

Minutes of the Metropolitan Taxicab Commission
Board Meeting – Friday, January 23, 2004
1:00 p.m., in the Auditorium at 100 North Tucker Boulevard

Call to Order at 1:20 p.m. by Vice Chairman Lou Hamilton, with apologizes for the late start. Due to the unanticipated absence of MTC Chairman Thomas McCarthy today, Mr. Hamilton will now chair this meeting, but was unavoidably detained by having to arrive from a previous appointment.

Roll Call was conducted: present were Acting Chairman Hamilton and Commissioners Harris, McNutt, Morgan, Rudawsky, and Satz.

Absent were Chairman McCarthy and Commissioner Bennett; it is noted that the successor to Commissioner Tadesse has not yet been chosen.

Note: there are 12 attendees in the public audience

Approval of December meeting Minutes: Since each Commissioner had been sent an advance copy of the text of the previous meeting's Minutes, Chairman Hamilton entertained a motion to approve them, after soliciting any additions, corrections or deletions. None was offered.

Motion to approve the Minutes as written was made by Mr. Satz, seconded by Mr. Morgan, and was passed by unanimous vote.

Old Business

Insurance coverage: Report was given by MTC Treasurer, Mike Morgan. He has obtained considerable information but is not yet ready to provide an overview in written form. Mr. Morgan pledged to have a written report to circulate to the Commissioners *in advance* of the February meeting and to present to the public at the meeting itself (which, later in today's session, was scheduled for February 20, 2004).

Random drug testing:

Mr. Tully explained that the random drug testing policy is not yet on paper. Stated he met at 2:00 yesterday with the Barnes Care representative and obtained their proposal – he will share that material with the Commissioners now, yet pledged everyone will discuss it thoroughly before the next meeting.

Mr. Hamilton affirmed, the Commissioners will get into detail about this, only *after* they receive Mr. Tully's recommendations.

Mr. Tully added that we need to address the 'target population' aspect– he has a meeting with the DOT next Tuesday (meaning, January 27) and this issue is part of the agenda to be discussed during that meeting.

"Customer Comment" Cards: Mr. Tully provided a reference sheet which detailed the U.S. Postal Service's two plan choices for establishing a Business Reply Mail postcard. The page also depicted a staff-developed prototype, with sample front and back shown, of the type of postcard which the MTC might use to solicit and record complaints/commendations from taxicab passengers. Both USPS plans are costly (with one plan being feasible only for a minimum volume of 950 replies in one year); Mr. Hamilton suggested we might instead just develop our own postcard and affix the standard 23 cents postcard postage, rather than using the USPS Business Reply Card methods and paying that additional annual expense. However it was pointed out that using simple pre-stamped postcards incurs the expense despite the possibility that few/no postcards may ever be returned; whereas both USPS methods assess fees only for postcards

actually returned to us for handling. No decision was made, and the Commissioners are now taking this under consideration.

Transportation of schoolchildren weighing under 40 lbs.: Report was given by Director Mike Tully. He contacted the St. Louis Police Department and was sent a summary of the City safety belt law, which explains that the standards are based solely upon the age, not the weight, of the passenger, and that there is no requirement for installation/usage of seat belts. Mr. Tully added that at next week's meeting in Jefferson City with the Department of Transportation, he will further pursue this matter at that time, also stating he will present the result of his inquiry at the February meeting.

Feasibility of reducing "waiting time" limitations at the airport for On-Call cabs:

Mr. Tully stated **he will combine this subject (which is Agenda item #5) with Agenda item number 6 (which addresses Airport drivers' use of transponders)**. Mr. Tully said he has discussed this with Airport Deputy Director Gerard Slay, and that this item is also on Mr. Slay's agenda – Mr. Slay will arrange a meeting of all companies and drivers to discuss improving airport service overall.

Mr. Patrick McCarthy interjected that Mr. Slay had expressed concern that some On-Call taxicab owners were likely to balk at the costs involved.

Possible requirement for all airport cabs to utilize transponders:

As noted above, this subject also will be on the Agenda for the meeting which Mr. Slay will arrange between owners and drivers.

Automatic notification of companies whenever drivers are issued "violation reports":

Mr. Tully reported that he has again contacted Deputy Director Slay's office concerning the forms which are to be printed by the Multigraph division of the Police Department. After learning that the actual printing has not yet been accomplished, Mr. Tully requested that the format be changed, from a 3-part form to a 4-part form, so that the distribution will be as follows: to the driver, the airport police, the MTC for its official records, *and now the driver's company*. At the February meeting, Mr. Tully will advise what the projected completion date will be. Mr. Tully explained that the progression is: from Mr. Slay, to the Police Department, to the Multigraph section, thus this printing order has not yet been shipped to the City. Mr. Hamilton wanted to clarify that 2 copies are to be sent to the MTC staff, who then will be responsible to forward one copy to the driver's company? Mr. Tully responded, yes. Mr. Hamilton told all the Commissioners to feel free to speak up; however, no comments were offered in reply.

Ratio of taxicabs vis a vis the general metropolitan population:

Mr. Tully reported that, as Mr. McNutt had suggested, he contacted the ITLF (now known as the TLPA: the Taxicab, Limousine and Paratransit Association). He was informed there are only two municipalities in the entire country who set their fleet sizes based on population: Hillsboro County, FL (whose ratio is one taxi per 2000 persons); and San Antonio, TX (whose ratio is one taxi per 1700 persons). Based on those formulae, Mr. Tully commented, St. Louis (with 925 taxis compared to its Metro population of 1.5 million) already exceeds the ratio by approximately 200 taxis.

(This item was next on today's Agenda, but Mr. Hamilton stated it will not actually be discussed today: Network integrity of personal information stored in MTC's new computer database: A report, written by our computer consultant, Jim Herrmann of Herrmann Technologies, was provided in each commissioner's folder of materials; it attests that all