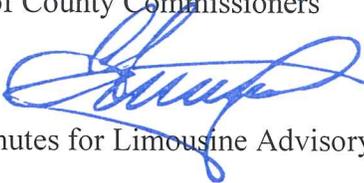


Memorandum



Date: August 21, 2013

To: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: Quarterly Meeting Minutes for Limousine Advisory Group and Taxicab Advisory Group

At the July 3, 2012 Board of County Commission meeting, the attached Resolution #R-599-12 directed the Mayor or designee to provide the Board with the votes taken and quarterly meeting minutes of both the Limousine Advisory and Taxicab Advisory Groups. Where votes taken or minutes of these advisory groups relate to pending legislation, the Board requested submission of such information as soon as practicable to allow full consideration by the County Commission or Committee of relevant jurisdiction.

In compliance to the Board's request please find attached, copies of the Limousine Advisory Group's April 30, 2013 quarterly meeting minutes, and the Taxicab Advisory Group's April 23, 2013 quarterly meeting minutes.

Please direct inquiries regarding the information above to Mr. Joe Mora, For-Hire Transportation Division Chief for the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, at 305-375-5952 or email: JM2@miamidade.gov.

c: Jack Osterholt, Deputy Mayor/Director, RER
Joe Mora, For-Hire Transportation Division Chief, Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources

Attachments

**Taxicab Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes for the April 23, 2013
140 West Flagler Street, #908**

Members Present:

Dr. William Samek	Consumer/Chairperson
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Fred Wong	Seaport Representative
Heidi Johnson-Wright	MDC ADA Coordination Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Driver Representative
Vacant	Chauffeur

Members Absent:

Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer Services

Staff Present:

Joe Mora	Division Director, For-Hire Transp.
Steven Bobes	Administrative Officer, For-Hire Transp.
Nancy Perez	Senior Exec Secretary, Business Affairs
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, For-Hire Transportation

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call. Mr. Mora advised the Chair a quorum was present although members Rolando Aedo and Robert Singer would not be in attendance.

Chairman Samek commenced the TAG meeting by welcoming members & audience participants. He set the agenda and established guidelines for audience participants to speak.

Approval of the Minutes:

Dr. Samek requested approval of the April 23, 2013 minutes. Mr. Moskowitz offered a motion to approve the April 23, 2013 TAG minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Feliciano, with unanimous member approval.

Chauffeur of the 1st Quarter:

Mr. Moskowitz proffered a nomination for driver 1-2, stating there was value in the return to the passenger. Ms. Beltran nominated driver 1-3 for their excellent customer service to the Consulate. Ms. Beltran's nomination was seconded by Mr. Wong, with unanimous member approval. The recipient for Chauffeur of the 1st Quarter Award was Driver 1-3.

Taxicab Stand Update:

The below information serves to update the quarterly taxicab stand report and staff accomplishments from the prior January 22, 2013 quarterly TAG meeting.

As a result of our request the following taxicab stands have been established, re-established and/or increased.

- Established a temporary taxicab stand to the Miami Beach Parking Department for the upcoming 2013 IDEA event, in an effort to provide additional transportation service.
- Four (4) car taxicabs stand at the Mandarin Oriental 500 Brickell Key Drive. Pending taxi sign.
- Homewood Suites by Hilton Miami Airport, 3590 NW 74th Avenue, pending taxicab stands.
- A one (1) car stand was re-established on 7436 Ocean Terrace adjacent to Ocean Surf Hotel and the Days Inn.
- A two (2) car stand was re-established on Collins Ave & 2nd Street that was removed due to construction.
- A four (4) car stand was reestablished on Collins Ave & S. Pointe Drive, which was closed due to construction.
- Coordinated the re-establishment of the JW Marriott (Brickell) taxicab stand, which was closed due to construction.

For a list of all taxicab stand locations, please visit the Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources website at:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/forms/taxi-stand-locations.pdf>.

Taxicab Growth Formula:

Mr. Mora read various recommendations and mechanisms for developing a taxicab growth formula. Mr. Mora advised ultimately this fundamental process will set forth an established formula for future taxi medallion growth. The growth formula proposal consists of the following measures: 1) electronic data files from Passenger Service Companies (PSC); 2) percentage growth in taxi trips dispatched by the Airport and Seaport; 3) percentage growth in hotel occupancy levels within Miami-Dade County as provided by the Greater Miami & Beaches Hotel Association; and, 4) general population growth of Miami-Dade County. This formula factors in: the Annual Medallion Taxi Permits to issue = .25% > trips provided + .25% > Airport and Seaport + .25% > Hotel Occupancy + .25% > in population, where the symbol ">" refers to "growth in".

