

**TAXI AND LIMOUSINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

March 11, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor Stephen Adams, Chair
Ms. Joanne Coffey
Ms. Cathy Towers
Mr. Gary Russell
Mr. Richard McNeil
Mr. Jamie Bolduc
Mr. Robert Richards
Ms. Lisa Dahr

REGRETS: Mr. Earl Brown
Mr. Derek Mathers

STAFF: Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi & Limousine
Services
Ms. Shawnee Gregory, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Barb Allen, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Adams called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. at the Captain William Spry Centre.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - January 11 & Notes of February 11, 2010

MOVED BY Mr. Bolduc, seconded by Mr. McNeil, that the minutes of January 11 & Notes of February 11, 2010 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions:

8.1 Stickers for Taxi Vans - Mr. Richards

MOVED BY Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Dahr, that the Order of Business be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Special Rate Clause, Schedule 1 Administrative Order #39 - Mr. Randolph Kinghorne, Solicitor

- A memorandum from Mr. Randolph Kinghorne, Solicitor, was before the Committee.

Mr. Hindle reported that this material had been shared for input and review and the Committee agreed that the wording was acceptable. Mr. Hindle will move this forward.

4.2 ESL Certification - Ms. Lisa Dahr

Ms. Dahr reported on her research into ESL certification, saying that the National Taxi and Limousine exam had been through testing and was designed at a grade 6 level. She said that in the past 12 months, 82 drivers had taken the exam with 17% failing on comprehension; noting that this was up from previous years. She also stated that there were some words and phrases that were misinterpreted and this was being tracked to

see if changes could be made to make this a fairer process. Ms. Dahr suggested that the exam be reviewed.

Mr. Hindle said that HRM was trying to determine language skills while ensuring that there was no discrimination and that everyone was treated fairly. He noted that there were educational programs run through libraries and the East Coast School of Language to help with comprehension before re-assessment, which takes place after 6 months of language training.

Ms Dahr reported that 32% of drivers who failed the exam have received additional support to enable them to succeed.

Mr. Hindle reported a 48% failure rate on exams after English language training. Mr. Hindle indicated that Ms. Dahr should forward her findings in a report in order for changes to be made in collaboration with East Coast Language school. Mr. Hindle stated that there have been no complaints or concerns raised by the public.

Ms. Dahr stated that there needed to be more training around contextual language.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE

5.1 Review of Taxi Stand - Hollis Street, Westside North of Terminal Road - * Updated * Memo from Mr. Taso Koutroulakis, Acting Manager of Traffic and Right of Way

- A memorandum from Mr. Taso Koutroulakis, Acting Manager of Traffic and Right of Way, was before the Committee.

The Committee accepted the memorandum as information.

5.2 Discussion Surrounding Possible Extension of the Friday and Saturday Open Zones from 3:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. - Mr. Rick McNeil

Mr. McNeil reported that many bars and establishments have extended hours on the weekends and that there was a need to open zones for later service downtown.

MOVED BY Mr. McNeil, seconded by Mr. Russell, that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request that the open zones be extended on Friday and Saturday from 11:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m.

Ms. Dahr is attending the roundtable on violence and will raise this matter there.

Mr. Richards said that this change should not be put forward at this time as there have been other changes presented to Council recently.

Mr. Hindle said this item could go back to Superintendent Don Spicer who is involved with the Roundtable on violence, to approve the wording.

MOTION DEFEATED.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence - None

6.2 Petitions

6.3 Presentations

6.3.1 Mr. Dave Buffett

Mr. Dave Buffett expressed concern that on weekend evenings there was often not enough room for cars at taxi stands. He stated that couriers are allowed to park in a no parking zone for 15 minutes, however, this was not permitted for taxi drivers. He noted that taxi stands could not accommodate all taxis and, therefore, police move drivers along. Mr. Buffett proposed that the same courtesy that couriers receive be extended to taxi drivers.

MOVED BY Mr. Bolduc, seconded by Mr. Richards, that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request information and consideration from the Traffic Authority and Halifax Regional Police regarding the potential of extending Taxi Drivers the same courtesy as couriers with regards to parking in no parking zones for up to 15 minutes. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. REPORTS - None

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Stickers for Taxi Vans - Mr. Richards

Mr. Richards proposed that a large sticker be designed to enable easy identification of taxi vans. He stated that roof lights can not be seen, especially by people in wheelchairs. Mr. Hindle said presently the rules state that a magnetic signs for the side of the vehicle be used for easy identification.

MOVED BY Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Bolduc, that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request that a large sticker be permitted on the window of taxi vans for easy identification purposes and that this item be forwarded to staff for wording and implementation. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for April 8, 2010

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Barb Allen
Legislative Support

The following items were added as information:

1. Parking and Nighttime Taxi Stands - Argyle and Grafton Streets
2. Proposed 2010 Meeting Schedule