

VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

CITY OF EDMONTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE COMMISSION

MEETING NO. 7

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

MEMBERS

M. Fysh
R. Clarke
C. Khehra
C. Kilburn
C. Leahey
J. Bruyer
J. Dziadyk

PRESENT

M. Fysh
R. Clarke
C. Khehra
C. Kilburn
C. Leahey
J. Bruyer
J. Dziadyk

Also in attendance;

Chief Livery Officer
VFH Commission Secretary
Transportation

G. Dziwenka
S. Weller
D. MacDonald

1. Call to Order

Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m

2. Announcements

Chairman read the announcement attached to the agenda regarding turning off cell phones, not discussing the Airport or the issuance of new licences, and the procedures for public involvement.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOVED KHEHRA/LEAHEY

#1-10-11

That the agenda be amended by adding item 7. a. 2 – Request from Edmonton Taxi Service Group's request for approval of vehicle markings.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

MOVED LEAHEY/CLARKE

That the agenda be approved as amended.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

4. Approval of Minutes

MOVED DZIADYK/BRUYER

#2-10-11

That the minutes be approved as circulated.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

5. Public Involvement

Mr. Jessy Halabi

Mr. Halabi addressed the Commission and brought up the issue of restricting limousine plates as the limousine industry feels they are being treated unfairly. Limousine plates currently do not accrue value and they would like to see the plates restricted so they do gain value. He stated they are merely asking for fair treatment as right now they feel there is favoritism and they would also like to see one driver's license for everybody.

Mr. Khehra stated that if limousine operators wanted parallel licences they would have to adhere to the same training requirements.

Mr. Halaby indicated he is aware that there is international training which may be acceptable to the Commission.

Mr. Khehra requested that he provide any information he may have on the training course to the Commission.

Mr. Balraj Manhas

Mr. Manhas addressed the Commission and stated that it appears there is no enforcement in the entertainment areas as there are still illegal cabs operating and even stretch limousines are competing with taxis. If necessary, Inspectors should be hired who are able to work late nights when the problems occur with these vehicles.

Mr. Manhas also stated that the Driver Association members would like to see definitions for limousines including a make/model category as well as specifying sedans or stretches.

Mr. Dziwenka responded that the Administration is in the process of working out solutions for late night inspection staff.

Mr. Mo Chebli

Mr. Mo Chebli addressed the Commission and inquired if the Commission is working for or against the industry – he asked why enforcement is giving tickets when taxis are dropping off passengers. He stated that there needs to be an area in front of Oil City where taxi can drop off their fares. Mr. Chebli continued by stating that regarding the suggestion to cap the number of limousines – limousines and cabs are totally different and will never be the same. Also, there does need to be specific definitions for limousines – since when is a BMW a limousine? In addition, there are a lot of stretch limousines charging per person on Whyte Avenue – all of the illegal vehicles are working in this area and yet the enforcement officers are going after cabs dropping off passengers at Oil City.

Mr. Dziwenka explained that enforcement officers were involved in a pilot project undertaken by Responsible Hospitality Edmonton in front of Oil City in an attempt to ensure that the area is kept safe.

Mr. Chebli reiterated that customers do not want to walk one block to get a cab and there is no signage to this effect – customers are still jumping into the street – there should be a cab queue in front of the business.

Mr. Chebli invited any Commission members or Administration to come on a 'ride along' with him to see what it is like to drive a cab. Mr. Dziwenka accepted and Mr. Chebli was to contact Mr. Dziwenka to make arrangements.

Mr. Ian Lee

Mr. Lee addressed the Commission and stated that Mr. Dziwenka, Mr. Fysh and Mr. Clarke were all in attendance and viewed the airbag deployment demonstration at Yellow Cab. He feels that the display confirms that there is an issue that must be addressed and resolved – it should not be postponed until a tragedy occurs. He would like to see an opportunity for drivers with side airbags to choose cameras instead of a shield.

Mr. Clarke commented that the demonstration provided great evidence and the issues of the choice to use cameras should be discussed.

Mr. Leahey stated that the problem with side air bags should perhaps be addressed by the shield installer and not the Commission. The use of cameras instead of shields is a separate issue.

Mr. Clarke stated that he is a strong supporter of safety for drivers and this is a safety issue.

Mr. Dziwenka indicated that the Administration would conduct some research into the matter.

Mr. Abdullahi Abdi

Mr. Abdi stated that he is a club promoter who also does music. He feels the Oil City pilot project is not going to work as cabs need to drop off customers in front of the bar. Also, other bar owners have to pay personnel to monitor customer parking and drop off near their businesses and Oil City is getting the service for free. Taxis are not going to Oil City as it is so 'messed up' – Oil City has taken the use of all enforcement and there is no promotion of any other area.

