

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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## TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMITTEE MINUTES December 20, 2004

- PRESENT: Councillor Linda Mosher, Acting Chair  
Councillor Gloria McCluskey  
Cal Demont  
Bob Richards  
Don Shannon  
Dave Withrow
- ABSENT: Derek Mathers (Regrets)  
Donald Swinimer (Regrets)  
Jeff Rozee (Regrets)  
Donald Hatcher (Regrets)
- STAFF: Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Mr. Kevin Hindle, Operations Coordinator  
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

On the advice of the Municipal Solicitor, the Committee elected Councillor Linda Mosher interim Chair.

The Municipal Solicitor advised that the report regarding the composition and mandate of the Taxi Committee was scheduled to come before Regional Council on January 11, 2005.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

**Addition:**

- Approval of the Minutes of October 18, 2004 (Previously considered)

9.1 Recognition of Former Chair - Mr. Richards

**Deletion:**

- Presentation: Nancy Cochrane, Cochrane Associates - Non-Violent Crisis Intervention

Ms. Cochrane is unable to attend due to a previously unscheduled work commitment.

Noting the importance of information/training for taxi drivers on this subject, Mr. Shannon requested that an effort be made to confirm Ms. Cochrane's attendance at the next meeting. Mr. Shannon further requested that staff contact HRM Human Resources regarding the possibility of having someone from HR present to the Committee in this regard.

**MOVED by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Shannon that the agenda, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - OCTOBER 18, 2004**

- Minutes of the October 18, 2004 meeting of the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee were re-circulated to the Committee. Minutes of the November 15, 2004 meeting of the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee were circulated to the Committee for information.

Mr. Richards, referring to October 18, 2004 minutes, noted that a vote had been taken on the Prohibition of New Drivers Licenses and that the outcome had been positive.

**MOVED by Mr. Richards that approval of the October 18, 2004 minutes be deferred to the new Committee.**

As there was no seconder to the motion, the **MOTION WAS LOST.**

Following a further discussion, it was **MOVED by Mr. Withrow, seconded by Mr. Demont that the minutes of the October 18, 2004 meeting of the Halifax Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee, as distributed, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**4. PRESENTATION: NANCY COCHRANE, COCHRANE ASSOCIATES - NON-VIOLENT CRISIS INTERVENTION**

This matter was deleted from the agenda during the setting of the agenda.

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**5.1 Taxi Driver Incident Forms**

- This matter was last discussed at the November 15, 2004 meeting of the Committee at which time it was deferred.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the incident form. Mr. Shannon noted that the incident form had been approved by this Committee and was to have been distributed to the brokers. Mr. Shannon indicated he did not know the status of the incident form, but believed there was a need for more promotion.

Following a further discussion, **it was agreed that** the incident form would be distributed to members of the Committee at the next meeting.

**5.2 Accessible Taxis**

- This matter was referred to the Committee from the December 14, 2004 meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

Mr. Dave Withrow addressed the matter noting that accessible taxis are not subject to limitation or zone requirements and can sit on the common stands anywhere in the municipality. Additionally, drivers of accessible taxis are not required to complete the national certification program.

Mr. Withrow went on to note that accessible taxis are regulated under the Motor Vehicle Act and not By-Law T-108. He pointed out that the larger taxi companies have attempted to provide the service and found it to not be profitable. Given that no restriction has been placed on accessible taxis and the larger companies were not able to realize a profit, individual drivers are not willing to take responsibility for this service.

Councillor Mosher referring to the accessible taxi service in Ottawa, indicated that she would be looking into whether or not this service is subsidized.

A brief discussion ensued with regard to the possibility of HRM subsidizing accessible taxis, with Mr. Anstey noting that HRM is not permitted under the Municipal Government Act to subsidize private business. Mr. Anstey went on to note that he understands that Metro Transit has an arrangement with at least one of the local companies regarding accessible taxis.

Mr. Hindle noted that the arrangement referred to by Mr. Anstey is a program to augment the access-a-bus service through the taxi industry. He advised that the Provincial Department of Social Services also provides a mini-bus. Mr. Hindle stated that the service provided by Yellow Cab was similar to access a bus and noted that it does not appear there is a great demand for individual accessible taxi service. Mr. Hindle advised that Metro Transit is preparing a report in response to Council's request for a report regarding the possibility of Metro Transit assuming responsibility for accessible taxis.

Mr. Shannon addressed the matter pointing out that the taxi industry in HRM is private. As it appears there is no profit in accessible taxis, it is reasonable that government be responsible for the provision of guaranteed accessible taxi service. Mr. Shannon commented that HRM, through Metro Transit, probably has the required information to provide accessible taxi service. Mr. Shannon stated that the provision of accessible taxis is not the responsibility of the taxi industry.

Following a further short discussion it was **MOVED by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Shannon the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that HRM look to all levels of government to assist with the establishment of such a service for disabled persons throughout Nova Scotia.**

**MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Mr. Richards that the motion be amended to provide that accessible taxis be provided through Metro Transit.**

Councillor McCluskey noted that the information she has received indicates that more than 900 accessible trips cannot be accommodated within the present system. The Councillor stressed that this is an unacceptable situation.

The motion to amend was **PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The amended motion, as follows, was **PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**MOVED by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Shannon the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that accessible taxis be provided through Metro Transit and further that HRM look to all levels of government to assist with the establishment of such a service for disabled persons throughout Nova Scotia.**

Mr. Hindle noted that the Taxi Office has received a number of calls praising the professional and helpful manner of taxi drivers when assisting disabled persons.

Mr. Withrow requested that the Taxi Office re-issue their letter regarding assistance to and transportation of disabled persons. Mr. Withrow also requested that the letter include a suggestion that the brokers develop a procedure for the dispatching of taxis that are able to handle wheelchairs.

## **6. GOOD NEWS STORIES**

Mr. Richards advised that two cellular phones found in his vehicles had been returned to the owners.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Schedule of Meetings for 2005**

**MOVED by Mr. Withrow, seconded by Mr. Richards that January 17, 2004 and February 21, 2004 be set as meeting dates for the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee and, further, that approval of meeting dates for the remainder of the year be deferred pending the outcome of the staff report to Council on the composition and mandate of the Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **8. MOTIONS - None**

## **9. ADDED ITEMS**

### **9.1 Recognition of Former Chair - Mr. Richards**

- This matter was added to the agenda during the approval of the order of business.

**MOVED by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Withrow that a letter be forwarded to the Mayor and Members of Council recognizing the long and dedicated service given by Councillor Stephen Adams to the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION - None**

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee is scheduled for January 17, 2004.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Sherryl Murphy  
Legislative Assistant