

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
TAXI AND LIMOUSINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

October 14, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor Stephen Adams, Chair
Mr. Earl Brown
Ms. Cathy Towers
Ms. Lisa Dahr
Mr. Richard McNeil
Mr. Derek Mathers
Mr. Robert Richards
Ms. Joanne Coffey

REGRETS: Mr. Gary Russell
Mr. Jamie Bolduc

STAFF: Ms. Shawnee Gregory, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Sharon Webber, Legislative Support

*** Final meeting of Committee – Minutes administratively approved***

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	3
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Notes of September 9, 2010.....	3
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	3
4.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES	
	4.1 Taxi Driver Handout re: Passengers with Disabilities	3
	4.2 Correspondence – Ms. Lisa Dahr, Manager, Partnerships and Professional Development, Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIANS)	4
	4.3 Correspondence - Ms. Darlene Grant Fiander, President, Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIANS)	4
5.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS	
	5.1 Roof Light Protocol	6
	5.2 \$7.00 Station Wagon, Mini-Van Surcharge	6
6.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS	
	6.1 Correspondence	7
	6.2 Petitions	7
	6.3 Presentations	7
7.	REPORTS	
	7.1 National Changes to the Criminal Record Check Requirements	7
8.	ADDED ITEMS:	
	8.1 Airporter Issue	7
9.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday, November 18, 2010	8
10.	ADJOURNMENT	8

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Stephen Adams, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m. in the Captain William Spry Centre, 10 Kidston Road, Halifax, N.S.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 12, 2010 and September 9, 2010

August 12, 2010 Minutes

Changes: Item 7.1 Roof Light Protocol – move the MOTION portion to item 4.2 Rate Increase

MOVED BY Ms. Joanne Coffey, seconded by Ms. Lisa Dahr that the minutes of August 12, 2010, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

September 19, 2010 Minutes

MOVED BY Ms. Joanne Coffey, seconded by Mr. Derek Mathers that the minutes of September 19, 2010, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Councillor Adams requested the addition of Item 8.1 Airporter Issues be added to the minutes.

MOVED BY Ms. Lisa Dahr, seconded by Ms. Cathy Towers that new item 8.1 be added to the minutes. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Taxi Driver Handout re: Passengers with Disabilities

A memo was circulated to the Committee dated October 1, 2010 from Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator Taxi & Limousine Services, pertaining to the Taxi Driver Handout Re: Passengers with Disabilities. This memo gave information as to where to obtain this document and requested the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities to review their current document for possible changes. This document was for the information of the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee only.

4.2 Correspondence – Ms. Lisa Dahr, Manager, Partnerships and Professional Development, Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIANS)

Ms. Dahr updated the Committee on the status of the Accessible Transportation Assistance Program (ATAP). She advised the members that there has been a meeting and there are follow up meetings to come which should include other products available for this program. She will keep the Committee updated as further progress is made.

4.3 Correspondence – Ms. Darlene Grant Fiander, President, Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIANS)

Councillor Adams reviewed the letter he received from Ms. Darlene Grant Fiander, President, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia where she outlined concerns by both the Hotel Association of Nova Scotia (HANS) and the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS).

This document outlined the Committee's mandate as follows:

- Promote and encourage a safe, accessible, friendly and professional service to the public as an integral part of the regional transportation system.
- Work with Stakeholders to encourage the Industry to improve the level of service for all citizens, businesses and visitors to HRM
- Work to promote and encourage a standard of quality service and professionally trained drivers throughout the industry.
- Enhance communication with stakeholders and promote best practices within the industry.
- Make recommendations to Regional Council respecting improvements to the Taxi and Limousine By-Law and its enforcement.

This document expressed concern regarding the lack of progress and accountability by this Committee for its mandate.

Ms. Darlene Grand Fiander then requested a response to the following questions:

- What is the process for Committee accountability?
- How is progress in advancing the mandate measured?
- When are Committees required to report to Regional Council?
- Is there a process for third party review on the effectiveness of HRM Committees?

Councillor Adams asked the Committee how they wished to proceed with this matter.

Ms. Dahr provided background for this letter.

Mr. McNeil stated that a meeting was held in late 2009 with various members from the Committee as well as representatives from the two groups mentioned by Ms. Fiander. At that meeting all agreed that the Committee was moving this industry forward; however, more emphasis could be put on further training.

Ms. Dahr indicated that she has been forwarding notes from these meetings to the parties to keep them up to date.

A general question was raised as to how meeting agendas are formulated. The Legislative Assistant advised that items were generated by HRM staff, previous meeting action items or from the members themselves.

The Committee noted that, currently, agenda items were added on a reactive basis.

Ms. Towers stated that if the Committee was effective, more drivers would be attending the meetings as they were only present when controversial issues were being discussed.

