



Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board

Thursday, July 11, 2024, 5:30 PM, Sharon Bushor Conference Room, City Hall, 149 Church St.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99726243187?pwd=HrRAqyjUd79TYu9PtcxfLdP2C1Yfyd.1>

Meeting ID: 997 2624 3187

Passcode: 789663

One tap mobile

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1. Agenda

1.1. Motion to amend/adopt agenda

File Attachments

2. Approve Minutes

2.1. Approval of 05/30/24 Minutes

3. Public Forum

3.1. PUBLIC FORUM - Verbal Comments

4. Hearings

4.1. Ride Easy Taxi

5. Deliberative Session

6. New Business

7. Adjournment

7.1. Motion to adjourn



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

4. Communications

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

7. New Business

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.



SWORN COMPLAINT
Taxi Administration Office
Clerk/Treasurer's Office
149 Church St. Burlington, VT 05401
802-865-7019, Fax: 802-865-7014

If you have experienced a problem while using a taxi and would like to file a formal complaint, please fill out the form below. If your complaint involves a traffic offense, please contact the Burlington Police Department at (802) 658-2700. Fields marked with an * indicates required information. We will contact you within 15 days.

Complainant Information:

First and Last Name: * Aziz bakkali

Address: * [REDACTED]

City, State, Zip: * South Burlington 05403

Daytime Phone Number: * [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

Incident Information:

Date of alleged violation: * May 29, 30, 2024

Location of Incident: * Airport of Burlington Location of Pick-Up: * Airport taxi line

Name of the Taxi Company: Ride Easy Taxi Name of the Driver: Saadi....

Taxicab License Plate Number: KDH741 Taxicab Number:

Would you be willing to attend a brief hearing regarding this incident? * Yes No

COMPLAINT

Now comes June 21, 2024, Affiant and after being duly sworn on oath, deposes and says:

I would like to complain about a fraud behaviors of the driver of "Ride Easy Taxi".

This driver shows opportunistic attitude many times in the taxi line.

First. He admitted to me that he goes inside the airport to ask the customers

that he is willing to give them discount if they go with him.

I told him that would be illegal and not good for your colleagues in the airport line.

He claims that it's smart to do that. I told him that I disagree with him.

Second: He tried many times to take customers to his friend breaking the rules.

That happened on May29,2024. He directed customer to go

for the driver number eight even though

I was number two because the driver number eight is his friend.

I told him that he broke the rules.

Third. On May 30, I had reservation pick up for Paula and I was waiting for her in the parking lot on front of door three crossing the street.

She texted me that she arrived and I directed her to ask for Aziz.

Five minutes later she texted that a driver steered her to his car.

She asked him four times if he is Aziz or Mac and he deceived her that he is.

She asked him if he is Easy Cab or a driver working with Prestige taxi and he assured that he was.

After getting the highway for about four miles he said that his name is Saadi.

In conclusion:

He insisted to take the customer even he knew that

she already had someone else who is going to pick her pay attention to these drivers who ar

He pretended that he is stupid, not recognizing his own name even she asked him four times.

I hope that you stop these fraud behaviors and pay attention to these drivers who are doing it.

Thank you in advance,

Aziz Prestige Taxi and Mac Easy Cab

He pretended that he limited understood English.

What happened? Please check any of the appropriate boxes.

- Driver operated vehicle in an unsafe manner or refused to provide insurance information after an accident.
- Driver failed to take most direct route or take passenger to requested destination.
- Driver overcharged, charged for service or attendant animal, or charged additional fee for wheelchair, crutches or other medical devices.
- Driver picked up another passenger without consent.
- Driver refused to transport passenger.
- Driver discourteous or physically abusive.
- Driver was sleeping.
- Driver was using pornography.
- Driver smoked in vehicle/ vehicle smells of smoke.
- Driver using cell phone unless in the case of an emergency.
- Zone descriptions and rates not in vehicle or visible.
- No air conditioning or heating.
- Doors and/or windows did not operate easily or close securely.
- Interior/ trunk compartment of vehicle not clean.

