

Taxicab Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes for the April 17, 2012
140 West Flagler Street, #908

Members Present:

Dr. William Samek	Consumer/Chairperson
Dawood Akhtar	Driver Representative
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Fred Wong	Seaport Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer
Vacant Seat	Office of ADA Coordination Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Driver Representative

Members Absent:

Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative
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Staff Present:

Joe Mora	Division Director, For-Hire Transp.
Steve Bobes	Administrative Officer, For-Hire Transp.
Ivan Cotayo	Taxi Cab Coordinator, For-Hire Transp.
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, For-Hire Transportation
Nancy Perez	Senior Ex. Secretary, Business Affairs

Dr. Samek welcomed members, set the agenda and commenced today's meeting.

Approval of the Minutes:

Dr. Samek requested members review and approve the February 1, 2012 minutes. Mr. Moskowitz offered a motion to approve the February 1, 2012 TAG minutes, seconded by Mr. Feliciano, with unanimous member approval.

Chauffeur of the 1st Quarter:

Ms. Beltran nominated driver 1-5 to be the recipient for the Chauffeur of the 1st Quarter award, with unanimously member approval.

Taxicab Stand Update

The following is an update on our taxicab stand accomplishments since the April 2012 TAG meeting:

As a result of our earlier proposals; the following taxicab stands have been established.

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- A two (2) car stand was established at the Comfort Suites Miami-Kendall located at 3901 SW 117th Avenue.
- A twelve (12) car stand was established at the Miami Marlins Ballpark. These spaces are located on the east side of NW 16th Avenue between NW 5th & 6th Street. In addition, a feeder-line was created on NW 5th Street between NW 16th & 17th Avenue.

Coordinated the establishment of the following temporary taxicab stands in an effort to provide additional transportation service to the public attending these events:

- A six (6) car stand was established at the Miami Beach Convention Center Hall B, for the 2012 ITEXPO event from January 31st to February 3rd.
- A six (6) car stand was established at the Miami Beach Convention Center Hall B, for the 2012 Miami Beach Boat Show from February 16th to the 20th.
- A 15+ car stand was established at the Miami Beach Convention Center Hall D, for the 2012 Cruise Shipping event from March 12-15.
- A 10+ car stand was established at Crandon Park for the 2012 Sony Ericsson Open Event from March 19th to April 1st.
- A 15+ car stand was established at the Miami Beach Convention Center Hall D, for the WrestleMania (Fan Fest) event from March 29th to April 1st, 2012
- Coordinated the activation of the temporary taxicab stand at the Sun Life Stadium Gate 4 for the WestleMania event on April 1st, 2012.

For a list of all taxicab stand locations please visit Miami-Dade County Sustainability, Planning and Economic Enhancement Department website at: http://www.miamidade.gov/csd/library/taxi_stand_loc.pdf

Legislative Updates:

Mr. Mora read into the record excerpt of Florida House Bill 675 and Senate Bill 1452. HB 675 stated in part: 166.0433 – *passenger vehicles for hire; credit card surcharges. A municipality may not prohibit the owner of operator of a taxicab, limousine, jitney, or other passenger vehicle for hire from imposing a surcharge on a passenger who elects to pay the passenger fare using a credit card in lieu of payment by cash, check or similar means...*

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and, Senate Bill 1452 paraphrased as followed: "*125-01035- prohibiting counties and municipalities from imposing certain restrictions on the accepted methods of payment of passenger fares for certain passenger vehicles for hire..*"

Mr. Mora discussed how these bills mirrored each other although both died on the legislative floor. Mr. Mora suggested TAG members review similar type of legislation that would provide future recommendations to the Board in regards to credit card usage.

Mr. Mora also reviewed the proposed bill implementing passage of the American w/Disability Act (ADA) which mandates the creation of a taxicab study (2013) report that would review the best course of action to insure wheelchair accessible cabs throughout the ADA community that are affordable and ridership accessible.

