



Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board 6/15/2017

Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board Minutes

Thursday June 15, 2017

Conference Room 12, City Hall

Members present:

Jeffrey Munger, JM

Bill Keogh, BK

Dennis Duffy, DD

Charles Herrick, CH

Adam Roof, AR

Also Present:

Gregg Meyer, GM

Ashley Bryce, AB

Christine Dunbar, CD

Isaac Trombley, IT

Meeting called to order at 10:33 AM

1. Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Keogh, second by Commissioner Roof to approve agenda as is.

Voting: Unanimous, motion carried.

2. Public Forum

None

3. Hearing



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3.01 Blazer Transportation – Ricky Handy, Owner

Present: Ricky Handy

A.J. LaRosa, Counsel

GM began hearing by introducing Board members and others present including Ricky Handy and his attorney, A.J. LaRosa followed by a brief description of how the hearing process works.

LaRosa began the hearing with an opening statement clarifying with GM that this hearing was in regards to Blazer Transportation as the business, GM confirmed yes also stating that Ricky Handy already had his VfH license revoked previous to this incident. LaRosa explained the situation presented before the Board as a good deed performed by Ricky. He was helping a gentleman, Drew Wiley, at 4 in the morning who was stranded at the Hilton Hotel with no ride to the Airport. The hotel called Blazer several times trying to get the gentleman a cab, Ricky stated that there were no cabs available. Drew Wiley called Blazer himself and asked Ricky again if he could get him a cab. Ricky told Drew he would do him a personal favor and pick him up and take him to the Airport but he could not collect a fare for this ride and that he could not take him in a marked taxi car. IT saw Ricky pull up to the Airport and drop Drew off. IT asked what Ricky was doing, Ricky explained the situation. There was no fare exchanged but Drew did give Ricky a cash tip.

LaRosa asked for clarification about a previous complaint against Blazer Transportation regarding Norman Hewell on a October 16, 2015 Board decision claiming that Blazer had already dealt with and was punished for this offense and that it should not be a factor in this case. LaRosa also addressed a previous case regarding Chris Handy and pointed out that Ricky Handy, as the owner of Blazer, fully supported the VfH Board in their decision to revoke Chris's license.

GM called IT to testify and swore both IT and Ricky in at this time. IT began by stating the incident took place Tuesday May 23rd shortly after he started his shift, at 4:50 am. IT saw Ricky stepping out of vehicle at the Airport and he asked Ricky what he was doing and that he wasn't allowed to drop off at the Airport and that he was breaking the law. Ricky shrugged his shoulders and replied that he didn't have any other drivers available. IT also stated that he has seen Ricky drop off at the Airport several times previous to this incident knowing that Ricky's VfH license had been revoked. BK asked IT if he was aware of the situation and that Ricky was just driving Drew as a favor, IT replied no. IT stated that Ricky did come to him days after the incident occurred to explain the situation to him fully. CH asked IT if it is written policy that a VfH operator must communicate with an Ambassador if that operator is dropping off someone for personal reasons if they had their VfH license revoked. IT replied no. CH asked if IT saw money exchanged between hands and IT replied no. GM asked LaRosa if he had any other questions or statements for the Board before they continue and LaRosa stated not at that time. GM asked permission for the Board to ask Ricky Handy questions regarding the case and LaRosa agreed.

AR asked Ricky if the car with license # FMB 980 was registered as an asset under Blazer Transportation. Ricky replied no and that the car was a personal vehicle of his. AR asked if he had done any pick up or drop off business with that car and Ricky replied that yes he did in 2014 but since then he has been squeaky clean and has been following carefully whatever the Board tells him to do. He stated he knows not to go to the Airport with a paying fare in that car. AR asked for Ricky's personal account of what happened that day in question from the minute he got the call from Drew Wiley to when he dropped him off. Ricky told Drew he could not pick him up in a taxi and that he could pick him up in his car and offer him



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a free ride to the Airport. Ricky claimed he ran out the door in his pajamas to pick up Drew and when he arrived at the hotel there were several bags of luggage that Ricky proceeded to load into his car. When Ricky arrived at the Airport he stated again to Drew that this was his personal car and that he could not accept a fare. Drew handed Ricky 5 dollars after being dropped off. AR referenced the email from Drew Wiley where he stated that Ricky would not accept a fare for the ride because he did not have a driver available. AR pointed out that this is very different than letting Drew know that Ricky did not have a VfH license. Ricky stated that he was receiving several calls that morning for taxis and did not have a driver available to pick up Drew. AR asked how many employees work for Ricky in which he stated 20 with about 8 being full time, 12 part time.

