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**VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION**

**CITY OF EDMONTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION**

**MEETING NO. 5**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2009**

**MEMBERS**

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

**PRESENT**

H. Naboulsi  
L. Lubin  
  
C. Khehra  
M. Pnaich  
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 1:40 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#1-05-09

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

FOR THE MOTION:       Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

### 3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED KHEHRA/LEAHEY

#2-05-09

That the minutes from the regular meeting held on April 8, 2009 be approved as circulated.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

Chairman announced that the recommendation contained in the driver training report is for discussion only and there will be no 'action' taken with regard to these recommendations at today's meeting.

### 4. Public Input

The following individuals requested to speak on agenda items;

Mr. Jessy Halabi  
Mr. Johan Janz  
Mr. Gurdip Waraich  
Mr. Mohamed Abdi

Mr. Steve Alvanos  
Mr. Balraj Manhas  
Mr. Phil Strong

Mr. Jatinder Deol  
Mr. Branko Mark  
Mr. Yusuf Demirbaj

Mr. Jessy Halabi made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Johan Janz made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Mohamed Abdi made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Balraj Manhas made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

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

Mr. Jatinder Deol made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Phil Strong made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

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

Mr. Yusuf Demirbaj made a presentation and answered the Commission's questions.

Mr. Gurdip Waraich did not address the Commission.

Subsequent to the presentations and related discussion, the following motions were presented;

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#3-05-09

That the draft minutes be released as soon as possible to interested parties as well as being posted on the VFH Commission website.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#4-05-09

That in addition to making the minutes available to interested parties, they be e-mailed to Brokers, the Limousine industry, the Drivers Association, etc.

FOR THE MOTION: Lubin, Fysh

OPPOSED: Naboulsi, Khehra, Pnaich, Leahey

**DEFEATED**

## **Reports from Commission**

### **a. Executive Committee**

- April 19 Co-op Experienced Driver Seminar

Chairman reported that he attended the Experienced Driver Seminar offered through Co-op Taxi by Mr. Gord Beatty. The course covered various safety issues and he felt it was professional and well presented and a valuable asset for members of the VFH industry.

- Update on 2008 Year End Service Deliverable Review

Chairman reported that he, the Vice Chairman and the Administrator met with the Director of the Community Standards Branch to discuss service deliverables. The meeting was informative and although most aspects of the service deliverable contract are satisfactory, there was discussion regarding the VFH Commission webpage.

MOVED NABOULSI/LEAHEY

#6-05-09

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

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

**b. Operation & Program Committee**

Chairman reported that he appeared before the Community Services Committee along with the Commission Chairman and Administrator. As a result of the presentation, the following motion was made by Councillor Krushell;

That the Vehicle for Hire Commission return to Community Services Committee with recommendations on the following before the end of 2009:

- Measures to reduce carbon emissions
- Vehicle emission reduction targets
- Create vehicle age restrictions
- Direct brokers to have a given percentage of hybrids on their fleet, and
- Create incentive options for owner/operators to place hybrids into service

He stated that this issue will be one of the topics discussed at a special 'public input' session which will be scheduled for July.

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#7-05-09

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

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#8-05-09

That the topic of vehicle emissions be discussed at the 'public input' session to be scheduled in July.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

**c. Safety Committee**

Committee Vice Chairman reported that the specifications for the taxi shields proposed for use by Yellow Cab were received by the Commission. The specs were reviewed by the Safety Committee who recommended approval which was subsequently offered by the Commission.

MOVED PNAICH/LUBIN

#9-05-09

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

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

The Safety Committee will be commenting on the progress of safety shield installation at the June meeting.

Administrator reported that over 1,000 shields have been ordered to date. Shield installation will be monitored and a strategy for enforcement will be implemented.

