

## Metropolitan Taxi Cab Commission

### Minutes

April 4, 2003

\_\_\_\_\_ The meeting was called to order on April 4, 2003 at 2:12 p.m. and was held at 1300 Convention Plaza, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room. Role was called. Those present were: Lou Hamilton, Dave McNutt, Solomon Tadesse, Vincent Bennett, James Harris, Larry Satz, Garry Earls, Karen Wittkoetter, Jerry Daniels, Airport representative-Gerard Slay.

Mr. Hamilton presided over the meeting in Mr. McCarthy's absence.

Mr. Hamilton announced that old minutes will be reviewed for adoption at the next meeting.

Mr. Daniels gave a presentation and discussed the organization and set up of the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Commission. He announced that the office is in the process of being set up at 1300 Convention Plaza and the temporary mailing address is still 41 South Central Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, St. Louis County Public Works Department. The phone number Monday - Friday, 9-5 is 615-5013. The fax number is 615- 4258. Mr. Hamilton asked, in the interest of time, if Mr. Daniels could provide Commission members with a copy of his report to read on their own time. Copies of his report are available through Mr. Daniels.

Charles Seagle, attorney for Gateway Taxi, presented a proposal. Copies of the proposal were presented to each Commission member. The proposal addressed the issue of a need for a reduction in the number of taxis, suggested the Commission consider one license, one driver to allow for accountability, suggested a moratorium on issuance of new licenses, discussed quality issues, and suggested a surcharge on the drivers license fee to provide for security and enforcement. Mr. Hamilton asked for questions or comments. There were none. Mr. Earls Provided two cautions for the Commission to consider. First, he cautioned that the Commission needs to consider whether it wants to deal with owners or regulating individual drivers. Second, he cautioned that ownership of vehicles is a very complex issue. He recommends a broad set of alternatives in ownership, due to a series of issues such as taxes which simple regulations may limit. Mr. Harris somewhat agrees and stated that it may be a liability to the Commission to have to deal with various owners and that individuals cause major problems. Abera Shaferaw and suggested that he represents 69 drivers who believe one driver, one license is fair. Mr. Earls stated that his point is that the Gateway proposal is based around the regulation of individuals and at the risk of sounding prejudicial would effectively ignore the company. He suggested that there are advantages and disadvantages to this. Mr. Harris stated that he wants each company to be responsible for enforcement of the quality of the driver.

Dr. Zoog represents the Airport Taxi Council(ATC). The ATC represents 188 taxi cabs and is a culmination of 8 taxi cab companies: Airways, Airport Taxi Services, United, Madina, Show Me, Central, AWAB, SBAN. Dr. Zoog stated that ATC went to the County and is now a Company. Dr. Zoog is the chairman of this company. The ATC's goals are to create a legal frame to enforce rules and regulations and to improve quality of service. The ATC would like to inquire as to the conditions and requirements the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Commission(MTCC). The ATC is ready to match any MTCC conditions. They suggested that bringing the airport taxi cabs under one company can bring service back to first class. They also suggested that the Commission can train and hire qualified inspectors from ATC and improve quality.

Mr. McNutt handed out Code changes to be reviewed and addressed at the next meeting.

Ms. Wittkoetter announced that the County funds will be available as of June 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr.

Earls suggested that the Commission requests for the same information from the City. Mr. Harris asked when the airport authorities take control. Mr. Slay stated May 1, 2004. Mr. Hamilton stated that the Commission does not make regulatory decisions until June 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Harris then stated that the Commission needs to deal with the airport taxis before May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. McNutt seconds the motion. The motion passed.