
VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

CITY OF EDMONTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

MEETING NO. 6

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

MEMBERS

H. Naboulsi,
L. Lubin, Acting Chairperson
R. Clarke
C. Khehra
M. Pnaich
M. Fysh
C. Leahey

PRESENT

L. Lubin
R. Clarke
C. Khehra

M. Fysh
C. Leahey

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

S. Weller Secretary
P. Fearon Administrator

Gwendolyn Stewart-Palmer
Shores-Jardine

1. Call to Order

Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. He explained to individuals attending that the first step in the process of streamlining the Commission decision making was to have a full agenda, including attachments to all interested parties one full week in advance of the meeting. This is intended to assist participants identify which specific topics they want to address with the Commission.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED FYSH/LEAHEY

#1-06-09

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

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

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED KHEHRA/LEAHEY

#2-06-09

That the minutes from the regular meeting held on May 13, 2009 be approved as circulated.

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

CARRIED

4. Public Involvement

The following individuals requested to speak on agenda items;

Mr. Steve Alvanos
Mr. Marc Dubuc

Mr. Jacob Bos

Mr. Steve Alvanos made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Mark Dubuc made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Jacob Bos made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

5. Reports from Commission

a. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has met on various occasions to discuss several issues brought to their attention at VFH Commission meetings by industry members in attendance.

Items being reviewed include the meeting format, parking for taxis at specific stands and venues, unlicensed 'vehicle for hire' transportation, communication with the industry and enforcement.

All issues are considered relevant and the Executive Committee is considering each item individually to ensure that they receive adequate attention. In some cases, issues are referred to a Committee with more expertise in a particular area. Recommendations will be offered as the research and review of the issues is completed.

That the status update report of the Executive Committee be received as information.

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

CARRIED

b. Operation & Program Committee

At the last Commission meeting, the Committee was directed to deal with three pieces of correspondence which identified a number of areas where there was an expressed concern:

1. Whether or not it was necessary to have two separate security clearance checks within the space of one year for limousine company owners that are also limousine drivers.
 - It is recommended that the existing practice be modified so that limousine company owners that also have a limousine driver's licence only require one security check per licence period.
2. Whether or not the substitute vehicle procedure and costs for limousine operators should be the same as that in effect for the owners of taxis. Currently, the owners of taxis pay a \$25.00 fee and keep their original vehicle license whereas, limousine owners have to buy a new vehicle license at a cost of \$310.00.
 - The subject requires further review and it is the Committee's intention that the issue be resolved in the very near future. It may be noted, any modification to the current situation shall require a Bylaw amendment.
3. The provision of taxi stands on Jasper Avenue between 107th and 108th Streets, i.e., to service the Oil City establishment.
 - The Committee contacted the appropriate authorities at Traffic Operations and were successful in having three regular parking spaces reserved for taxis after 11:00 PM each evening. The signs are now up and the spaces are currently available.

- Furthermore, the meters will be “hooded” after 6:00 PM each evening. It is our hope this will assist the taxis in dealing with patrons without impeding bus service.
 - Further representations are being directed to senior officials with a view to obtaining a taxi stand on the west side of Commerce Place. At this time we do not have any indication as to what our chances for success may be.
4. One other piece of correspondence dealt with a number of issues that were outside of the Commissions sphere of influence and our comments will be directed to that individual privately through the Administration.
 5. Whether or not seasonal plates should be issued.
 - It is recommended that the issuance of seasonal plates requires further study and a decision be deferred until later this fall when the Commission’s annual review of licence plates takes place.

There are two other points that should be noted:

- the industry should be reminded that the Bylaw Amendment requiring all drivers to have at least 200 days of operation will be going forward to Council for approval, and,
- the Commission has been directed by City Council to prepare recommendations with respect to:
 - measures to reduce carbon emissions
 - vehicle emission reduction targets
 - vehicle age restrictions
 - direct brokers to have a given percentage of hybrids in their fleet
 - create inventive options for owner operators to place hybrids into service

It is our recommendation that the industry be prepared to present their views at the July 7th open meeting.

MOVED LUBIN/KHEHRA

#4-06-09

That the status update report of the Operation and Program Committee be received as information.

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

CARRIED

MOVED LEAHEY/CLARKE

#5-06-09

That the Executive Committee within the next two months resolve to share written information they discuss with the other three members of the VFH Commission prior to the next meeting.

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

CARRIED

c. Safety Committee

The Safety Committee convened a meeting on May 28, 2009 to determine strategies relative to those members of the taxi industry who have neglected to comply with the Bylaw and Regulations concerning safety shields.

The result of this session is that if you are operating a taxi vehicle in Edmonton without a safety shield as of June 1, 2009 you can expect the following to happen:

1. You will be asked by a Taxi Inspector to produce your receipt validating your purchase of the safety shield. Please ensure this is in your vehicle at all times.
2. The taxi vehicle licence holder will be issued a Notice To Remedy this deficiency with a compliance date 6 weeks from the date of issue.
3. If the safety shield is installed within the 6 week period, the vehicle must be re-inspected by our Taxi Inspector, and the Taxi Vehicle Inspection sticker will be installed.
4. If the safety shield is not installed within the 6 week period, the taxi vehicle licence holder will be issued a Violation Ticket with a mandatory Court appearance.
5. Every taxi vehicle licence holder that does not comply within the specified 6 week time period will then be subject to a formal taxi vehicle licence review. The result of this review will be one of the following:
 - a. the taxi vehicle licence may have conditions imposed upon it; or
 - b. the taxi vehicle licence will be cancelled; or

- c. the taxi vehicle licence will be revoked and re-assigned through the Lottery provision included within the Bylaw.

