



Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board

Monday, February 5, 2024, 9:00 AM, Remote only via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

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1. Agenda

1.1. Motion to amend/adopt agenda

2. Previous Minutes

Subject 2.1. Approval of Previous Minutes

File Attachments

1. VHF 01.22.24 Minutes Draft

VHF 01.22.24 Minutes Draft.pdf

3. New Meter Rate

3.1. Discussion on the new meter rate rollout plan

4. Public Forum

4.1. PUBLIC FORUM - Verbal Comments

5. New Business

6. Adjournment

6.1. Motion to adjourn



**BURLINGTON VEHICLE FOR HIRE LICENSING BOARD
QUEEN CITY ROOM, 3RD FLOOR, CITY HALL, 149 CHURCH ST.
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 22, 2024**

Member Present: Paul Hines, Youness Jamil, Stephen Hamlin

Also present: Hayley McClenahan, Tenzin Chokden

Meeting start time: 5:39p

1. Agenda

1.1. Motion to amend/adopt agenda

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

2. Previous Minutes

2.1. Previous Minutes Approval

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

3. Ordinance Update

3.1. Ordinance update

According to Paul Hines, some elements of the ordinance appeared out of date or were not followed. He wants to propose two ordinance changes but believes they can only make recommendations as a board. He asked if that was correct.

Hayley McClenahan responded that the board can recommend and contact the Transportation Energy Utilities Committee or the Ordinance Committee (TEUC), but it would be preferable for the board to work with TECU because they are more familiar with the situation, and they are the board that would step in if the VFH board fell short of quorum. She can help edit and review the ordinance before submitting it to the city council for final approval.

Paul Hines suggested updating the definitions of taxicab and vehicle for hire, as well as removing the roof light from the taxicab description.

Hayley McClenahan stated that this would cause confusion in the ordinance because all taxis are vehicles for hire, and not all vehicles for hire are not taxis.

Paul Hines proposed requiring taxis in the queue line to use their meters. According to him, the ordinance already requires taxicabs to use meters when they are at taxi stands or hailing from the street.

Hayley McClenahan suggested that if the board intends to update airport rules, it should update Appendix E in the ordinance. Otherwise, taxis may operate as vehicles for hire if the fare was discussed and agreed upon by both parties before entering the cab. Previously, the definition of street hail was interpreted as a customer getting into a cab and beginning the ride. Paul Hines proposed the taxis at the airport queue must use their taxi meter and it's not right for people who are visiting the city to have to negotiate with drivers at fair prices and it doesn't look good for the city. He added that it states in other language that you are required to have meters if you hold a queue permit.

Youness Jamil agreed and he knows there are taxis in the airport queue line who don't have meters and charge flat fees.

Stephen Hamlin agreed.

Paul suggested updating the ordinance and Appendix E of the city ordinance governing airport rules and regulations. Drivers must allow riders to pay with credit cards, and they are not permitted to refuse service if a credit card is requested. They must also provide a receipt.

Hayley McClenahan stated that the board can certainly make recommendations to the TEUC and Ordinance Committee, but the city attorney will conduct research and determine whether the decision is within the authority of the city council.

Stephen Hamlin proposed that board chair Paul Hines collaborate with city staff to develop a memo on the aforementioned ordinance changes. Youness Jamil seconded it.
Approved unanimously.

4. New Meter Rate

4. New Meter Rate

Tenzin Chokden suggested giving all business owners 45 days to notify them of any changes to meter rates, as there is no one here locally.

Stephen Hamlin suggested that the new meter rate be reflected beginning March 15th.

Tenzin Chokden questioned how we would ensure that the new rates set in each taxi were accurate. Would it be appropriate for business owners to change their meter rate and certify that the rates have

been changed? Is there a provision in the ordinance that specifies who can change the rate?

Hayley McClenahan responded that while the ordinance does not state anything specific, the board has the authority to establish rules and regulations in the future.

Paul Hines suggested that we notify business owners of the new meter rate, and that the board develop rules and regulations regarding meter calibration. He asked Youness Jamil if he was concerned about that.

Youness Jamil agreed that before announcing the new meter rate, the board should first determine the rules and regulations governing meter calibration to avoid driver confusion.

Paul Hines suggested we allow the new meter rate, sent notices out and follow up with guidelines to meter calibration.

Hayley McClenahan agreed that the board could do so and solicit feedback from business owners on meter calibration and standards.

Tenzin Chokden asked if the board would be okay with business owners getting their meters calibrated and changing the rate themselves and submitting some sort of certification, such as a sworn statement or a technician's certification.

Paul Hines and Stephen Hamlin both liked the concept.

Stephen Hamlin moved for this board to approve the meter rate effective 03/15/24, and that the meter rates be updated by providing a certification, and that new guidelines on meter calibration be presented in the future.

Paul Hines seconded to go into further discussion on this motion.

Youness Jamil stated that he knows a driver in town who knows how to calibrate the meter and asked if the board would grant authority to change meter rates in other taxicabs.

Tenzin Chokden asked Hayley if this was permitted.

Hayley McClenahan responded that there is nothing in the ordinance that specifies who can calibrate meters. The board can either refer to a certified technician or allow business owners to self-certify their meter calibrations. She suggested that the board work on rules and regulations regarding meter calibration.

Youness Jamil suggested that we watch this Alpha Taxi driver demonstrate how to change the meter rate and see if it is correct, after which he can do it for others.

Tenzin Chokden recalled a previous conversation with the Centrodyne support team about training someone or an entity on how to calibrate meters and provide certification. He asked if that convinced the board to allow this Alpha Taxi driver to calibrate all meters in Burlington if he received his certification. He can gather additional information about training and report back to the board. Paul Hines asked if that would be something he could do and discuss next week.

Tenzin Chokden said he would find out the information and let the board know.

The motion was tabled until the next meeting on Tuesday, 01/30 at 5:00p.

5. Public Forum

No members from the public comment.

6. New Business

6. New Business

None

7. Adjournment

7. Adjournment

7.1. Motion to adjourn

The motion to adjourn by Stephen Hamlin, seconded by Youness Jamil.
Approved unanimously.