

TAXI COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of the December 20, 2010 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; Commissioners James Feehley, and Paul Ford, Captain Michael Schwartz, Lieutenant Mark Newport, and Deputy City Clerk Dianne M. Kirby

Absent: Councilor Robert Lister (excused), Commissioners Joel Look (unexcused) and Peter Bresciano (excused)

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 15, 2010

Commissioner Feehley moved to approve and accept the minutes of the November 15, 2010, Taxi Commission meeting. Seconded by Captain Schwartz and voted.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. New Police Liaison to the Taxi Commission – Lieutenant Mark Newport

Chair Daggett introduced and welcomed Mark Newport to the Taxi Commission. He thanked Captain Schwartz for all his support while assigned to the Commission. He stated the Commission will miss him at the meetings.

2. New Year's Eve

Chair Daggett took a poll of the taxi owners to see how many companies would have taxies on the road New Year's Eve. Blue Star stated they would have all five (5) vehicles available. Rockingham Livery stated he would have three (3) vehicles available. Sunshine Taxi stated he would have three (3) vehicles running and Anchor Taxi said he would have two (2) vehicles operating. Chair Daggett asked Deputy City Clerk Kirby to contact Checker Cab and Portsmouth Taxi to see if they will have any cabs in the area on New Year's Eve and notify Captain Schwartz as to this number. Deputy City Clerk Kirby stated she would do this.

Chair Daggett said he didn't anticipate any problems this year. Captain Schwartz stated the Police Department would be watching for unauthorized taxis operating within the City. Commissioner Ford said if any operators see any unlicensed cabs working on New Year's Eve should they contact the Police Department. Captain Schwartz said absolutely they can call dispatch at 436-2145. He stated he will be running the First Night fireworks and all of that so he will be on duty from 4 p.m. until 1 a.m. Commissioner Ford asked if it would be inappropriate to ask for him. Captain Schwartz said it would not. Commissioner Ford said if the companies feel like there were unauthorized companies out there and we didn't call it is our own fault. Chair Daggett stated he has been saying for years that the taxi drivers have the right to report any problems or discrepancies they see to the Police Department.

Steve Gerrato, Rockingham Livery stated that Portsmouth Taxi has a white Jaguar they have been operating that does not have a medallion. He said unless they are caught picking up and dropping off in Portsmouth there is nothing we can do about it. Captain Schwartz stated if there are concerns of something going on the Police Department can investigate it. Steve Gerrato, Rockingham Livery said he has quite a bit of pictures etc. and requested if he could get with Captain Schwartz after the meeting. Captain Schwartz stated he could.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Proposed Taxi Reading – 2nd Reading/Public Hearing (12-20-2010)

Deputy City Clerk Kirby stated this was added to the agenda to inform the Commission that the Second Reading/Public Hearing on the Taxi Commission's proposed ordinance was on the City Council's Agenda for this evening. Alan Ladd, Sunshine Taxi asked if the Taxi Companies will be notified of the changes that are approved by the City Council concerning the inspection and reissued dates. Chair Daggett stated Deputy City Clerk would forward a copy of the new ordinance to all company owners upon approval by the Council.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Steve Gerrato, Rockingham Livery asked if it was possible to ask the bars downtown to stagger their closing hours so people will not have to stand outside in the cold waiting for a taxi. Captain Schwartz stated unfortunately they do not have the ability to tell a business when to close. He said some bars will close earlier than others, but most will remain open until the last minute in order to make as much money as possible.

Steve Gerrato, Rockingham Livery passed out pictures of Portsmouth Taxi that he has taken showing the white jaguar they are using without a medallion as well as some pictures showing his driver sleeping at the bus station causing the bus to have to go around the taxi to pick up his passengers. He further stated that Portsmouth Taxi does not have adequate equipment for their cabs. He said they remove the dome light from one vehicle in order to have another vehicle pass the inspection and then move the dome to another vehicle after the inspection is complete. Captain Schwartz stated it would be proper to complete a statement after the meeting and allow the Police Department to investigate the allegations.

1. Police Liaison Report

Captain Schwartz read the Police Liaison Report for November.

Steve Gerrato, Rockingham Livery asked Captain Schwartz if there was a report from a passenger complaining that he felt a taxi meter was wrong and that he was being overcharged. Captain Schwartz asked when this event occurred. Mr. Gerrato stated last weekend. Captain Schwartz stated that would be on the December Report. Chair Daggett stated the meters are very difficult to tamper with. Alan Ladd, Sunshine Taxi and authorized meter certifier stated things can go wrong with the meters, but it is not common.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:27 a.m. Captain Schwartz moved to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Feehley and voted.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dianne M. Kirby, Deputy City Clerk