

**Taxicab Advisory Group**  
**January 22, 2013 Amended Meeting Minutes**  
**140 West Flagler Street, Conference Room #908**  
**Miami, Florida 33130**

**TAG Members Present:**

Dr. William Samek	Chairperson/Consumer
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Fred Wong	Seaport (PortMiami) Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer Services
Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative
Heidi Johnson-Wright	MDC ADA Coordination Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Driver Representative

**TAG Members Absent:**

Dawood Akhtar	Vacated TAG seat
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**Staff Present:**

Joe Mora	For-Hire Transportation Director
Raul Gonzalez	Sp. Projects, For-Hire Transportation
Steve Bobes	Adm. Officer, For-Hire Transportation
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, For-Hire Transportation
Nancy Perez	Senior Ex. Secy., Business Affairs Div.

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call and advised the Chair a quorum was present. Mr. Mora advised the Chair, he recently learned TAG Member Mr. Dawood Akhtar recently sold his interest in his for-hire license which therefore disqualified him to fill his TAG seat as a Taxicab Owner/Driver Representation.

Dr. Samek commenced the meeting welcoming members and set the agenda.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Dr. Samek requested members review and approve the minutes of the October 23, 2012 TAG meeting. Mr. Feliciano offered a motion to approve the October 23, 2012 TAG minutes, seconded by Mr. Moskowitz, with unanimous approval.

**Chauffeur of the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter:**

Mr. Aedo nominated driver 4-4 to be recipient for the Chauffeur of the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter award. Ms. Beltran seconded the nomination, with unanimous member approval.

**Chauffeur of the Year 2012:**

Mr. Moskowitz nominated driver 2-1 to be recipient for the Chauffeur of the Year 2012 award. Mr. Feliciano seconded that nomination, with unanimous member approval.

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**Taxicab Stand Update:**

The updates below reflect the division's taxicab stand accomplishments for the fourth quarter of 2012. As a result of the division's request, the below taxicab stands were established, re-established or increased:

- In addition to the taxicab stand by the Dolphin Mall main entrance, a one (1) car stand with a four (4) car feeder-line was established by the food court entrance.

**The Division coordinated the activation of a temporary taxicab stand at Sun Life Stadium - Gate 4 for the following sporting event(s):**

- Orange Bowl Game held on January 4, 2013
- BCS Championship Game held on January 7, 2013

It should be noted, that we had enforcement staff at all these events to ensure for-hire vehicles were in Code compliance” “

**In partnership with the City of Miami Beach Parking Department temporary taxicab stands were established at Miami Beach's Convention Center in an effort to provide additional transportation services to the following events:**

- A seven (7) car stand was established at the Miami Beach Convention Center, 1900 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach

**Staff coordinated the establishment of temporary taxicab stands at the following events, in an effort to provide additional transportation service to the motoring public.**

**2012 NASCAR Championship Races:**

- A five (5) car temporary stand was established at the NE corner of SW 336<sup>th</sup> Street & SW 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**2012 Art Basel / Art Miami**

- A seven (7) car stand was established at Midtown Miami adjacent to the Rubell Collection 95 NW 29<sup>th</sup> Street.

For a complete listing of taxicab stand locations throughout Miami-Dade County, please visit the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources website at: <http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/forms/taxi-stand-locations.pdf>.

**Uber – Digital Dispatching Service:**

Mr. Mora provided background information on an on-demand private business venture named “Uber”, desiring to establish business in the South Florida marketplace. Mr. Mora

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stated the company is based in various cities throughout the United States and quickly becoming a concern for the taxi and limousine industries.

Mr. Mora further stated Uber developed a mobile application which connects passengers with drivers. Customers can request 24 hour transportation services from anywhere by utilizing the "apps" on their iPhone or Androids or email: [m.uber.com](mailto:m.uber.com).

Mr. Mora discussed Uber's business model and website which reads "Ride in Style." Uber dispatches the nearest driver to pick up passenger. Customers receive text messages indicating estimated time of arrival as well as arrival wherein a sleek black vehicle awaits. Customer then provide drivers with destination information and away they go."

The iPhone and Android apps are used to establish pick-up location and map trips. By utilizing Uber's website: [m.uber.com](http://m.uber.com), clientele can type their address or text info within the US and Canada by using their address and City to: 827-222. Uber advertises "Leave the Cash at Home". Upon arrival at their destination(s), Uber automatically charges the credit card on file to avoid handling of payments by drivers other than, receiving "gratuities." Fare prices begin with a base fare. Thereafter, fees depend on travelling speed over 11mph, a distance fee for traveling below 11mph, and a time fee.

Mr. Mora advised Uber's future plans are to expand operations to include non-taxi ridesharing. Mr. Mora understood, in several jurisdictions Uber is being accused of operating an illegal taxicab operation.

