

**TAXI AND LIMOUSINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 14, 2006**

PRESENT: Councillor Stephen D. Adams, Chair
Mr. Derek Mathers
Mr. Denis St. Laurent
Ms. Cathy Towers
Mr. Robert Richards

ABSENT WITH
REGRETS: Mr. Kevin Bulley
Ms. Darlene Grant-Fiander
Mr. Bill Harrison
Mr. Tim Hosford

STAFF: Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine
Services
Mr. Randy Kinghorne, Solicitor
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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- 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair, Councillor Stephen D. Adams, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm in Meeting Room "C, Keshen Goodman Library.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Deferred until all members are in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Addition: Request for Temporary Closure of Taxi Stands - North Street and Spring Garden Road for Saturday, September 23, 2006.

MOVED BY Mr. Derek Mathers, seconded by Mr. Robert Richards that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - July 13, 2006

MOVED BY Mr. Derek Mathers, seconded by Mr. Denis St. Laurent that the minutes of the July 13, 2006 Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee's Workplan

Mr. Denis St. Laurent referenced the workshop that was held on March 6, 2006 and commented that the Committee had agreed their priority would be to review By-Law T-108 line byline. Staff advised Mr. St. Laurent that the review is being done under agenda Item 5.4 By-Law T-108 Review.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

6.1 Safety of Taxi Drivers

- A copy of the draft Information Report for Regional Council was before the Committee.

Councillor Adams responded to Mr. Mathers, in regard to costs associated with safety equipment for taxis, that the Motor Vehicle Act does not permit municipal monies to be used for purchase/installation of equipment in taxis. Mr. Mathers commented that a suggestion could be made at Regional Council that a surcharge be implemented to assist with the costs.

MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Denis St. Laurent that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee forward the Taxi Driver Safety Systems Information Report, dated August 10, 2006, to Regional Council.

The Chair, Legislative Assistant and Regional Coordinator for Taxi and Limousine Services, clarified that the Information Report was an update only and did not include any recommendations from this Committee. The Chair clarified that the report would not be part of the active Regional Council agenda unless a member of Council requests that it be added for discussion. The Legislative Assistant further clarified that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee has not completed discussion on the issue of taxi driver safety and, to date, has made no recommendations on the matter.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Upon concerns raised by Mr. Mathers that there are currently no standards in regard to installation of safety equipment in taxis, the Committee requested that Mr. Randolph Kinghorne, Municipal Solicitor, provide comment at the October meeting on the liability for shields/safety equipment installed in taxi cabs by the owner of the vehicle or the manufacturer of the product. The Committee requested clarification on who would be liable if a passenger were injured by a safety device that had been installed in the vehicle; would it be the driver, the vehicle owner, the taxi broker, the city, the installer or the product manufacturer. Mr. Kinghorne advised that he will review the provincial standards and provide comment at a later date.

At 3:03 pm, due to continued interruptions and unsolicited comments from the public in attendance including personal insults directed toward him, Mr. Mathers advised that he was leaving the meeting. Quorum was lost at this time.

Councillor Adams reminded the public in attendance that there was a meeting in progress and that the Committee has important issues to consider. He added that he

would adjourn the meeting if there were any further interruptions. Quorum was regained at 3:10 pm when Mr. Mathers returned to the meeting.

6.2 Transferability of Roof Lights

MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Denis St. Laurent that By-Law T-108, section 24, page 9 be amended by removing the word not. Section 24, page 9 will now read: "A taxi owner license shall be transferable."

Mr. St. Laurent commented that other jurisdictions, such as Winnipeg, Manitoba, have the ability to transfer rooflights. He added that in 2005 a rooflight in Winnipeg was \$200,000. He suggested HRM draw from that example and replicate it to empower taxi drivers to own their own business.

Mr. St. Laurent further questioned why the taxi business is governed by volunteers in HRM and suggested that a Taxicab Board or Tribunal, similar to Winnipeg's, be implemented. He suggested that the Board or Tribunal would have a person responsible (similar to Mr. Kozubal's position in Winnipeg) who would produce an annual report and oversee licensing of individuals. He suggested HRM move from a volunteer based administration to an appointed board. He further suggested the membership consist of one member of Regional Council, the Chief of Halifax Regional Police and five other persons appointed by the province. The mandate would be "adequate tax cab service at a reasonable cost".

Following a lengthy discussion on the matter and without a vote being taken on the motion on the floor, it was **MOVED BY Mr. Denis St. Laurent that the matter of transferability of rooflights be deferred to the October meeting at which time Mr. St. Laurent will present a plan, in consultation with members of the taxi industry, outlining how the objective of transferability could be obtained.** Having no seconder, the motion was lost.

The main motion, as follows, was before the Committee for consideration: **MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Denis St. Laurent that By-Law T-108, section 24, page 9 be amended by removing the word not. Section 24, page 9 will now read: "A taxi owner license shall be transferable."**

Due to continued interruptions by members of the public while trying to speak, Mr. Roberts requested that the Chair ask those members of the public to leave the room. Councillor Adams advised the public that he would have to clear the room if the interruptions and unsolicited comments continued.