**d. Driver Training Committee**

Committee Chairman reported that as outlined on the meeting agenda, the Committee has completed the report on Driver Training and copies of the report are available for review. Individuals interested in commenting on the report are to forward their submissions in writing to the VFH Commission office or present them at the public input session being scheduled for July. As outlined on the agenda, the major recommendations are as follows;

1. The Committee supports both the standardization and the elimination of any content duplication, unless such duplication is necessary for driver and public safety, and overall consumer protection.
2. Consider adopting the City of Toronto driver training and testing model.
3. Should it not be possible to adopt the City of Toronto model because of financial or administrative reasons, the Vehicle for Hire Commission should prescribe the curriculum, delivery methods, testing, reference materials, etc.
4. To maintain the credibility of testing the test be administered by a third party – an educational institution or the Commission Administration.
5. Require that all drivers take a refresher course (Advanced Driver Training Course) after every four years. Drivers passing a written test should be exempted from taking the course.

6. A mandatory minimum period of one month be required before an applicant is allowed to re-take tests.
7. Regularly monitor customer satisfaction and update the training and testing programs as required.
8. Stagger the Defensive Driver and the Advanced Driver Training Courses so that the drivers take them at different times.

Committee Chairman requested that the Administration obtain driver training information from other jurisdictions across Canada and provide it to the Commission. He inquired how long it would take to obtain this information.

Administrator suggested that we only obtain the information from 3 or 4 cities of comparable size and that information could be received by the end of June. He stated that that comparable information, in addition to information submitted at the public input session could be reviewed to assist in making decisions.

Ms. Stewart-Palmer stated that there are various details, including the statuses of licences that will have to be addressed. In addition, Bylaw changes will have to be made and there could be other legal implications. She would like advance notice so she may review any proposed recommendations.

MOVED KHEHRA/LUBIN

#10-05-09

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

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

## **6. Administrative Matters**

### **a. Licencing**

- Alternatives for Broker Compliance to Commission requests for information

Administrator reported on the available remedies for non-compliance of any violation of the Bylaw. This document is attached to the minutes and identified as 'Attachment 1'.

- April, 2009 Service Deliverable Report

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

- Vehicle For Hire Commission Expense/Revenue Data

Administrator reported that the document identifies costs and revenue comparisons for '07, '08 and '09 including over/under spent and total expenses.

- Vehicle For Hire Commission Budget 'Net Position"

The current specific financial position of the Commission is included in the expense/revenue data.

Administrator stated that also attached to the agenda is a line by line listing of budget items for 2008. The line by line report for 2009 will be sent out with the minutes.

In addition, the Commission workplan indicates that a report on 'super licences' – one licence to permit a driver to drive all vehicles – was due this month. A portion of the research information requested on this issue has not yet been received, therefore the report will be tabled in July. There was also a proposal for seasonal plates submitted by an individual and a meeting was held to discuss the feasibility. Subsequently, a response was forwarded to the individual as well as the Office of the Mayor and Councillors. As per the work plan, final discussion regarding seasonal plates is to take place at the June meeting.

Finally, there were two items of correspondence received this morning that are required to be referred to an appropriate Sub-Committee.

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#11-05-09

That all 'available remedies for non-compliance' available to the Administration be communicated to the Brokers and interested industry members forthwith.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh,

OPPOSED: Leahey

**CARRIED**

Ms. Stewart-Palmer indicated that the powers assigned to the Administration are contained in the Bylaw which has been implemented for a year.

Mr. Lubin indicated that it is a matter of courtesy to remind the industry and should be phrased to draw their attention to the matter.

MOVED LUBIN/PNAICH

#12-05-09

That the discussion of seasonal plates be deferred until the June meeting and the report on super licences be deferred until the July meeting.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

MOVED LUBIN/PNAICH

#13-05-09

That the e-mail correspondence received from Ahmad Houcheimi regarding parking at Oil City Roadhouse and the e-mail correspondence from Jacob Bos regarding problems in the industry be referred to the Operation and Program Committee for review..

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

**b. Bylaw Issues**

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

Administrator reported that the amendment to modify the \$3.00 late night surcharge to be applicable only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights as well as any night before a City recognized stat holiday is partially completed and he will continue to report on the progress. He also indicated that the amendment regarding the 200 day operation requirement for 2010 has been delayed because of 2009 renewal complications

Mr. Lubin suggested that the 200 day requirement amendment be considered a priority as the industry need to begin keeping records.