Mr. Mathers stated that he saw the non attendance as a positive thing as of the lack of drivers at these meetings indicated that they had no concerns and the Committee was doing its job.

Mr. Brown expressed concern that there were 400 taxis in Dartmouth, which represented 40% of taxis in metro and that they were not allowed in downtown Halifax.

Mr. William Cunningham, Owner/Operator in the county of HRM, asked the Committee why By-law T-108 Section 15, was not being enforced equally for all taxi drivers.

Ms. Joanne Coffey stated that approximately six years ago there was no representation for disabled persons on the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee and that, since then, the Committee has made great strides to bridge the gap between these two groups.

Ms. Dahr wished to discuss the 74 complaints received over the past two years in this Industry and requested that this item be placed on a future agenda. Mr.

Mr. Mathers stated that the complaints give a negative view of this Industry even though 10,000,000 calls were received in HRM over this two year period.

Mr. McNeil stated that drivers should be educated in customer etiquette.

The Chair indicated that this was already regulated by HRM; however, agreed that education was the key to this Industry.

Ms. Dahr asked the Committee if the current service program for drivers was sufficient.

Mr. Cunningham indicated he had this training and as a driver with 33 years experience, did not learn anything of value; however, he stated that this was a good course for newer drivers.

Ms. Dahr stated that she wished to further investigate core service skills which are required in this industry. She will report back to the Committee on this issue.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Roof Light Protocol

Mr. Brown indicated that the current roof light protocol was to leave the light on at all times whether the driver has a fare or not; stating that this By-law came into effect in the early 1950's after a major incident and was out of date.

MOVED BY Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Richards that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request consideration that the roof light protocol be updated to state that the roof light of a taxi is to be on when available and off when occupied. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.2 \$7.00 Station Wagon, Mini-Van Surcharge

The Committee had a discussion regarding this issue; expressing concern that some drivers charge a customer the full \$7.00 surcharge plus \$.50 per person fare for this service. The \$7.00 surcharge is to be charged only if a customer called in requesting a station wagon or mini-van with no extra person charge.

Mr. Brown expressed concern that if someone was abusing this system, they should be penalized.

Councillor Adams indicated that he had not received any complaints in this regard and until he did, could not enforce this By-law.

Mr. Mathers suggested that this By-law be amended so that it could be enforced.

MOVED BY Mr. Mathers, seconded by Mr. Brown that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request consideration that Administrative Order #39, Rate Schedule #1 be amended to state that the \$7.00 mini-van surcharge may be requested, however, not combined with the \$.50 per additional passenger surcharge. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence - NONE

6.2 Petitions - NONE

6.3 Presentations - NONE

Ms. Coffey left the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

7. REPORTS

7.1 National Changes to the Criminal Record Check Requirements

Mr. Richards gave the Committee a description of his recent experience while updating his Criminal Record for his license renewal. He indicated that he received a letter indicating that he should submit a copy of his fingerprints for verification as there was another man with the exact same birth date as his who has a criminal record. He was offended by this information and contacted a lawyer. The lawyer indicated that he did not have to submit his fingerprints unless it is required by HRM Council. Mr. Richards expressed concern that not only did he have to pay \$31.00 for the criminal record check (which was not a problem); however, he would also have to pay an additional \$25.00 to have his fingerprints taken. He has decided not to comply with the fingerprinting request.

Councillor Adams indicated that the fingerprinting was a Federal Government issue.

Ms. Dahr asked how this type of issue is handled in other areas of the country.

Councillor Adams requested that the Legislative Assistant have Mr. Hindle investigate this issue further including what would happen to Mr. Richards if he does not comply with the fingerprinting request as well as how this issue is handled in other cities

Mr. Richards left the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Airporter Issues

Councillor Adams indicated that he has been advised by the Airport Bus Service that there are some drivers identifying themselves as the Airporter. Ms. Dahr further stated that these drivers are scooping up passengers which would use the Airporter service. Ms. Towers has investigated this and was informed that the name used by these drivers was fine.

MOVED BY Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Towers that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee request consideration that the following statements replace Section 15, By-law T-108:

- 15.1 No person shall operate any taxi, limousine or accessible taxi under any business name other than the name specified in the owner's license.**
- 2. Upon request from anyone, the driver of the taxi, limousine or accessible taxi shall clearly state the business name under which the vehicle is to be operated.**

3. **No owner or driver shall operate a taxi, limousine or accessible taxi upon private property where prohibited or otherwise contrary to directions provided by the owner or other person in control of the private property.**
4. **The Licensing Authority may suspend the owner's license or driver's license of a person who has violated this section for a period of up to thirty days.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday, November 18, 2010**
10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Sharon Webber
Legislative Support