

**Limousine Advisory Group  
Meeting Minutes for the April 30, 2013  
140 West Flagler Street, 908  
Miami, Florida 33130**

**Members Present:**

Neil Goodman	Aventura Limo, Industry Rep.
Freddy Castro	Signature Limo, Industry Rep.
Michael Solomon	USA Transp., Industry Rep.
Mark Mitros	MIA Landside Operations
Antonio Meilan	Meilan Limo, Industry Rep.
Freddy Wong, Jr.	Seaport Representative
William Talbert	GMCVB Representative

**Members Absent:**

Luciano Aoki	Consumer Representative
Ron Hoye	Carey International, Industry Rep.

**Staff Present:**

Joe Mora	Division Chief, For-Hire Transportation
Steven Bobes	Admin Officer, For-Hire Transportation
Theresa Therilus	Legal Advisor, For-Hire Transportation
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, For-Hire Transportation
Nancy Perez	Senior Ex. Secretary, RER Business Affairs

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call. He advised Vice-Chair Goodman that Ron Hoye from Carey International Industry was granted an excuse absence from today's meeting. Mr. Mora also informed, LAG's Consumer Representative Mr. Luciano Aoki tendered his resignation due to a promotion and possible conflict at work. Mr. Mora advised, the department will be seeking to fill LAG's vacancy prior to the next quarterly meeting in August.

Vice-Chair Goodman commenced the meeting, welcoming members, thanked those in attendance and requested member's introductions.

Mr. Mora introduced the department's newly hired Legal Advisor, Ms. Theresa Therilus. Ms. Therilus comes with a wealth of knowledge and we are grateful to have her aboard.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Mr. Goodman requested approval of the April 30, 2013 Limousine Advisory Group meeting minutes. Mr. Solomon motioned to approve the April 30, 2013 minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Talbert, with unanimous Committee approval.

**Selection of LAG Chair:**

At the prior quarterly LAG meeting, the selection for Chair was tabled due to, a tie between Mr. Solomon and Mr. Castro. Members agreed to address the selection process at this meeting. With that said, Mr. Goodman nominated Michael Solomon to fill the vacancy as Chair of LAG, seconded by Mr. Meilan. Mr. Freddy Castro nominated himself as LAG's Chair, seconded by

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Mr. Mitros. The Committee took a vote. The results were 5-2 and selected Mr. Michael Solomon as the Limousine Advisory Committee's newly appointed Chair.

**LAG Vacancy:**

Mr. Mora discussed LAG's vacated consumer seat and informed members a recruitment to fill this vacancy was to commence soon. Interested individuals will be able to download the LAG application from the department's webpage.

Mr. Mora advised, the department's PIO will advertise the vacancy through the website/media/press. A copy of the LAG application will also be forwarded to all LAG members and those on the interested parties list. The department's website is:  
[www.miamidade.gov/businesslicensesforhiretransportation](http://www.miamidade.gov/businesslicensesforhiretransportation).

**Luxury Limousine Sedan Vehicle Listing:**

Mr. Mora provided an overview of an economical vehicle that could possibly meet the luxury sedan standard and qualify as a fleet vehicle. Mr. Mora reported, the Toyota Avalon as well as other manufacturer models has produced a new series of "Eco" friendly vehicles.

Mr. Castro discussed the Chrysler 300, a 6 cylinder model, although a lower manufacturer cost. Members suggested staff review the Chrysler 300 models along with, the Suburban and Tahoe.

Mr. Solomon stated, fleet owners as well as members, must make a concerted effort towards moving into "Eco friendly" vehicles, and go green.

Mr. Castro offered a motion directing the department to further evaluate and provide a list of "Eco" friendly vehicles that would meet qualifying standards under the Code. The motion, seconded by Mr. Talbert was, unanimously approved.

**Chauffeur Registration:**

Mr. Castro discussed company endorsement clauses on chauffeur hack licenses. Mr. Castro stated he would like the County to adopt legislation revising current laws to eliminate company endorsements for drivers and thus provide drivers with the ability to work as, sub-contractors.

