

**TAXI AND LIMOUSINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2006**

PRESENT: Mr. Bill Harrison, Interim Chair  
Mr. Hari Boggs, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Wayne Black  
Ms. Darlene Grant Fiander  
Mr. Tim Hosford  
Mr. Derek Mathers  
Mr. Paul Matthews  
Mr. Denis St. Laurent  
Mr. Robert Richards

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

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**1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

The Legislative Assistant called the meeting to order at 10:00 am in Meeting Room "C" of the Keshen Goodman Library, 330 Lacewood Drive, Halifax.

Introductions were made and members welcomed to the first meeting of the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.

**MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Derek Mathers that the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee recommend Regional Council amend Administrative Order 38 to appoint a Councillor to the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.**

Mr. Richards commented that Councillor Stephen D. Adams has had experience as Chair of the previous Regional Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee and would be a good candidate to serve on the Committee. He further commented that a Councillor on the Committee would expedite matters going before Regional Council. He suggested that the Chair elected today be an Interim Chair and that the Councillor appointed hold the position of Chair on the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**2. ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR**

The Committee agreed that the position of Chair would be an Interim position pending the outcome of Regional Council's decision on the requested amendment to Administrative Order 38. If a Councillor is appointed, the Councillor would assume the role of Chair for the Committee at the time of appointment.

Nominations were held for the position of Interim Chair.

Mr. Hari Boggs and Mr. Bill Harrison were nominated for the position of Interim Chair of the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee. Upon a vote by the Committee, **Mr. Bill Harrison was elected Interim Chair for the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.**

Mr. Harrison commented that for consistency, the position of Vice-Chair should also be an Interim position.

Nominations were held for the position of Interim Vice-Chair.

**Mr. Hari Boggs was elected as Interim Vice-Chair of the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.**

Mr. Boggs requested clarification on whether or not he represents all owners/drivers in HRM or only those in the County Zone as he is a County Owner/Driver. The Legislative Assistant and Mr. Kevin Hindle confirmed that the understanding of the Committee's composition is that each appointed representative would be representing all persons ir- regardless of zone.

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

- Additions:**
- 6.2.1 Resident Complaint regarding Lack of Taxi Service on Saturday, December 3 and Saturday, December 10. - *Mr. Kevin Hindle*
  - 6.2.2 Petition re: Limousine Representative on the Taxi Committee. - *(submitted to Mr. Hari Boggs by a member of the public).*

The Committee agreed to accept the petition (Item 6.2.2) for the record but not to discuss the matter further during the public meeting as the subject matter was deemed inappropriate.

**MOVED BY Ms. Darlene Grant-Flander, seconded by Mr. Tim Hosford that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- 4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - None
- 5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES** - None
- 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

**6.1.1 Mandate of the Committee**

- A document entitled *Mandate of the Committee* was before the Committee.

Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant, Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine Services and Mr. Bill Harrison, Interim Chair reviewed the mandate of the Committee as outlined in Administrative Order 38. The document was circulated to the Committee with comments from the Taxi Inspector's Office as to what procedures they are undertaking to assist in the fulfillment of the mandate.

The following is the mandate of the newly formed Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee:

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

The following points were raised by the Committee during the ensuing discussion:

**MOVED BY Ms. Darlene Grant-Fiander, seconded by Mr. Robert Richards that an external Facilitator be hired to assist the Committee in developing a workplan to further the goals as outlined in the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee's mandate.**

Ms. Fiander suggested that priority items from the industry be communicated to the Committee.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- In regard to Item 1: Safety: Criminal record checks are requested by the Taxi Inspector's Office. Mr. Hari Boggs commented that each time a vehicle (taxi) is put on the road a criminal record check is required even if it is the same person placing the vehicle in service.
- Mr. Robert Richards suggested that the Appeals Committee should have a member appointed from the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee to represent the interest of the drivers. Mr. Hindle explained that drivers are in no way limited in having representation accompany them to the appeal hearings. Composition of the Appeal Committee will be reviewed at a future meeting.
- In regard to Item 4: Communication: It was suggested that steps be taken to

improve communication to and from taxi drivers as well as citizens of Halifax. Mr. Denis St. Laurent advised that he has hired an external publishing company to publish the TAXI BULLETIN (distributed to Halifax Zone drivers by Yellow and Casino Taxi) in order to get information to the drivers.

No further action required.

### **6.1.2 Process**

- A document entitled *Process* was before the Committee.

Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant, Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine Services and Mr. Bill Harrison, Interim Chair reviewed the process for agenda preparation (how to add/delete items for the agenda), the role of Chair/Vice-Chair/Legislative Assistant and Staff Liaison persons role.

Mr. Mathers commented that the document on process is an important document to review as many people attend the meetings and may not be familiar with the process.

**MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards that there be a Solicitor appointed to the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee. Having no seconder the MOTION WAS LOST.**

Mr. Mathers requested clarification on the process regarding reports going forward to Regional Council from the Committee and asked if the Committee would be provided an opportunity to review the report before it is sent to Regional Council.

Mr. Hindle responded that it would depend on the report the Committee is generating, for example, if it were for a By-Law amendment, the report would have to be reviewed by the By-Law Rationalization Committee prior to going to Regional Council. The Legislative Assistant advised that there are different types of reports and this Committee will most likely deal with a report with a recommendation or an Information Report (no recommendation). She advised that the Committee could review the report first but it may delay the process as the Committee would review the report at their next scheduled meeting and then upon final approval it would go forward to Regional Council. The Committee requested that all reports be reviewed by the Committee members before going forward to Regional Council.

**MOVED BY Mr. Robert Richards that a representative from the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee be appointed to the By-Law Rationalization Committee as there is currently no representation of Taxi Drivers on that Committee.**

The Legislative Assistant advised that clarification on the mandate and composition of the By-Law Rationalization Committee will be provided at the next meeting.

Having no seconder, the **MOTION WAS LOST.**

Ms. Darlene Grant-Fiander left the meeting at 11:15 am.

In regard to process, it was further clarified that:

- Members of the public are in attendance as observers only and are not to approach Committee members or staff while the meeting is in session.
- All items for the agenda must be sent to the Legislative Assistant/Interim Chair two weeks prior to the meeting date. If the item falls within the mandate of the Committee, it will be added to the active agenda for consideration by the Committee or added as an Information Item (Information Items are circulated to the Committee but not part of the active agenda unless moved to the active agenda by a Committee member during the approval of the agenda.)
- Items may be added to/deleted from the agenda by Committee members during the approval of the agenda the day of the meeting.
- The official spokesperson for the Committee is the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the official spokesperson will be the Vice-Chair.
- The Chair presents the Committee's reports to Regional Council.
- In Camera meetings can only be held if the topic falls within one of the eight categories outlined in the **MGA, Part 1 (I) Section 22 (2).**

Mr. Derek Mathers requested clarification on Item A of Section 22 (2): a) Acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property on whether discussion of HRM Tax Licenses would have to be held In Camera where the topic would be centered around municipal property (Taxi Licenses).

The Legislative Assistant advised that a request for clarification on this matter will be sent to HRM's Legal Services.

### **6.1.3 Meeting Frequency/Location/Time/Day**

The Committee agreed to meet the second Thursday of the month at 10:00 am in the Keshen Goodman Library.

### **6.1.4 Safety of Taxi Drivers**

- A document entitled CPC Custom Plastic Creations Inc., The Taxi Industry - Health

- & Safety In the Workplace was circulated to the Committee at this time.
- A document entitled Case Study - Taxi: Winnipeg Taxicab Board was circulated to the Committee at this time.
- A document entitled Taxicab Partitions - Products/Shields was circulated to the Committee at this time.
- A document entitled DriverSHEILDs for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers was circulated to the Committee at this time.
- A copy of a letter sent to Mayor Kelly from The Honourable Kerry Morash, Minister of Environment and Labour was before the Committee.
- A copy of an e-mail from A1 Advantage Safety Solutions (Ms. Bowers) was before the Committee.
- A request from Councillor Younger for consideration of Taxi Driver Safety was before the Committee.

Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine Services presented the information to the Committee. He indicated that the Honourable Kerry Morash has offered his assistance to the municipality in reviewing safety issues in the taxi industry and with any recommendations to be brought forward. Minister Morash also offered the assistance of his departmental staff. Mr. Jim Leblanc, Director, Occupational Health and Safety has also contacted the Committee through the Legislative Assistant and Mr. Hindle to offer assistance. Mr. Hindle will meet with the provincial representatives prior to the next Committee meeting.

Upon further discussion on the matter by the Committee, the following points were raised:

- An information session was requested at which all information regarding safety device options available to taxi drivers could be presented in order for the drivers to view all options available including cost and possible funding assistance to install/implement the desired option. Research should be done from a wide variety of sources including North America and Europe.
- This matter is to be elevated to the highest priority.
- Staff were requested to gather the information, with assistance from the province, for the next meeting. All members of the Committee are encouraged to come forward with suggestions/comments as well.
- One of the main issues is whether or not to mandate the use of a safety device in a vehicle.
- Some drivers do not want the full shield and some clients are not accepting of the shield. One driver had a shield installed in his car but had it removed.
- Drivers who service the airport have commented that their clients would not be accepting of a full shield and they do not want one in their vehicles.

Mr. Derek Mathers added that there are three items that could be used to increase safety for the driver:

1. Full plexi-glass shield
2. Mini-shield (encompasses the driver)
3. Cameras.

He added that the RCMP have protective items in their vehicles that are paid for by the province. He suggested that means of financial assistance be researched especially if the use of a safety device is to become mandatory.

Mr. Robert Richards requested that copies of two documents he obtained in Ottawa (re: the Winnipeg TaxiCab Act) be circulated to members of the Committee for review. He indicated that measures used in Winnipeg, such as no one permitted to sit in the front seat with the driver, may be considered as safety options.

Mr. Kevin Hindle commented that Winnipeg introduced cameras in the cars and then the shields. The cameras showed a reduction but did not eliminate crimes. The floating shield was introduced and it is more adaptable and protects the individual driver. He added there are pros and cons for the devices, for example, New York had problems with heat and air conditioning control with the full shields in place. The shields are not bullet proof. The "bubble" seems to have accommodated the issue of heat/air conditioning control. The bubble takes 10 - 15 minutes time to place/remove. Mr. Hindle advised the Winnipeg study could be made available but it is quite lengthy.

Mr. Boggs added that there has not been a murder of a licensed driver in Winnipeg since 1996 once safety devices were mandated. He further advised that an electronic shield, available in Baltimore, Maryland, is another option at a cost of only \$376.00 Canadian. He explained that the electronic shield can be retracted when not required to be in use.

The Committee expressed the importance of keeping the drivers informed of the options/cost and any financial assistance that maybe available. It was suggested that a check-list for drivers on what to do/not to do to increase their safety may be beneficial.

## **6.2 ADDED ITEMS**

### **6.2.1 Resident Complaint regarding Lack of Taxi Service on Saturday, December 3 and Saturday, December 10**

Mr. Hindle brought this item forward as it relates to service. The Committee agreed that

a Saturday in December is a very busy time of year for the taxi industry and it is unfortunate that the resident had a long wait time. The Committee further suggested that the resident raise the concern with the cab company in question.

No further action required.

**6.2.2 Petition re: Limousine Representative on the Taxi Committee**

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See page 3.

7. **MOTIONS** - None

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Chris Newson  
Legislative Assistant