Mr. Mora noted when considering the percentage of population growth, members must consider, percentage of population and passengers with physical and mobility issues and those requiring use of wheelchair accessible cabs. The department would consider adopting the approach outlined in Dr. Mundy's 2007 Taxi Ridership Study. Although the for-hire industry would like to incorporate technology for vehicles most drivers are unwilling to do so because they will be responsible for technology fees.

Mr. Eisenberg noted within the last three months his company has witnessed a growth spurt in dispatching lines. Mr. Eisenberg went on to discuss the lack of productivity from taxicabs, the

lack of service in North and South Dade; down time before drivers can obtain their chauffeur registrations, license transfer and sells for single owner drivers, fleet operations if cabs could be transferred within a specific timeframe should they be allowed to sell their license. Mr. Eisenberg suggested a formula of 43 cabs with 2% growth mechanism annually, licenses held for three years with maximum productivity of 2 shifts (night/day), after the fifth year drivers should have the ability to sell their license to whomever. The end result would be more fleet cabs, if afforded transfer ability without restrictions.

Mr. Feliciano agreed. Mr. Feliciano emphasized all new licenses must be required to operate a double shift 24 hours a day.

Chauffeur John Valdes informed members his lease rate have risen at least fourteen times over these past years yet there has not been a meter rate increase since 2007. Mr. Valdes complained about the abundance of competition within the industry and suggested no more than forty-three permits be issued annually.

Chauffeur Jackson Rip Holmes felt the industry needed more lotteries to empower drivers. Mr. Holmes believed members should reinstitute the prior formula taken out of the Code several years ago dealing with the growth population x 1000.

Chauffeur Niez Mohammed discussed rising lease prices, there unaffordability, and the industries need for future medallion growth in order to control rising lease prices. He further stated, allowing driver's freedom to distribute licenses would create a higher productivity from drivers.

Owner Operator Jorge Cortez & Frank Hernandez agreed that fleet operators would have vehicles on the road at all times. It was suggested this industry needs to get back to basics in order to run a smooth operation with a re-vamping of the system.

Discussion continued as many audience participants voiced their concern regarding the mechanisms for developing a growth formula measure, New York City's methodology, Ride Share, the merits behind the '98 Ordinance verses what did not work from passage of that legislation.

Ms. Beltran stressed this industry must address higher customer services standards and professionalism to engage clientele. The riding public today demands higher technology and service. Drivers must embrace technology as the lack of technology will impact taxi services. Ms. Beltran as noted, technology is here to stay and on demand from consumers.

Ms. Beltran reported the population in Miami-Dade County is roughly 2.6 million people. Travelers with mobility issues under the ADA laws have the right to demand the same service as other customers. Lately, their service demands have increased tremendously and the industry is just not servicing the needs of that community.

Mr. Feliciano stated there was a lack of money on the streets of Miami and adding more competition would only flood the marketplace. At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Feliciano proffered a motion to accept the percentage growth formula language from Dr. Mundy's Taxi Rider Study. Mr. Feliciano also motioned to consider adding the lost language to the formula from the Code prior to the 1998 ordinance passage. Mr. Eisenberg seconded motion although there was no vote taken.

Mr. Mora will review language change and have information for the next TAG meeting for members. Mr. Mora posed concerns that all modes may not be captured.

Ms. Wright-Johnson raised concerns on changes to the percentage in population growth. It's essential somewhere in the formula that staff should consider seeking certain taxi cabs for people with mobility issues and/or disabilities. Ms. Wright-Johnson also states to look into tourist population as well.

Mr. Mora noted the Code reads three (3%) percent of for-hire fleet vehicles must be designated wheelchair accessible (WAC). Mr. Mora informed members to keep in mind all proposed growth formula language must also have the approval of the Board of County Commissioners. Growth formula implementation deadline is January 2014.

Member discussion pursued reiterating various methods for developing a reasonable formula for growth within the taxi industry. Mr. Moskowitz requested this topic be continued at the next quarterly TAG meeting. Mr. Wong noted his concerns and agreed the matter required further discussion. Mr. Mora responded, duly noted and agreed matter would be placed on the next agenda.

Mr. Feliciano requested his prior motion be tabled in order for the department to supply further research data to present at the July quarterly TAG meeting. Mr. Feliciano's motion was seconded by Mr. Eisenberg with, unanimous approval.

To conclude, members agreed upon the propose language below as the method for establishing a growth formula mechanism. It read:

"A taxicab growth formula that consists of a 2% increase in the total number of medallions rounded up to the next whole number ending in five (5), for a period of five (5) years. Two (2) of the total number of licenses annually, would be subject to an auction".

Taxicab Advisory Group Vacancies:

Mr. Mora provided members with a status report on the five vacant TAG seats. The application process closed March 29, 2013 although the department only received three out of the four applications for the five separate categories. The department plans to re-advertise this vacancy.

Adjournment:

Mr. Samek moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Moskowitz and unanimously approved by all.

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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.

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.