BK asked IT if Ricky arrived at the Airport in his pajamas as he so stated, IT did not see Ricky in his pajamas. CH asked Ricky if there were other times that he used his personal vehicle to drop off at the Airport and Ricky could recall three other times, first time a warning, second time he was given a ticket which he fought and judge threw it out, third time he was driving on the interstate and he received a call from a woman in North Hero who needed a ride to the Airport so he picked her up and immediately realized he was in the wrong. He knew he would get in trouble for dropping her off at the Airport but she was already in the car and she was getting very impatient and anxious about making her flight. As soon as he pulled in and unloaded the lady IT was right there watching him and approached the lady to ask if Ricky had charged her for the ride. Ricky claimed that was the last trip he made in that car for a fare to the Airport. Ricky lost his license for three years and his business for three months and claims because of this would never do it again. Ricky asked the Board if he is not allowed to give free rides then to please let him know and he would never do it again. Ricky claimed this was just a good deed he was trying to perform.

CH asked if it was a business phone that Ricky received his calls on and Ricky said he just had the one phone and all calls came through on it. CH asked if he knew Drew Wiley prior to this incident, Ricky said no.

GM asked LaRosa if he had any closing statements he said no. GM closed the evidence on the hearing and told Ricky and Counsel that they would deliberate in closed session and a written decision would be sent to Blazer Transportation.

Motion to move into executive session at 11:13 a.m.

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof.

Voting: Unanimous, motion carried.

Motion to end executive session at 11:47 a.m.

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof.

Voting: Unanimous, motion carried.

*****This executive session occurred after agenda item 5.01**





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4. Updates

4.01 Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Update

GM explained the conservative budget that was put in place about six months ago and pointed out that a new analysis had been done to adjust the costs in the budget. VfH enforcement officer was included in the initial budget but the position has yet to be filled and the new analysis reflects this as well. The budget is going to be higher moving forward to reflect more accurately people's time. Fees will continue to be collected as the budget has increased. JM asked to see the schedule of fees and would like them presented at every VfH meeting. CH would like to see how the \$110,000 budget was broken down. AB agreed to get all documents available for the Board. JM asked for an update on the enforcement officer position. Dennis stated that the candidate they had pulled out last minute and since reposting the job, he was unaware of anyone applying. GM suggested an idea of parking enforcement officers expanding their experience and hours by joining the taxi team. DD explained that the enforcement officers were full time positions and if they were to expand their hours they would be going into overtime. DD also explained that the duties of parking enforcement officers requires their full attention and time so, taking on additional taxi duties would not work.

4.02 Taxi Zone Update

GM stated that he, BK, AB and CD had a meeting at DPW a couple weeks ago to discuss with their team if it is possible to turn the City's loading zones into taxi zones after hours. There was an initial pushback from DPW but after the meeting the issues seemed to be resolved and it should not be too complicated to incorporate taxi zones downtown. GM stated we are still waiting on the next steps from DPW to move forward on this process. BK pointed out that DPW wants maximum use of curbs which is critical and supportive of our request to use these areas as taxi zones. BK asked GM to follow up on the minutes that were taken for that meeting by DPW staff. GM is going to follow up on the next move in this process.

GM asked the visitor in the room to announce himself, Ted Corbett, owner of Burlington StageCoach, who wanted to say something about Ricky Handy's case. He stated that Ricky may just have personal insurance, not commercial, on his car and is something to consider.

CH would like to discuss further a taxi loading zone closer to the bus station.

4.03 Miscellaneous Update

JM would like to add an agenda item "Commissioner Items" so that Board members have the option to add to the agenda if something comes up they would like to present.

5. Minutes



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5.01 May 10, 2017

Motion to approve the minutes

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof.

Voting: Unanimous, motion carried.

6. Adjournment

6.01 Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting at 11:54 a.m.

Motion by Bill Keogh, second by Adam Roof.

Voting: Unanimous, motion carried.