Dated this _____ day of May 29, 30, 2024 at Burlington Airport

Vermont.


Aziz Bakkali, Prestige Taxi

Affiant/Complainant



Subscribed and sworn to before me at South Burlington, Vermont Monday day of

June 24, 2024


Notary #0010508

Business name: Ride Easy Taxi
Owner: Ali, Al Jarah
Driver: Saadi, Al Jarah
Email: rideeasytaxi@gmail.com

Date: 07/01/2024

Burlington international airport,
Department of Ground Transportation.

To whom it may concern,

On June 28th of 2024, the business driver brought to my attention that he feels targeted, discriminated against, threatened and harassed by a selected group of people since the day he began to work in the taxi line at the airport. The driver has English language barrier, even though he treats everyone with dignity and respect. He has an excellent work ethics and goes above and beyond in maintaining professionalism and a safe environment with the customer satisfaction.

the information provided regarding the other drivers,

- Youness, Jamil- Star Cab
- Aziz, Bakkali- Prestige Taxi
- Mahmoud- Easy Cab

Based on the information of the incident that was provided, it is a possibility that the drivers listed above trying to strong arm Saadi the driver of Easy Ride Taxi because he is a new driver in the taxi line with a language barrier that could be a potential victim of harassment, strongarmed, and mind games by spreading false rumors, empty threats, or accusation to scar him off and quit.

Saadi's report below for multiple incidents,

1-"Youness, Aziz, and Mahmoud have been harassing me and spreading false rumors about me. I have no personal problems with anyone; I just want to work in peace. I try to be respectful and follow the rules, but these individuals are making my work difficult. They falsely accuse me of going inside to take customers, which is impossible as I do not speak English well. Aziz accused me of stealing his customer, but the customer approached me in the line and asked for a ride. She did not mention anything about being Aziz's customer. When we reached exit 17, she asked for my name. I did not break any rule nor taken someone else's customer, and Aziz should have

communicated better with his customer. He insulted and threatened me, saying he wanted to hit and kill me. Not long ago I received in the mail regarding a hearing date on July 11th at 0530pm with the taxi board.

2- "Today, June 28th, I had a pickup from BTV at 12:15 PM. I went inside the airport and upstairs with my customer's name displayed on my phone to find them. I noticed Youness Jamil (Star Cab) following and watching me. I did not think much of it initially. I thought Youness was just walking inside the airport. I waited for my customer and she did not show up, so I called my boss to ask him to contact the customer and inform them that I was outside. Then, I went to the pickup location and stood near my car. My boss me called back and said the customer was by door #3. I went to her and helped with her luggage. As we approached the car, the customer stated that there's male standing on the other side using hand gestures with his index and middle fingers pointing to his eyes and turning his hands at me, which translated that I am watching you. As I looked at him to identify the person, it was the Star Cab driver Youness, Jamil watching us and did the same hand gestures. My customer felt unsafe and uncomfortable by his behavior, so we took off and the customer asked if everything was ok with him.

2- "On another occasion, Youness was first, and I was second. He took a short trip but, instead of returning to the end of the line, he came in front of me, breaking the rules again. A customer arrived, and when I tried to give them a ride, Youness started yelling and cursing at me".

3- "There have also been issues with Mahmoud. One day, I was first in line and he was second. He took a customer without checking with me, the first in line, and did this twice. When I questioned him, he gave random answers".

4- "Additionally, Aziz often threatens me with Youness. I do not understand why he thinks I am afraid of Youness. I believe that someone have said Youness works for the taxi board or works with the taxi board."

In conclusion, I would like to thank the individual who is going to be taken this matter seriously in ensuring a safe environment to work and maintaining a free of any kind of discrimination, targeting or victimization. If you have question or need more information please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

Ali, Al Jarah,

Saadi Al Jarah

State of Vermont)
County of Chittenden)
City of Burlington) ss. Al Jarah Ali
Personally appeared _____
before me an subscribed and swore to the truth of the
foregoing statement.
Dated this 2nd day of July, 2024

Notary Public My Commission Expires: 01/31/2025