Without a vote being taken on the motion on the floor, it was **MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Denis St. Laurent that the matter of transferability of rooflights be deferred to the October meeting at which time Mr. Robert Richards and Mr. Denis St. Laurent will present a plan, in consultation with members of the taxi industry and the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee, outlining how the objective of transferability could be obtained.** The plan will include consideration of guidelines on matters such as how many lights could be transferred (a possible limit of two owned by one person was suggested). **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

6.3 Bylaw T-108

- (i) Impact of Leasing Roof Lights on the Taxi Industry**
- (ii) Issuing of Roof Lights**
- (iii) Limousine Seat Belts**
- (iv) Moratorium on Licensing of New Taxi Drivers in The Halifax Zone**
- (v) Advertising on Roof Lights**
- (vi) Collection of Fees**

- A draft of By-Law T-108, including the proposed amendments, was circulated to the Committee at this time.

Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine Services and Mr. Randolph Kinghorne, Municipal Solicitor, presented the proposed amendments to By-Law T-108. They explained that the majority of amendments are housekeeping issues and are outlined on the first two pages of the document.

Mr. Hindle responded to Mr. Richards that the operators license will be renewed on a two year basis and; along with the criminal record check, a Vulnerable Persons Sector Search (VPSS) will now be required. He explained that a VPSS is required for any person who will provide a service to the public where that individual could be responsible for a child, senior or person with disability. Mr. Richards expressed concern that criminal record checks will be required every two years when he had previously had that changed to every five years. He added that the proposed By-Law, as amended, should be rejected.

Councillor Adams suggested the Committee defer discussion on the amendments until they have had an opportunity to review the information distributed.

(ii) Issuing of Roof Lights

Mr. Randolph Kinghorne, Municipal Solicitor, clarified for the Committee and members of the public that all names currently on the waiting list for roof lights will be required to be names of individuals, not a corporate name. The proposed amendment to the By-Law will give Corporations ninety (90) days to replace the corporate name with an individual's name in order to remain on the waiting list.

The Committee dealt with item 6.3 (vi) at this time.

(vi) Collection of Fees

Mr. Hindle advised that the proposed amendment to Sections 35 (e) - 36 in regard to collection of fees is that the Taxi Inspector's Office will no longer collect fees for outside agencies such as the English Second Language testing and TIANS (National Certification Course). The individual will be required to provide the Taxi Inspector's office with proof of successful completion of the ESL testing and that they have registered with TIANS before a Conditional license will be issued.

Mr. Richards expressed concern with the amount of running around the driver would have to do in order to obtain his/her conditional license.

Mr. Mathers expressed concern with Section 33 in regard to the driver's responsibility to ensure his/her contact information remains current with the administration at all times.

Mr. Kinghorne responded that there is no fine intended if the information is not kept current but that the responsibility is on the individual if the administration is unable to contact the person due to inaccurate contact information.

The Committee dealt with item 6.3 (v) at this time.

(v) Advertising on Roof Lights

MOVED BY Mr. Derek Mathers, seconded by Mr. Robert Richards that there be no advertising on rooflights.

Councillor Adams reminded the Committee that advertising on roof lights could be a method for taxi drivers to earn a little extra money. Mr. Mathers expressed concern that there are no standards to guide roof light advertising.

Due to interruptions by members of the public, Councillor Adams advised that if they were not respectful of the Committee and the meeting procedure that they would be asked to leave.

MOVED BY Mr. Denis St. Laurent, seconded by Mr. Derek Mathers that the matter of advertising on roof lights be deferred pending a staff outline on how advertising on roof lights could be implemented. A response is requested for the October meeting.

Mr. Richards left the meeting at 3:46 pm. Quorum was lost at this time.

No vote was taken on the motion on the floor due to a loss of quorum.

6.4 Code of Ethics

Deferred due to a loss of quorum.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS, DELEGATIONS - None

8. REPORTS

8.1 STAFF REPORTS

8.1.1 Presentation of Committee Reports to Regional Council - *Mr. Kevin Hindle*

Deferred due to a loss of quorum.

8.1.2 Membership

The Legislative Assistant advised that there are currently three vacancies. An advertisement for volunteers to serve on HRMBoards and Committees will appear in the Saturday, September 16th newspapers.

9. NOTICES OF MOTION - None

10. ADDED ITEMS

10.1 Temporary Closure of Two Common Taxi Stands on Saturday, September 23, 2006.

- A request from Mr. Kevin McEachern, Traffic & Right of Way Services, regarding temporary closure of two common taxi stands on Saturday, September 23, 2006 was before the Committee.

The remaining Committee members agreed that it would be necessary to close the common taxi stands at the North Street and Spring Garden Road locations, as outlined by Mr. Kevin McEachern on Saturday, September 23, 2006 due to the Rolling Stones Concert.

The Committee requested that traffic services follow the usual process to notify members of the industry and public of the temporary closure.

11. MOTIONS - None

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 12, 2006.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 pm due to a loss of quorum.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant