

TAXI AND LIMOUSINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

February 12, 2009

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

REGRETS: Mr. Tim Hosford
Mr. Earl Brown

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	3
2.	APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - December 11, 2008	3
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	3
4.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES	
4.1	Alternative Meeting Locations for the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee (List of Options)	3
4.2	Amendments to By-Law T-108 re: Introduction of Hybrid / Fuel Efficient Vehicles into the HRM Taxi Fleet (<i>Update</i>)	4
4.3	Minimum Hourly Rate for Limousines re: Trips from Halifax Stanfield International Airport to the Downtown Core (<i>Response from Halifax International Airport Authority</i>)	4
4.4	Taxi Driver Rate Increases (<i>Update</i>)	4
5.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS	
5.1	Transferability of Rooflights	5
6.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS	5
7.	REPORTS	5
8.	ADDED ITEMS	
8.1	Commercial Curb - Halifax Stanfield International Airport	5
8.2	Meeting Date and Time of Committee	6
8.3	Lane Exemption for Taxis	6
8.4	Charges for Various Other Services	6
9.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING - March 12, 2009	7
10.	ADJOURNMENT	7

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. at the Captain William Spry Centre.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - December 11, 2008

Correction: One of the recipients of the Pineapple Awards, Mr. Craig Doucette, is not a taxi driver, he works for the Holiday Inn.

MOVED By Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Ms. Joanne Coffey that the minutes of December 11, 2008 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

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

ADDITIONS:

- 8.1 Commercial Curb - Halifax Stanfield International Airport
- 8.2 Changes in Meeting Date and Time of Committee
- 8.3 Lane Exemption for Taxis
- 8.4 Charges for Other Various Services

MOVED By Mr. Richard McNeil, seconded by Mr. Derek Mathers that the Order of Business be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

A moment of silence was held for Mr. Kevin Demont, Bob's Taxi, who passed away.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Alternative Meeting Locations for the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee (List of Options).

The Committee reviewed the different options that were available for meeting venues. The Committee agreed that Bloomfield Centre should be contacted and if the fee for renting a room can be waived, the meeting venue would change to that location. If not, Capt William Spry would continue to be the venue.

4.2 Amendments to By-Law T-108 re: Introduction of Hybrid/Fuel Efficient Vehicles into the HRM Taxi Fleet (Update)

In response to Councillor Adam's, Mr. Kevin Hindle advised that the report was in the final stages of approval and once signed off by staff it will be brought back to Council.

In response to Mr. Mather's question, Mr. Hindle responded that the dimension of the cars was being changed to introduce not only hybrid cars but also other fuel efficiency cars. This does not eliminate the larger cars in the industry. The measurements have been adjusted to allow for the smaller or hybrid car.

4.3 Minimum Hourly Rate for Limousines re: Trips from Halifax Stanfield International Airport to the Downtown Core (Response from Halifax International Airport Authority)

Ms. Towers advised that although the Airport Authority supports the difference in the prices between the fares charged by taxis and limousines, it cannot dictate that limousines change their prices. Because it is less than an hour to drive to the city, limousines charges only a portion of the hourly rate.

4.4 Taxi Driver Rate Increases (Update)

Mr. Hindle clarified that staff was not asked to do a report on increases but rather determine a method of how these increases should occur based on factors other than fuel costs. Further, he advised that staff was to look at a mechanism for an annual review of taxi rates. He advised the Committee that the report being reviewed and once signed off by staff, it will be brought back to Council

In response to Mr. McNeil's comments, Mr. Hindle clarified that any time this committee asked for a fare increase it has been granted by Council. Further, the last time that a request came to Council for an increase, direction was given from this Committee that there was not enough information to support an increase and it was not needed at this time.

Mr. Richards advised that there are not enough drivers at these meetings to sanction an increase. He continued, saying that a general meeting of all drivers needs to be held and a consensus reached whether they want the increase or leave it as it is.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Transferability of Rooflights

Mr. Richards asked that this be deferred until he can complete a report to bring back to the Committee.

MOVED By Mr. Robert Richards, seconded by Mr. Jamie Bolduc that this item be deferred until the report can be completed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED_

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - NONE

7. REPORTS - NONE

8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

8.1 Commercial Curb - Halifax Stanfield International Airport

Ms. Cathy Towers, Manager, Ground Transportation, Halifax Stanfield International Airport, gave an overview of the new commercial curb noting the following:

- A commercial curb has been constructed at the airport;
- The Airport Authority has entered into an agreement with MacPass and the Airport is in the process of putting in a gate now that will accommodate the MacPass;
- MacPasses that drivers currently have will work, however, they can also obtain a second Mac pass for this purpose;
- Rack licenced drivers will have the ability to automatically access this commercial curb;
- The Airport Authority will be going out to the larger brokers to see if they have an interest in accessing the commercial curb;
- There is going to be only two options for picking up customers, the commercial curb and the bus depot;
- Picking up at the bus depot will cost \$2.00 as opposed to the cost of \$4.00 for the commercial curb for non rack licenced drivers;
- These changes will be implemented in the very near future;
- There are no costs for drop offs;
- This arrangement is only to the end of the September when the contract expires.

Ms. Towers advised that the Committee or other drivers could call the Airport Authority and she or other members of the Airport Authority would answer any questions that they might have.

In clarification to Mr. Mathers, Mr. Hindle advised that there is nothing in the by-law that states how additional charges to access public or private property are passed on. If the customer agrees to pay the additional \$4.00 to be picked up at the Commercial Curb, then this charge can be passed on. If not, they can be picked up at the commercial shelter at no extra charge.

Mr. Mathers suggested that these additional fees should be enforced in the by-law. The by-laws needs to be reviewed and revisions made where necessary.

Ms. Towers advised that taxi drivers negotiate charges for different services all the time and this would be no different.

8.2 Meeting Date and Time of Committee

The Committee agreed to the current meeting date and time for its meeting.

8.3 Lane Exemption for Taxis

Mr. Mathers advised the Committee that before the Armdale Rotary became the Roundabout there was a lane exception used by taxis when they have a passenger on board. He asked if another lane exemption at the Roundabout could be developed and/or specific metro transit lanes could be used for taxis when they have a passenger on board. It was noted that these lane exemptions for buses only were governed by Metro Transit and would need to receive their approval.

8.4 Charges for Various Other Services

Mr. Vinnie Hannah, taxi driver 366, gave an overview of an incident that happened while he was driving his taxi.

In response to Mr. Hannah's questions, Mr. Hindle advised that he could not respond to the investigation, as this was a matter before the Courts. In response to the Mr. Hannah's question of whether Mr. Hannah could use his meter or a flat rate at the airport, Mr. Hindle advised that according to the by-laws, Mr. Hannah had the right to use a flat rate fare or the meter because Mr. Hannah was not a licensed taxi driver at the airport.

In response to no copies of the by-laws being available at the Taxi office, Mr. Hindle advised that they have always been available. Copies of the by-laws are also available on-line and at the Municipal Clerks office.

Mr. Hindle explained how the flat rates were previously established.

Mr. Hannah stated that it is not fair to the driver that the cost to pick up the fare is more than they make on the actual call. Mr. Mathers agreed with him that this is a problem.

Ms. Towers advised the Committee that she has spoken to Mr. Hindle on numerous occasions regarding the Halifax and Dartmouth drivers being in violation of zoning when they come to the airport. She does not want this to continue and it is something that will need to be looked at before the Airport Authority enters into a new contract in the fall.

MOVED By Mr. Derek Mathers, seconded by Mr. Robert Richards that staff develop the wording to address the issue of the cost of trip exceeding the fare received and bring it back to the next meeting. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting will be held on March 12, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Captain William Spry Centre.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Barbara Coleman
Legislative Assistant