

Metropolitan Taxicab Commission

**May 22, 2007 @ 10:00 am**  
**100 North Tucker Boulevard**

Members present: Chairman Hamilton, Commissioners Banahan, Haile, McNutt, Reeves, and Rudawsky.

Members absent: Commissioners Bennett and Satz. *(One seat on the Commission remains vacant.)*

MTC staff: Deering, Barker, Hinton, Hammond, and Tully.

Legal Department: Counselor McCarthy

*Chairman Hamilton called the meeting to order at 10:20 AM.*

**MINUTES**

Chairman Hamilton requested approval for the minutes of the April 9, 2007 Metropolitan Taxicab Commission meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Mr. Reeves, seconded by Mr. McNutt. The motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Hamilton paused to introduce and welcome the newest member of the Commission, Berhanu Haile.

The Commissioners scheduled the next Commission meeting for June 19, 2007 at 10:00 AM at 100 North Tucker Boulevard in the Auditorium, pending the availability of the facility. *(After the meeting, the Commission discovered the meeting room would not be available and the meeting date was changed to June 20, 2007 at 10:00 AM.)*

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. McCarthy presented the proposal drawn up by Dr. Ray Mundy for the transportation study. The study will cost \$20,000, to be billed progressively. An explanation of the study and its goals were discussed. The Commission granted Mr. McCarthy the authority to work out the progressive billing schedule with Dr. Mundy.

Mr. McCarthy then presented his report on the growth and reserve issue. He acknowledged there are conflicts between the code sections on growth and reserves. He recommended that the chapters be held in abeyance until the initial reports from Dr. Mundy's study are presented.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Director began by pointing out the statistics in the Commissioner's packets. The Airport Taxicab inspections were completed by April first. Per the airport contract, all of the airport cabs are model year 2001 or newer. Approximately twenty percent of the vehicles were replaced.

On call cab inspections are currently in progress and will be completed by June 30. The Busch Stadium cab stands are working out well. The Broadway cab stand has been seeing more use than the Spruce Stand.

Director Tully commended Agent Barker for his investigation and recovery of a stolen courtesy vehicle owned by Chase Park Plaza. The investigation was initiated by citizen complaining about a suspicious vehicle parked on their property. The St. Louis Police responded to process the vehicle.

The Director and Mr. McNutt opened a dialog with the Hotel Association members. They inquired about the possibility of approximate rates to certain destinations. The Director will work with the hotels and the industry to find a solution.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Reeves reported on the Commission's finances. The Commissioners were provided with the first four months of the financial information for the year to date indicating a loss of \$97,404. This is about \$29,000 worse than budget projection. He directed their attention to the cash position of \$133,473, down about \$60,000 from a year ago. Although it is not as strong as in past years, he explained that a couple of more months would bring the Commission back into a stable operating mode. Discussion ensued. Questions were asked and answered by the Commissioners regarding specific line items.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Val Grabsky, of Airways Cab Company, addressed the Commission. His initial questions were directed towards Mr. Rudawky and his company. Mr. McCarthy objected on grounds that it was a private business question and that it is not relevant to commission business. Mr. Grabsky then inquired about the possible addition of Taxicabs and if the Airport would be included. Mr. McCarthy informed him the Airport would be included in the Transportation Study.

Mr. Grabsky then asked about the gas surcharge and fluctuating gas prices. Chairman Hamilton recommended the Director should review the gas price issue and possibly tweak it. He added the companies should consider tweaking their pricing formulas, since higher gas prices are a cost of doing business and not a market fluctuation. Discussion amongst the Commissioners ensued.

Attorney Mike Goldberg, representing City Express Limited, addressed the Commission. He represents a company, a group of drivers, wanting to start a cab company with 75 cabs. He inquired as to why existing companies were allowed to expand, but new companies were blocked from the moratorium. Chairman Hamilton deferred the issue to Counsel. Mr. McCarthy responded that the expansions have been minimal, as well as, the aftermath of the collapse of Allen and Auto Livery has yet to be completely assessed. Mr. Goldberg inquired about the details of the Allen and Auto Livery collapse. Chairman Hamilton replied with a summary of the Commission's response. Additional discussion ensued regarding the Transportation Study.

Judge William McHugh, representing Ebony Cab Company, addressed the Commission. He spoke on behalf of Ebony Cab Company, an applicant to be an on call taxi company. He described the specific market Ebon Cab would serve. Chairman Hamilton referred back to the conversation with Mr. Goldberg. Both the Chairman and General Counsel deferred to the upcoming transportation study. Discussion ensued. Judge McHugh referred to illegal cabs and gypsy services. Chairman Hamilton asked the Judge or his clients to turn over any information regarding illegal services to the Director.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Hamilton entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Reeves motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McNutt. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 AM.

*The meeting recording was transcribed by A. Hammond.  
Minutes were interpreted from the transcript by D. Barker.*