Members raised various concerns and discussed compliance of the County's Limousine laws in regards to the one-hour pre-arrangement provisions. Mr. Eisenberg noted he did not have an issue with Uber as long as their operation was in compliance to the County's For-hire Codes.

Mr. Eisenberg proffered a motion to support the continuation of the uniform meter rates along with the one hour pre-arrangement clause. Mr. Eisenberg stated members could approve or withdraw the motion as he was willing to further discuss issue. Motion was not seconded. Mr. Feliciano suggested discussion of that motion.

Mr. Feliciano urged the advisory group to reach out to their County Commissioners to inform Commissioners TAG members would stand behind the current for-hire Code pertaining to taxi/limousines services.

Mr. Feliciano noted Uber has a contract with the City of Miami. Mr. Feliciano suggested enforcement staff investigate whether company was utilizing license or non-license limousine companies and if so, ascertain which local companies were leasing these vehicles.

Mr. Moskowitz believed revising existing laws for luxury sedan vehicles would not only greatly affect the limousine industry but would also have a major impact on the taxi industry.

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Mr. Eisenberg motioned to support existing laws regarding luxury sedans to include rate, year, make of vehicles and prearrangements. Mr. Feliciano seconded Mr. Eisenberg's motion.

Mr. Aedo suggested the motion regarding luxury sedans vehicles be withdrawn. He noted this was a Taxi Advisory Group meeting and questioned why the main focus was on luxury limousine sedans, their existing laws such as the one-hour prearrangements provision and uniform rates. Mr. Aedo said he had no knowledge of the limousine industry and opted not to support Mr. Eisenberg's motion. Ms. Beltran and Ms. Wright-Johnson both agreed with Mr. Aedo and therefore, were not supportive of Mr. Eisenberg's motion.

Mr. Aedo suggested a joint meeting be considered for TAG and LAG to further discuss the Uber topic.

Dr. Samek suggested Commissioner's be informed of Uber's website. It clearly states, "Your car will arrive in minutes". Dr. Samek questioned whether their webpage statement breached the Codes governing the limousine industry in Miami-Dade County.

Mr. Mora stated, Uber is in violation of the County Codes with a motto of "Your car will arrive in minutes". But Uber's website advertises worldwide. Mr. Mora advised Uber supports pre-arrangement and have stated, they would like to get rid of the one-hour prearrangement clause in the Code.

Mr. Eisenberg modified his motion to read, enforce existing limousine laws under the luxury sedan category and suggested the taxi industry seek to improve areas for technology to include credit cards and dispatching. Mr. Feliciano seconded the motion. Five members were in favor, none opposed, and four members sustained. Motion passed

**Credit Cards:**

Mr. Eisenberg discussed usage of credit cards in taxicabs and believed the gas station model should be explored. Mr. Eisenberg stated he reached out to a meter shop employee to explore methodologies for implementing a discount fee in taximeters to would show passengers their taxi fare. Passengers could opt whether to pay with cash and receive a discounted rate applied to their fare.

Mr. Eisenberg proffered a motion, requiring all taxicabs to accept credit cards utilizing the gas station model to cover card fees and placement of these credit card machines on the back side of the driver's seat. Ms. Beltran favored an increase per mile instead of upfront fees but would support the will of this committee. Mr. Moskowitz suggested a \$2.50 drop fee, with an additional \$1.00 each 1/6 of a mile. The motion, seconded by Mr. Feliciano, was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

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**Taxi Growth Formula update:**

Mr. Mora requested a TAG Subcommittee be created to review new technology and methodologies for establishing a taxi growth formula that would involve all Passenger Service Companies. TAG members selected Mr. Eisenberg as their sub-committee chair. Audience member Robert Fuentes volunteered his services to this sub-committee.

While several TAG members left the meeting, Mr. Mora advised he would reach out to inform them of the formation of this sub-committee. Mr. Mora will establish a date for the first sub-committee meeting and inform members.

**Updates: Taxi Renewals & Taxicab Advisory Group Vacancies:**

Mr. Mora informed members taxi renewals will commence on February 1, 2013. As part of the request for the 2013 Taxi Renewals process, permit holders as well as drivers, will be required to submit their passenger service company agreements.

Industry members were for warned of this legislative change. Mr. Mora noted if agreements are not submitted when renewal applications are received, deficiencies will be issued. The application process will not be placed on hold for lack of compliance. Permit holders will be contacted in order to make necessary changes and/or come into compliance.

Mr. Mora advised, the division is seeking applicants to fill 5 vacant TAG seats. Deadline submission for applications is March 29, 2013. These applications are posted on the department's webpage.

Dr. Samek advised remaining TAG members, a quorum was not present therefore casting votes would not be valid.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Samek moved to adjourn meeting, unanimously approved by all. Meeting adjourned.