras by VFH Inspectors to record and issue summons
- The Safety Committee has discussed the concerns brought forward by members of the industry regarding the practice of our Inspectors taking photographs of infractions and later mailing a summons. The Commission does not support this practice and have expressed this to the parties involved. We have been advised that this is an operational issue for the Chief Livery Officer and the City Managers' Office to address, not the Safety Committee or the Vehicle for Hire Commission.

**MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH**

**#6-11-10**

To approve the report of the Safety Committee regarding evaluation of Criminal criteria, uniforms for Inspectors, and the use of cameras to record infractions & issue summonses.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke  
**CARRIED**

**d) Driver Training**

1. Appreciation of the driving instructors for allowing Commission members to know in advance of the dates of training and programs.
2. Drivers license terms will be announced in the new business of this meeting agenda

**MOVED: KHEHRA/LEAHEY**

**#7-11-10**

To accept the report as presented.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke  
**CARRIED**

**8. Administrative Matters**

**a) Vehicle for Hire Commission**

**1) November Services Deliverable Report**

- Report is attached to meeting minutes.

**2) 2011 VFH Commission budget**

- Vebral Report to be announced at next meeting.

**3) 2011 Commission Workplan**

- Report is attached to meeting minutes.

**4) General Maters**

- No report at this time.

**Edmonton Police Service**

- No report at this time.

**b) Edmonton Transportation**

- No report at this time.

**9. New Business**

**MOVED: KHEHRA/LEAHEY**

**#8-11-10**

1. The Administration request the City of Edmonton Law Branch to draft amendments to bylaw #14700 to change all vehicle for hire driver's license expiry date from one year to two years. Make this change neutral by doubling the driver's license renewal fee.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke

**CARRIED**

**MOVED: KHEHRA/LEAHEY**

**#9-11-10**

1. The Administration request the City of Edmonton Law Branch to draft amendments to bylaw #14700 to make it an express condition of the driver's license application to advise the City Manager or his designate within 30 days of being charged with an offence under the Criminal Code.
2. The Administration request the City of Edmonton Law Branch to draft amendments to bylaw #14700 to make it an express condition of the licensed Brokers to advise the City Manager or his designate 30 days of becoming aware that a driver providing services to the Broker has being charged with an offence under the Criminal Code.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke

**CARRIED**

**MOVED: CLARKE/FYSH**

**#10-11-10**

1. The Administration request the City of Edmonton Law Branch to draft amendments to bylaw #14700 so that the start date of the twelve month license year for taxi vehicle licences and accessible taxi vehicle licences be changed from May 1 to November 1 of each year, commencing in November 2011.
2. The Administration request the City of Edmonton Law Branch to draft amendments to bylaw #14700 so that the taxi licenses and accessible taxi licenses which would expire on April 30, 2011 be extended to October 31, 2011.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke  
**CARRIED**

**MOVED: LUBIN/FYSH**

**#11-11-10**

1. The VFH Commission, as part of its mandate is committed to serving the best interests of the public, it is moved that the Commission adopt a Passenger Bill of Rights, as noted below:

Whereas, the Vehicle for Hire Commission, as part of its mandate, is committed to serving the best interests of the public, it is moved that the Commission adopt a Passenger Bill of Rights to read as follows:

As a passenger in this taxi, you have the RIGHT to:

- Only pay the amount that is registered on the meter;
- Be accompanied by an assistance animal;
- A safe and courteous driver who obeys all the traffic laws;
- Be driven to your destination by the most direct route;
- A knowledgeable driver who knows the city geography;
- A noise free trip unless you request the radio;
- Scent and smoke free air;
- A clean taxi;
- Air conditioning or heat on request;
- Seat belts for all passengers;
- A driver who does not use a hand-held cell phone while driving nor carry on a conversation with anyone other than their dispatcher.

It is equally important for you to recognize that your driver should also be treated with equal dignity.

If you have a complaint, a compliment or a comment, please do not hesitate to contact the manager of this company noting the date, time, number of the vehicle and name of the driver. Otherwise, contact the Commission office at (780) 496-5244.



Vehicle for Hire Commission

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh, Clarke

**CARRIED**

**MOVED: LUBIN/LEAHEY**

**#12-11-10**

1. Make a Policy recommendation that the Administration of the Vehicle For Hire Commission Office never be left unattended during regular business hours at anytime, neither the Administrator or the Secretary be away at the same time for example taking the same vacation time.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Leahey, Fysh

**OPPOSED: CLARKE**

**CARRIED**

**10. News Articles**

- a) New York Times – New York's new taxi: the list narrows to three.
- b) Edmonton Journal Nov 19, 2010 – Turkish car, Transit finalists for taxi contest.
- c) The Edmonton Sun Nov 18, 2010 – Meet the King of Cabbies.
- d) U.S Department of Energy Nov 22, 2010 – Department of energy offers vehicle production group nearly \$50 million Conditional Loan Commitment.

**MOVED: LEAHEY/CLARKE**

**#13-11-10**

To accept these news article as information.

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Clarke, Leahey, Fysh

**CARRIED**

**11. General Correspondence**

No Items at this time.

**12. In-Camera Items**

No Items at this time.

**13. Adjournment:**

**MOVED: LEAHEY/FYSH**

**#14-11-10**

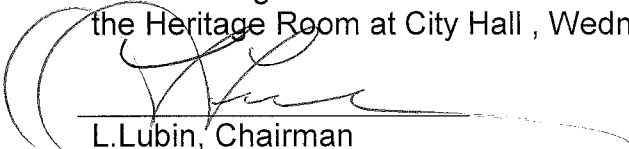
That the meeting be adjourned at 3:10pm

**FOR THE MOTION:**

Lubin, Khehra, Clarke, Leahey, Fysh

**CARRIED**

The next regular Vehicle For Hire Commission meeting will take place at 1:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room at City Hall, Wednesday, February 18, 2010.

  
L. Lubin, Chairman

  
J. Arifa, Administrative Assistant