OFF SITE VISIT

The Safety Committee Chairman was in Ottawa on personal business when he took the opportunity to meet with Ms. Linda Anderson, Manager - Enforcement Inspections, City of Ottawa to discuss the taxi industry in Edmonton and Ottawa. A number of issues were brought up with some of the more interesting being that:

- Ottawa taxi drivers are members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (the same union representing ETS drivers) with the collective agreement between Brokers and owners, resulting in the Administration having to deal with only two entities – brokers and union representatives;
- Algonquin College offers the accessible taxi course out of Toronto;
- Ottawa has a cap on taxi vehicle ages at seven (7) years;
- the average income for a taxi owner who works full time is \$70,000.00

MOVED CLARKE/LEAHEY

#6-06-09

That the status update report of the Safety Committee be received as information.

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

CARRIED

d. Driver Training Committee

Standardization and DDC Content Duplication

- The Committee submitted its report on Standardization and DDC content duplication on May 13, 2009. Copies were distributed and stakeholders invited to forward their comments in writing to Shar Weller, or present them at the next public involvement meeting.
- The Administration was requested to obtain driver training information from 3 or 4 cities of comparable size and share it with stakeholders.
- The report recommendations would require legal review and Bylaw changes.

Limousine and Shuttle Services

- The Committee would be conducting a review of driver training and testing for Limousine and Shuttle services.

Vehicle for Hire Appreciation Day, 2009

- Limousines and Shuttle services will be included for nominations.
- To increase participation, the Committee would be seeking stakeholder input for promoting the November 18 event and obtaining sponsorships.

MOVED KHEHRA/FYSH

#7-06-09

That the status update report of the Driver Training Committee be received as information.

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

CARRIED

6. Administrative Matters

a. Licencing

- General Administrative Matters

Administrator commented that he met with Broker representatives regarding their input on enforcement for safety shield non-compliance. He also met with the President the United Cabbies Association to discuss a variety of their concerns. Both meetings included a positive dialogue as well as commitment for future monthly meetings. He also attended a meeting with all of the 'Driving Miss Daisy' franchisee's at which they were advised of Vehicle For Hire licencing parameters for their operation. He also advised meeting attendees that Driving Miss Daisy has changed the decals for all their vehicles so they do not include any reference to "airport service".

Administrator also indicated that the RFP for the wheelchair accessible taxi vehicles should be in the public domain by the end of the month. Once received, submissions will be reviewed and recommendations made to Materials Management for release of the plates. The RFP will include instructions for any interested and qualified parties.

- May, 2009 Service Deliverable Report

Administrator reported on the attached document and elaborated on the highlights including the issuance of additional tickets from enforcement staff.

One of the 'bandit' vehicles found by Inspectors this past weekend was an unlicensed, unregistered limousine being driven by an unlicensed driver. The limousine vehicle was towed as a result of the various infractions. \$1,900.00 in Violation Tickets were issued to the driver.

Administrator also reported that this is a busy month as the on-site inspections are currently taking place at Co-op taxi and are scheduled to take place at Yellow Cab at the end of the month.

- Web Page Updates

Administrator reported that he has met with individuals from Communications who are responsible for loading information on to our web page. The web page has been updated to reflect all of the current minutes and agendas. It may be possible in the near future to have a VFH Commission staff member be responsible for loading information onto the web page.

- Safety Shield Implementation Notification

Administrator indicated that the information regarding safety shield notification was explained in the Safety Committee report.

b. Bylaw Issues

- Bylaw amendment regarding \$3.00 surcharge
- Bylaw amendment regarding 200 day operation

Administrator reported that both Bylaw amendments are partially completed and will be forwarded to City Council for their early July meeting.

c. Enforcement

- Standard Operating Practices

Administrator reported that the enforcement Standard Operating Practices have been finalized and he will report on the initial implementation and outcome at the July meeting.

MOVED FYSH/LEAHEY

#8-06-09

That the reports presented under items a, b and c of administrative matters be received as information.

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

7. New Business

a. Venue for July 7, 2009 Public Involvement Session

Administrator advised that the date and venue for the public involvement session have been set. The date is July 7th from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Convention Centre located at 4520 – 76 Avenue. The information will appear on the VFH Commission website in the near future.

8. General Correspondence

MOVED CLARKE/LEAHEY

#9-06-09

That the following item of general correspondence be received as information;

- a. E-mail correspondence dated May 27, 2009 from Mr. Parminder Singh regarding "need justice".

9. In-Camera Items

There were no in-camera items to be discussed at this time.

Chairman offered individuals an additional minute of time for presentations to the Commission.

Mr. Steve Alvanos made an additional presentation and answered the Commissions questions.


Mr. Jacob Bos made an additional presentation and answered the Commissions questions.

Mr. Parminder Singh made a presentation and answered the Commissions questions.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

The next regular Vehicle For Hire Commission meeting will be held Wednesday, July 8, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room, Main Floor, City Hall.

for. 
Hatem Naboulsi, Chairman.

for. Mona.
S. Weller, Secretary