



BURLINGTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE LICENSING BOARD
SHARON BUSHOR ROOM, CITY HALL, 149 CHURCH ST. BURLINGTON, VT 05401 OR
REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 30, 2024

Present: Paul Hines, Stephen Hamlin, Youness Jamil
Also present: Hayley McClenahan, Tenzin Chokden

Meeting start time: 5:32 PM

1. Agenda

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Motion to accept the agenda by Stephen Hamlin, seconded by Youness Jamil.
Approved unanimously.

2. Previous Minutes

Motion to accept the previous minutes by Stephen Hamlin, seconded by Youness Jamil.
Approved unanimously.

3. Public Forum

No members of the public commented.

4. Hearings

4. Hearings: JDs Taxi

Hayley McClenahan swore in Gary Margolis, the complainant, and Josic Slobodan, the owner/driver of the company.

Gary Margolis stated that he had taken a cab home from the Burlington airport late one night and checked out the website. He would generally like to understand how much a taxi will cost to return home to Shelburne and read the process. According to information on the meter rate on the website, it should have cost about \$20 and ended up being \$40 for 7.5 miles. What he read online at the time was that meters were the way the fees were calculated.

The driver, while certainly pleasant enough, explained to him that the meter wasn't working and that they were using a zone system. He couldn't find anything about that online, but was told that a ride to Shelburne is automatically \$40. He said it was late at night, maybe after midnight at that point, and he paid the \$40 but just wasn't satisfied that that's what the fee should have been.

His understanding was that taxis needed to have working meters, and again, he could find nothing about zones. When he did raise the issue during the ride, the driver responded that he had already accepted the fare because he was driving away at that point.

Youness Jamil asked: when did the ride occur and was the price negotiated before he entered the cab?

Gary Margolis answered that he took the cab ride on February 7, 2024. He does not remember if the vehicle had already moved by the time the fare was stated or otherwise, but he remembers the meter didn't work. When the car drove off, he complained about it. He thinks he started this conversation once the vehicle began moving, when he started to realize that something wasn't right.

Youness Jamil asked Gary if he had ever taken a taxi cab from the airport to Shelburne before for \$20.

Gary Margolis responded that the fare was roughly calculated according to rates posted on the website. He had since taken a taxi cab and now knows to ask if the meter is working before getting in a cab and he has paid around \$25 but not \$40 since the last ride.

Josic Slobodan told the complainant it would be \$40 for the ride and the complainant said he didn't have time to wait and had to go. On reaching the destination, the complainant was surprised by the price of the trip. He told the board that his meter was broken and no one in town serviced the meter. The meter is now repaired and calibrated to the new price and he would be happy to use his meter and offer a refund if desired.

Gary Margolis stated that he is not seeking compensation from the driver and wants to bring the matter before the board to investigate what is happening with the airport taxi service.

The board will deliberate on this hearing and a decision notice will be sent by mail.

5. Deliberative Session

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The board entered a deliberative session at 5:53 PM and ended at 6:00 PM.

6. Discussion of the new rates

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Youness Jamil suggested adding another third and fourth meter rate, especially for long-distance rides because he feels like the drivers should get compensation for their time when they agreed to pick up a customer at a certain time and wait for the customer to come out of the airport.

Paul Hines stated that the new rates have time and distance elements incorporated. He asked Youness Jamil if that was not sufficient enough.

Youness Jamil replied it is sufficient for short distances that are local but not for long distances.

Paul Hines questioned if that's in the board's purview.

Stephen Hamlin said if a ride originated from the airport then it certainly is.

Paul Hines has been working with Councilor Barlow to add to the ordinance to require all taxis to use taxi meters if they are operating from a taxi stand. He suggested instead of using a complicated rate system for long distances, why not set a boundary of distance for taxis to use their meters and if they go above the distance then it's up to the drivers.

Hayley McClenahan said that if the ordinance is to be updated to require the use of meters at airport pick-ups, some reasonable parameters need to be set about that.

Youness Jamil asked if a taxi from another city that drops off passengers at the airport requires a license from the City of Burlington.

Hayley McClenahan said that they are not required to get a license.

The board discussed setting a distance between 50 – 60 miles and will revisit this at the next meeting.

7. Discussion of signage at the airport

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Paul Hines wanted to make sure we have been communicating with the airport on signage on the new rates.

Youness Jamil said he saw new signs with new meter rates and passenger bills of rights posted on the booth at the taxi queue line.

8. Discussion for other updates

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Paul Hines shared an update that he had discussed with Councilor Barlow on updating two items on the ordinance. The first one is requiring taxis to use rates from the airport queue line and will add discussion on the distance limit of 50 miles. The second is requiring drivers to accept credit card payments.

Youness Jamil suggested finding another member on this board to meet a quorum if one of the members is out because it takes three members to meet a quorum.

Hayley McClenahan stated that Councilor Barlow's request on credit card requirements is under internal review.

Tenzin shared that over 30 taxi vehicles have been calibrated to new meter rates and thanked Byron for all his help. Byron has also trained Youness Jamil and Yacine from Nation Cab to calibrate meters and they are now both certified.

Youness Jamil asked if the board had a meeting on an incident that happened at the airport between Abdi Dhere and Muhaideen Batah, a ramp agent at the airport. He also heard that Abdi Dhere was recently arrested and failed to show up at a court hearing.

Tenzin, upon receiving a formal complaint from the Muhaideen, will inquire further about Abdi Dhere and seek a hearing.

9. Adjournment

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9.1. Motion to adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Stephen Hamlin, seconded by Youness Jamil.
Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.