Underserved & South Miami Dade Areas:

Dawood Akhtar advised he presented a citizen presentation on April 4, 2012 to the full Board of County Commissioners regarding the Underserved Area (U/A) and South Miami Dade Area. Mr. Mora informed the TAG members; that he met with several Commissioners to further discuss Mr. Akhtar U/A proposal. Upon the request of Commissioner Martinez Office, the County Attorney's Office in conjunction with the For-Hire Transportation Division was tasked with drafting a proposed Underserved Area Ordinance, currently under Commission review.

The proposed ordinance, if adopted, provides underserved drivers the ability to operate outside their designated zones and work County-wide on "odd and even days" with the exception of Miami International Airport. One stipulation was implemented, drivers would be required to have and utilize radio communication.

Mr. Mora discussed the suggested conversion fee and operating criteria for these vehicles. Ms. Beltran insisted drivers fully understood and was aware of the perimeters prior to purchasing and operating such vehicles. Members also agreed technology installation such as GPS or Geo fencing should be factored into the agreement. Mr. Mora suggested, members consider decreasing the conversion fee from those operating wheelchair accessible cabs (\$10,000.00 to \$5,000.00).

Mr. Moskowitz offered a motion for drivers desiring of converting these UA cabs into County-wide cabs and driving under the odd/even day stipulation with the exception of MIA, a minimum conversion fee of \$5,000 be charged. Mr. Moskowitz motion further stated, the conversion fee should have a loan payoff period to the County of at least 18 months, similar to other payment

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arrangements previously offered by the department. The above motion was seconded by Diego Feliciano. TAG members voted 7-1; motion passed.

ADA Coordinator, Ms. Heidi Johnson-Wright and representatives of the disable community expressed their concerns in regards to the inability to obtain ridership and assistance for wheelchair accessible taxis when necessary. Community representatives stated this has been an ongoing issue for quite some time and must be addressed.

Several TAG members were unaware of the wheelchair accessible vehicles not being available. Mr. Mora suggested, the only way for a company to be aware of the inconsistencies in wheelchair vehicle service would be to place a GPS unit in each vehicle. GPS placement inside each vehicle would offer tracking access on vehicles not responding to dispatched calls to assist a disable passenger seeking transportation.

After further discussion members offered a motion to form a sub-committee that would solely work on resolving the transportation issues of the disabled community. Motion passed unanimously. TAG members volunteered to serve on the sub-committee along with a member from the audience. Mr. Mora suggested, the County's ADA Coordinator Ms. Johnson-Wright also serve.

American Shuttle:

Mr. Mora advised members Mr. Ray Gonzalez, President of American Shuttle had been invited to address members' concerns and answer any inquiries regarding his PMC application.

Industry members had various concerns regarding an American Shuttle agenda item listed on the April 9, 2012 Regional Transportation Committee meeting. After much discussion, the Commission directed County staff to review this matter with both TAG and LAG members and to clarify any misconceptions or misunderstandings prior to returning this matter to the full Board.

Mr. Mora provided an overview of the agenda item that if approved would give American Shuttle a new passenger motor carrier certificate and allow him to provide 24 hour pre-arrange transportation service to passengers. Concurrently, American Shuttle has two existing PMC licenses and was awarded the Miami International Airport ground transportation contract.

Mr. Gonzalez answered all inquiries addressed to him and advised that if this item did not pass he would convert one of his company's existing PMC license into 24 hour transportation. Mr. Gonzalez was amenable to working out drivers'

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concerns at the airport and would address their complaints with personnel in his company.

Ms. Beltran noted airport business was plentiful for both taxis and shuttles and that she was fully aware of the various drivers' complaints. Landside aviation staff were mitigating all troubled areas and holding biweekly meetings to air individual driver complaints.

Adjournment

No further agenda items were slated for discussion therefore Dr. Samek moved, with unanimous member approval to adjourn this meeting.