Mr. Jatinder Deol was on the list but declined to speak.

Mr. Phil Strong was on the list but declined to speak.

6. Reports

a. Committee Structure

Chairman stated that the Agenda Planning Committee meets two weeks prior to each monthly public Commission meeting to plan the agenda. The plan is to re-evaluate the current Committees and there will be information on this subject forthcoming subsequent to the review.

MOVED FYSH/LEAHEY

#3-10-11

That the Chairmans report be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

b. Driver Appreciation Day

Mr. Khehra advised on the process for Taxi Driver Appreciation Day as per the report attached to the agenda. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room - prior to the regular meeting.

c. Yellow Cab Airbag Deployment

On Thursday, September 29th, the Chairman, Bob Clarke and the Chief Livery Officer attended an air bag demonstration at Yellow Cab. This was in response to Mr. Lee's presentation at the last meeting.

Mr. Dziwenka stated that Mr. Lee has agreed to forward further information and suggestions to the Administration. He stated that the demonstration was very interesting and he agrees that some further research should be conducted.

Mr. Clarke commented that he supports the Commission addressing this issue. He thanked Yellow Cab for bring this issue to the attention of the Commission and also for the informative demonstration.

7. Business

a. Business Arising

(i) Airport Taxi Request

Airport Taxi has requested vehicle color and marking approval, a necessary step in the process of establishing a brokerage in Edmonton. All other steps are Bylaw and/or Regulation driven as expressed in the motion last meeting. For the color and markings all requirements have been satisfied.

MOVED FYSH/LEAHEY

#5-10-11

That the Commission approve the colour request by Airport Taxi Service for an Edmonton Taxi Broker:

Pacific Blue 408P with the logo of an elongated oval with blue clouds on the lower half and a white airplane coming up from the clouds. The word "airport" is in red capital letters at the top and the words "taxi service" is in white capital letters on the bottom.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

(ii) Yellow Cab Decals

MOVED FYSH/CLARKE

#6-10-11

That the Commission approve Edmonton Taxi Service Group's request for approval for the following changes to;

- a) the markings for Yellow Cab by adding 'edmtaxi.com' on the rear door in red letters, to be placed above the phone number (letter size 20.77 in. x 2.07 in) and,
- b) the markings on Barrel Taxi by adding 'edmtaxi.com' on the rear door in black letters, to be placed above the phone number (letter size 20.77 in. x 2.07 in.)

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

b. New Business

(i) Taxi Vehicle Prototypes

The Ford Motor Company has developed a taxi based upon the format of one of its vans. It was viewed by the Agenda Planning Committee. The Ford representative provided vehicle information to the office.

MOVED FYSH/KHEHRA

#7-10-11

That the van detail package received from the Ford Motor Company on the prototype van be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

8. Administrative Matters

a. Vehicle For Hire Commission

(i) City Council Reports Regarding Vehicle For Hire Issues

Mr. Dziwenka reported that the 2010 Activity report as well as the report on how best to govern the industry are going to Executive Committee on October 19, 2011. The reports should be available on-line on the 14th.

On November 16th the report on Bylaw Amendments to accommodate the issuance of additional licences is being presented to the Executive Committee. This report should be available on-line on November 10th.

All interested parties may make presentations at these meetings either by informing the City Clerk's office or by appearing at the meeting and letting the Clerk know.

(ii) Enforcement Issues

Mr. Dziwenka stated that the Administration acknowledges that there are gypsy cabs operating and the Municipal Enforcement Officers have been issuing tickets. Three such operations were issued tickets in the last couple of months. There is also a 'sting' operation being planned for the near future.

He also reported that the 'Limousine' report is currently being drafted and should be available in January or February.

MOVED FYSH/CLARKE

#8-10-11

That Mr. Dziwenka's report be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

b. Edmonton Police Service

Superintendent Campbell forwarded regrets as she was unable to attend the meeting.

c. Edmonton Transportation

There was no new information to be discussed regarding Transportation issues.

9. News Articles

- a. Edmonton Journal Article dated September 15, 2011 regarding "Woman in hospital after leaping from Edmonton taxi."**

MOVED KHEHRA/LEAHEY

#9-10-11

That the Edmonton Journal news article be received as information.

FOR THE MOTION; Khehra, Fysh, Clarke, Kilburn, Leahey, Bruyer, Dziadyk

CARRIED

10. General Correspondence

There are no items under this heading.

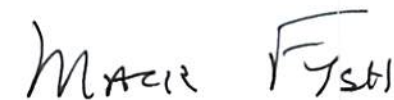
11. In-Camera Items

There are no items under this heading.

12. Adjournment

As there were no further matters to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular Vehicle For Hire Commission meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room at City Hall, Wednesday, November 9, 2011.



M. Fysh, Chairman



S. Weller, Administrative Assistant