

TAXI COMMISSION MEETING
Amended Minutes of the January 22, 2008 meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Frank Daggett called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE

Present: Members: Chair Frank Daggett; Councilor Eric Spear, Commissioners, James Feehley, and Peter Bresciano and Deputy City Clerk Dianne M. Kirby

Absent: Lieutenant Rodney McQuate

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 26, 2007

Commissioner Bresciano moved to correct item V (1.) first sentence changing town signs to tow signs. Seconded by Councilor Spear and voted.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Welcome to Councilor Spear (not on the agenda)

Chair Daggett introduced Councilor Spear as the Taxi Commission's new Council Representative replacing former Councilor Harold Whitehouse.

2. Election of Taxi Commission Chair

Commissioner Bresciano moved to recommend Commissioner Turner as Chair for the Taxi Commission. Deputy City Clerk Kirby stated that Commissioner Turner did not renew her position on the Taxi Commission. Commissioner Bresciano asked Chair Daggett if he had renewed his position. Chair Daggett stated that he had. Commissioner Feehley moved to recommend Commissioner Daggett as the Taxi Commission Chair. Seconded by Councilor Spear and voted.

3. Taxi Meters

Chair Daggett said he had a complaint that some cabs are telling the residents that their meters are not working. He said he has discussed this with the City Attorney and City Attorney Sullivan stated that if the meter is not working, then the taxi cab can not operate on Portsmouth roads. Chair Daggett stated that it could be some of the driver's who are stealing from the companies and he requested that the taxi owners check with their drivers. Commissioner Feehley stated that with Blue Star Taxi, if the meter doesn't work the driver's are instructed to come back and get a new cab. Blue Star taxi owner Ford stated that they rarely have problems with the meters, but he will put out a memo to his drivers.

4. New Year's Eve Report

Chair Daggett requested to know if any companies encountered issues on New Year's Eve. Commissioner Feehley stated that this New Year's Eve was mild compared to past years. Chair Daggett stated that he would like to have Lieutenant McQuate available to discuss if the Police Department had any problems during New Year's Eve. Commissioner Bresciano moved to table this item until the next meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Feehley and voted.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Restoration Fee for Revoked Permits (Ordinance Change)

Chair Daggett stated that he spoke to City Attorney Sullivan regarding the restoration fee for revoked permits and he stated that cabs are to be ready for inspection at all times. Chair Daggett said that City Attorney Sullivan further stated that in the past some of the taxis were in bad condition and therefore, the Ordinance was written that if a medallion is pulled, you pay the \$100.00 fee to get it restored. Blue Star Taxi owner Ford requested clarification of a medallion being pulled. Commissioner Bresciano stated that pulled means that the owner has to go to the City Clerk to pick it up. Acme Taxi owner Doug Wade asked if there is a list of what the inspectors look for. Chair Daggett stated that our inspectors field strips a car. Commissioner Bresciano stated that he feels that if the repair is made within a few minutes, he doesn't feel the company should have to pay the \$100.00 restoration fee. He stated that it might help the cab companies if the inspections could be done by 1:00 p.m. with Lieutenant McQuate returning for a specific time in order to give the companies time to repair the vehicles and return prior to Lieutenant McQuate turning in the medallions to the City Clerk.

Blue Star Taxi owner Ford stated that there needs to be standardized January and June inspections with inspection criteria. Chair Daggett stated in the past, we required taxi companies to take their vehicles to the State inspector for inspections. He stated that when we sent the cabs to these inspectors, the taxi owner's had to pay for the inspection. He said that the Commission did not feel this was fair to the companies and therefore, the Commission trained city employees and did not charge the companies. Blue Star Taxi owner Paul Ford stated that the cab owners are not against keeping cabs safe. Chair Daggett requested that this item be placed on next months agenda for discussion with Lieutenant McQuate present.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chair Daggett requested if there was any miscellaneous/unfinished business. Anchor Taxi owner Spadafora stated that he hates to be the one that always brings this up, but with the price of gas being \$3.00 plus, he suggested that maybe a small fare increase was in order. Commissioner Bresciano asked if it would be a fare increase or a surcharge. Chair Daggett stated that any change must be an ordinance change. Blue Star Taxi owner Ford stated that in conjunction with gas prices, minimum wage is also going up. Commissioner Bresciano stated that the taxi owners need to bring the figures to the Commission so we can see what they are talking about. Chair Daggett stated that the owner's need to get together and submit a report/letter to the Council through the Commission.

Anchor Taxi owner Spadafora stated that he has observed another illegal cab operating within Portsmouth. He stated that he observed a Dominos Pizza guy picking up fares. He also stated that he knows the individual lives at Osprey Landing.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:40 a.m., Chair Daggett moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Feehley and voted.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dianne M. Kirby, Deputy City Clerk