Mr. Mora had no issue with the above request although advised should LAG decide to follow through with Mr. Castro's suggestion, Commission sponsorship would have to be sought. Mr. Mora further stated, if you hire a driver to operate a rental car, that is a violation of the Code. If a private vehicle owner desired to hire a driver to operate their personal vehicle that is not in violation of the Code.

Mr. Castro offered a motion to support legislation language which would remove the driver endorsement from Passenger Service Companies, seconded by Mr. Mitros. Members did not vote on this motion but opened the floor for further discussion.

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Mr. Mora informed, the language in question was incorporated from the chauffeur section of the Code. Mr. Mora noted, having no issue with the every changing landscape over this past decade he reminded members, any such legislation proposal would require Commission sponsorship.

Mr. Mitros questioned the expressed purpose of the department's prior knowledge of driver sponsorship from passenger service companies. Mr. Mora stated the intended purpose in the Code for noting sponsorship was to be able to hold the permit holder responsible in the event of an accident. Mr. Solomon responded, there's no accountability to the permit holder for driver actions.

Mr. Mora advised, companies hiring drivers are responsible for checking a driver's background. Mr. Mitros inquired who is deemed the responsible party if a driver is involved in a car accident, noting his main concern was the overall safety of the customer.

The above discussion prompted audience attendee, Mr. Feliciano to provide a historical background. Feliciano advised, the endorsement was not due to the taxi drivers, noting the reason for the sponsorship at that time was for legal purposes.

Mr. Castro insisted the US Labor Department wants to list drivers as company employees instead of independent sub-contractors. Mr. Sorci suggested this was a vicious cycle for both sides, without resolve.

Mr. Solomon stated the insurance company has no knowledge of the hack license. The insurance company's sole concern is the background check on the individual operating the vehicle. Mr. Feliciano noted the real dictator for these endorsements was the insurance company and not the limousine company.

Mr. Mora inserted, under the current Code there is no authority to regulate companies such as Red Cap. Mr. Castro questioned selection for pool of drivers, in capsulizing the dynamics of these agreements. He question company's business model, driver use of personal car vs. a rental. Mr. Mora recited the cost to obtain a chauffeur license and/or renewal and cost to revise license for Miami-Dade County.

Members called the motion and proceeded to vote. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Talbert questioned clarification of the motion and its validity. Ms. Fried quantified Mr. Talbert's concern and suggested to the Chair, members discuss procedures for handling legislative items that were discuss outside the boundaries of LAG.

**Date Selection for Rescheduling July Quarterly Meeting:**

Several members announced their intentions to attend the TLPA Conference scheduled for July 27-31 in Boston. Members requested the July quarterly LAG meeting be rescheduled to early August to accommodate their absence.

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There being no objection to the above request Mr. Mora would instruct staff to reschedule the July LAG meeting to August 6, 2013.

**Open Discussion:**

Mr. Castro suggested elimination of the 1 hour prearrangement clause in the Limo Code. Mr. Mora replied, although not privy to proposed "Uber" legislation language he was aware folks from Southern Strategy were lobbying to request elimination of the one-hour prearrangement clause.

Mr. Talbert, speaking as CEO of the GMCVB, Miami's marketing promotions encourages visitors to come and enjoy this world class luxury destination. High-end hotels are demanding luxury services for their patrons. Mr. Talbert believed, the prearrangement clause was intended to separate the difference between for-hire taxis and limousines. Mr. Talbert stated, the one-hour clause should remain in the Code.

Mr. Goodman informed members a marketing campaign against "Uber" business model was underway. Ms. Lorraine Celestino duly noted, the TLPA movement was a public campaign and TLPA was seeking industry member donations.

Companies such as "Uber", "Fly Wheel" and "Hailo" along with other competitive "Apps", are delivering services worldwide in today's marketplace.

Members discussed staging concerns and customer service issues. Members agreed it was imperative to "deliver excellent customer service" to customers. Today's clientele have high expectations for service and utilize technology. Keeping up with today's competitive market is challenging to owners striving to provide their customers with these services.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further LAG business, Mr. Goodman motioned adjournment, seconded by Mr. Meilan with, unanimous approval.

Thereafter, the meeting was adjourned.