



Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board 12/14/2017

Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board Minutes

Thursday December 14, 2017

Conference Room 12, City Hall

Members present:

Jeffrey Munger, JM

Bill Keogh, BK

Charles Herrick, CH

Dennis Duffy, DD

Adam Roof, AR

Also Present:

Anthea Dexter-Cooper, AD

Christine Dunbar, CD

Sarah Aberle, SA

Meeting called to order at 4:04 PM

1. Agenda

1.01 Adopt/Amend Agenda

Adopt/Amend Agenda as is

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: Bill Keogh, Jeff Munger, Dennis Duffy, Charles Herrick, Adam Roof

2. Public Forum

3. Hearing

Bessette, Eric - Quik Cab

Present:



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Eric Bessette, George Morrill, Heidi Fischer-Burbo

AD swore in Eric Bessette and the Board introduced themselves. BK asked if George and Heidi would be providing testimony and George stated that they would if it would help Eric get his taxi license. AD swore in both George Morrill and Heidi Fischer-Burbo. AD asked CD to present the evidence to the Board. CD stated that Eric Bessette came to apply for a taxi license, to drive for Quik-Cab, and this was his first time applying for a taxi license in the City of Burlington. CD stated that once the background check came back for Bessette, it was very lengthy and a felony was listed that occurred within the last seven years. CD stated that whenever this happens on a background check, she likes to go to AD to have her look over the background check with her and it was decided that this application should be brought before the Board for them to decide if Eric should be granted a taxi license. CD told Eric that he would have to appear before the Board to which Eric agreed. After Eric was informed of his hearing date, a City employee witnessed Eric Bessette driving a Quik-Cab vehicle in the Ethan Allen Shopping center, where he was dropping off a family of four. The City employee wrote up an explanation of what he saw and that statement was presented to the Board.

Eric was informed by BK and by AD that he could object to the letter testimony from the City employee because he was not there in person to testify. Eric did object to the letter stating that he was training with Heidi that weekend but was not driving. CD stated that she initially spoke with Eric in person to notify him of the hearing date and time and she provided him a copy of his application and background check. After CD heard about the alleged incident at Ethan Allen Shopping Center, she sent a notice to Eric and to Quik-Cab alerting them that this issue would be presented to the Board along with his application. There were no questions for CD at this time and BK requested to hear Eric Bessette's side of the story.

Eric Bessette stated that he had a rough upbringing but was not going to deny anything that he had done in the past. Eric stated he was currently in two and a half years of sobriety and understands that his background check looks bad and scary but stated that he never harmed anyone ever in his life. Eric stated that he used to have an addiction and that is when most of the crimes were committed. Eric stated that the felony in question was just him not checking in with his parole officer. Eric stated that his life is very different now and that he lives in Shelburne with his girlfriend and has never hurt anyone and is very good working with people.

JM stated that on the first page of Eric's background check, he could see several convictions that took place in 2016. Eric Bessette thought that he was brought before the Board because of the felony on his record and CH responded that once an issue is brought before the Board, they look and consider everything. Eric stated that he was trying to better his life and get a good job and has medical proof that he has been sober for the past couple of years. BK asked Eric how is he a changed man today, Eric replied that it is obvious he is not using any drugs and he has a doctor that can testify to his sobriety. Eric asked George if he could work days so that he wouldn't subject himself to nightlife that caused problems for him in the past. George Morrill stated that Eric has been working for Quik-Cab in areas outside of Burlington and that he is a great employee and is great with the customers. AR asked Eric how long he has been driving outside of Burlington and Eric responded approximately two weeks. AR asked where he was planning to go back to school and Eric stated he was going to school to get his CDL license. AR asked AD if the misdemeanors would have triggered a hearing on their own and AD stated no they would not. AD stated that the felony had to be checked and the only way this background check did not comply with the ordinance is under the cache all general public health and safety.



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Heidi stated that Eric was training with her and they were in and out of the Ethan Allen Shopping Center four times that day and he was helping her unload and load up passengers but he was never behind the wheel. Eric stated this was his first day training with Heidi and he was helping people with their bags that day. AR stated that his primary concern was not whether or not Eric was driving without a license that day. CH asked George if he kept records of the daily shifts and George stated yes but did not have the records with him at the hearing. AR asked Eric if he does not get approved to drive in Burlington, will he continue to drive taxi or would he seek other employment and Eric stated that it is not enough money for him to continue if he can't drive in Burlington. Eric thanked the Board for their time and reminded them that he is trying to turn his life around.

**Motion to enter executive session at 4:33pm by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof

**Motion to exit executive session at 5:04pm by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof

4. Updates

4.01 Monthly fees

4.02 VfH Compliance Officer - Job Description

BK requested that the Board receive a report from Sarah for each meeting to know what is going on and what she is seeing. AD stated that she will be giving Sarah more guidance as far as her training is going. DD stated that this new position is a work in progress and he is currently working with Sarah on her training.

4.03 Downtown taxi spaces

BK is very frustrated that there have been no results from DPW. AD is going to follow up with DPW and try to get some answers.

4.04 Commissioner items

BK asked CD about contract vehicles and recommended she speak to Isaac at the Airport regarding this. BK also suggested they schedule a driver's meeting in January to which the Board agreed.

5. Minutes





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5.01 October 26, 2017

Approve the minutes

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: Bill Keogh, Jeff Munger, Dennis Duffy, Charles Herrick, Adam Roof

6. Adjournment

6.01 Adjourn

Adjourn meeting at 5:30 pm

Motion by Adam Roof, second by Charles Herrick.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: Bill Keogh, Jeff Munger, Dennis Duffy, Charles Herrick, Adam Roof