



BURLINGTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE LICENSING BOARD
QUEEN CITY ROOM, 3RD FLOOR, CITY HALL, 149 CHURCH ST. BURLINGTON, VT
05401 OR REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 30, 2024

Draft

Members present: Paul Hines (Chair)
 Youness Jamil
 Stephen Hamlin
Also present: Hayley McClenahan
 Tenzin Chokden

Meeting start time: 5:43 PM

1. Agenda

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

2. Previous Minutes

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Paul Hines noted an error in the last paragraph under Discussion for other updates to be corrected from “The Muhaideen” to “Mr. Muhaideen”. Tenzin Chokden said he will correct. Stephen Hamlin made the motion to accept the amended previous minutes, seconded by Youness Jamil. Approved unanimously.

3. Public Forum

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No members of the public commented.

4. Communications

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4.1. Andrew Peissig Taxi Complaint

Andrew Peissig stated that he frequently travels from the Burlington Airport. He said in pre-pandemic times taxis were straightforward, with airport fees and metered rates. Over the past 18 months, he has consistently experienced taxi drivers at the airport not using their meters. They have had negotiations over the fee or even been told upfront that it will be 35 dollars. He thought maybe he was unaware of

the change in taxi policies. This issue has been consistent, with him traveling from the airport four times this year. He has had friends with similar experiences. He requested that taxis start using the meters again.

Stephen Hamlin asked: when was the last time he took a cab from the airport?

Andrew Peissig replied: May 11, 2024.

Paul Hines added that the meter rates have been updated and an ordinance change is being discussed to make it mandatory to use the meter when giving rides from the airport. If the passenger didn't agree to a rate before entering the vehicle, the driver should have been required to use the meter rate. He asked if there was a specific trip in which Andrew had experienced a driver not using a meter.

Andrew Peissig stated he has receipts from three taxi companies recently from his email receipts record.

Paul Hines informed Andrew that a specific date, like May 11th, would be beneficial for holding a hearing, as the board is aware of the issue and is working on amending the ordinance.

Andrew Peissig acknowledges Paul's support and urges the board to address this issue in the future.

Youness Jamil asked Andrew Peissig if he could give more information on the name of the cab company, time the ride was taken, color of the vehicle, or name of the driver.

Andrew Peissig doesn't remember the company's name or color but stated it was a female cab driver and it was at 7:00 p.m.

Youness Jamil said there is only one female driver who operates at the airport queue line and he knows her.

4.2. Complaints against Abdi Dhere

The board discussed the two statements from the two drivers at the airport regarding Abdi Dhere skipping the queue line and taking customers from them.

Abdi Dhere was not present at the meeting.

Paul Hines asked Hayley McClenahan if there was a violation of the airport rules.

Hayley McClenahan confirmed and the board can deliberate on this matter in deliberation session.

5. Hearings

5. Hearings

5.1. Airport Winooski Cab - Abdi Dhere

Abdi Dhere was not present for the hearing.

Paul Hines asked if the board could proceed with the hearing with just the complainant who was

present.

Hayley McClenahan confirmed the board can proceed, as notices were sent to both parties.

Tenzin Chokden said that both parties were sent email notices by certified mail on May 21, 2024. The certified mail sent to Abdi Dhere was refused by the addressee on May 23, 2024.

The complainant, Muhaideen Batah, was sworn in by Hayley McClenahan.

Muhaideen Batah first encountered Abdi Dhere at the Winooski post office, where Abdi Dhere came in and started cursing at him.

Paul Hines asked if he had known Abdi before.

Muhaideen Batah said he knew Abdi when he used to work in the taxi business. He described the incident in the airport men's restroom between him and Abdi Dhere as stated in the police report attached in the agenda packet.

Paul Hines told Muhaideen Batah he appreciated him coming to the hearing.

6. Deliberative Session

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The board entered the deliberative session at 18:05.

The board ended the deliberative session at 18:21.

7. New Business

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Youness Jamil reported that some drivers are unhappy with the updated metered rates as of April 15th, as they are struggling to cover insurance costs and are complaining about inflation. Some drivers refuse to use meters and charge flat-rate fees, sometimes having only one customer in four hours for approximately \$20.

Paul Hines' understanding of December rates compared to other cities is that our new rates are slightly higher, with more money going to drivers. However, he acknowledges insufficient business due to customer's bad experiences.

Youness Jamil acknowledges the slow taxi business at the airport due to its bad reputation and observes families opting for pick-up instead of taxis.

Stephen Hamlin stated that people can now post on websites and arrange their pick-up instead of taking a cab.

Paul Hines stated the new rates set in April are good and stated that there's no need to alter rates, but rather there is a need to enhance the overall experience.

Youness Jamil is doing well in his business, but he also addresses the struggles of other drivers who are leaving or are considering leaving.

Youness Jamil commented Blazer Transportation has been criticized for not using their meters by other drivers.

Paul Hines reported using a Blazer Transportation cab today, with a meter being used for his trip.

Paul Hines shared that Councilor Barlow will present the ordinance changes drafted by Hayley McClenahan at the next TEUC meeting on June 11, 2024.

Hayley McClenahan gave an update that the TEUC committee's review is scheduled for June 11th, followed by the city council's decision on whether to proceed with the necessary meter piece at the airport.

The next meeting will be on July 2nd.

8. Adjournment

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8.1. Motion to adjourn

Stephen Hamlin motioned to approve. Youness Jamil seconded. Approved unanimously.

The meeting ended at 6:32 p.m.