Mr. Stewart-Palmer stated that the industry has been given notice as a result of the Commission passing the motion specific to the requirement at a public meeting.

**c. Enforcement**

- Current Status
- Standard Operating Practices



Administrator stated that a Standard Operating Practice for enforcement has been developed which will commence next week. A meeting with Communications is scheduled to develop a media release and information will be posted on the web site.

Administrator also advised that over \$37K in tickets were issued to unlicensed limousine operators last Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Finally, the Administrator reported that the Commission received as information at a previous meeting, a letter from Mr. Dave Sager that outlined various limousine companies that were advertising flat rates in the yellow pages. The companies identified in the correspondence will be included in the enforcement procedures being developed.

Mr. Leahey commended the Inspectors for the enforcement activity to date, however, he suggested perhaps discretion could be utilized when issuing tickets for licensed cab drivers, dependent on the circumstances.

MOVED LUBIN/KHEHRAN

#14-05-09

That the Administrators status update reports on Licencing, Bylaw Issues and Enforcement be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

## **7. New Business**

### **a. 2010 Budget**

Chairman stated that the 2010 budget process has begun and members will be apprised of progress and forwarded pertinent information as it becomes available.

Administrator advised that 2010 budget decisions are to be made in July and Commission members need to focus on reductions and/or increases and how to balance them with revenue received.

### **b. Correspondence dated April 20, 2009 to Hatem Naboulsi, Chairman Vehicle For Hire Commission from Mayor Stephen Mandel regarding 'Security Clearance Checks'.**

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#15-05-09

That the Administration prepare a response as soon as possible on behalf of the Chair advising that the matter has been referred to the Operation & Program Committee for action

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

- c. Correspondence dated April 30, 2009 to Hatem Naboulsi, Chairman, Vehicle For Hire Commission from Phil Strong, President, Prestige Transportation Ltd. regarding "Sub-Vehicle Procedure for Limousine Owners.'

MOVED LUBIN/FYSH

#16-05-09

That the Administration prepare a response as soon as possible on behalf of the Chair advising that the matter has been referred to the Operation & Program Committee for action.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

- d. TLPA 2009 Convention October 4 – 7, 2009 – Las Vegas

MOVED LUBIN/LEAHEY

#18-05-09

That the Chairman attend the TLPA convention on behalf of the Commission.

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

- e. July Public Involvement Session

- Key Topics
  - Emission Reduction Strategies

Members concurred that the above noted Emission Reduction Strategies as well as Driving Training will be the two topics of discussion at the public input session to be scheduled in July. This information is to be posted on the web page as soon as it becomes available.

**8. General Correspondence**

MOVED FYSH/LEAHEY

#19-05-09

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

- a. Calgary Herald News Article dated April 21st, 2009 entitled 'Cabbies seeing fewer customers as recession puts crimp on travel, Drivers wait longer for fares, working more hours'.
- b. May 5 Edmonton Journal article regarding safety shields

FOR THE MOTION: Naboulsi, Lubin, Khehra, Pnaich, Fysh, Leahey

**CARRIED**

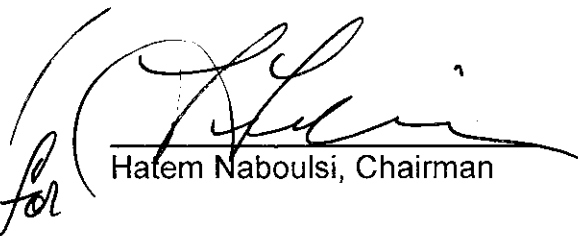
**9. In-Camera Items**


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

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

The next regular Vehicle For Hire Commission meeting will be held Wednesday ,June 10, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room, Main Floor, City Hall.

  
for  
Hatem Naboulsi, Chairman

  
S. Weller, Secretary