

Minutes  
Metropolitan Taxi Cab Commission  
December 20, 2002

The meeting was called to order on December 20, 2002 at 2:11 p.m. and was held in the Downtown NOW office. Those present were: Tom McCarthy, Lou Hamilton, Dave McNutt, Tom Dunne, Basil Rudawsky, Solomon Tadesse, Jim Sondermann, Garry Earls, Karen Wittkoetter, Brian Malarney, and Patrick McCarthy.

**Old Business**

Chairman Tom McCarthy provided copies of the 12/6/02 Minutes, the Ordinance amending Section 806.070, and the revised Metropolitan Taxi Commission Vehicles for Hire Code.

Mr. Hamilton moved to approve the 12/6/02 Minutes. Mr. Rudawsky seconds. The minutes were passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. McCarthy announced that the hearing dates have been published in The Countian and The Post-Dispatch. The hearing dates are December 23 at 10a.m. in room 208 at City Hall and December 27 at 10a.m. at the County Council Chamber. Mr. McCarthy also suggested that the Commission request written testimony and readily accept written testimony until the end of January.

Mr. McCarthy also suggested that the Commission does not start running the 120 day time clock to allow the Commission to take over until after the hearings. Mr. Earls stated that it was his perception that the time clock could start running after the draft of the Code was adopted. Mr. Hamilton commented that he was unsure if the Commission should have adopted the Code until after the hearings. He then withdrew that statement. Mr. McCarthy stated that he read the statute to say that the Commission could adopt the Code prior to the hearings. He stated that he will consult the County Counselor and if there are any serious misgivings the Commission will not adopt the Code until January 3.

Mr. McCarthy requested that Jim Sondermann arrange for a marshall for the City Hall hearing.

Mr. Rudawsky asked about the status of the moratorium on new licenses in the county. Mr. McCarthy stated that he sent a letter requesting a moratorium on new licenses to the county. Mr. McNutt stated that the city already has a moratorium on new licenses. Mr. Earls stated that the airport already has a moratorium on new licenses and that he thought the county will support the moratorium.

**New Business**

Mr. Hamilton suggested that the Commission set up a bank account in case the

Commission receives money. Mr. McCarthy asked Mr. Earls if the county can handle disbursement, since the Commission has no purchasing procedures. Mr. Earls agreed that the county can handle it as an entry in their books.

Mr. McNutt announced that Mr. Harris is hospitalized at John Cochran Veteran's Hospital and will be ill for some time.

Mr. McCarthy announced that he will be out of town for the next two meetings. Mr. Hamilton will chair the Commission in his absence.

Ms. Wittkoetter announced that Commission parking will be validated in the parking garage for the county meeting.

Mr. McCarthy stated that he and Mr. Hamilton met with Mr. Earls and Mr. Sondermann about the future specific location of the Commission. The address is 1300 Convention Plaza. Mr. McCarthy is redrafting the lease agreement at the request of the City. The City is leasing the space for \$1 for a minimum of 1 year and will front the expenses for painting, a new door, and telephone. The space should be ready by January 15<sup>th</sup>. The Commission is trying to arrange parking.

Mr. Dunne asked what lawsuits there are. Mr. McCarthy stated that the Taxi Commission is being sued and was served. The lawsuit alleges that the state can not wipe out prior ordinances. The county is also being sued regarding fees.

Mr. Sondermann asked how long the hearings will take. Mr. McCarthy states that it was published that if no one has appeared by 10:30a.m., the Commission will adjourn.

Mr. McCarthy moves that we send the Code to all licensed Taxi Companies and ask for written input. Mr. Dunne seconds. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. Mr. Hamilton suggested using return/receipt. Mr. McCarthy stated that mail is fine.

Mr. Hamilton suggested that the Commission get the website on line as soon as possible and post the Code. Mr. Earls stated that the county will post the Code on their website. Owners will be told that the Code is on the website.

Mr. Dunne suggested that the Commission should send a gift to Mr. Harris. Mr. McNutt stated that he will take care of it.

Mr. Rudawsky asked what happens next. Mr. McCarthy stated that the Commissioners and others will review and make comments. The Commission will then deal with the comments by discussions and make changes as needed.

Mr. Hamilton asked that the city and county make recordings of the hearings.

Mr. McCarthy announced that the CORO foundation has offered a group of CORO



fellows to the Commission, for the month of January. Mr. Hamilton will organize them and provide a work agenda for them. Mr. Earls suggested that the Commission provide guidance for the fellows. Mr. McNutt commented that he felt the time period was too tight. Mr. Dunne asked and was assured that the fellows were not doing a study.

Mr. McCarthy also announced that the county is hiring Jerry Daniels on an interim basis. He worked with councilmen Dooley. He has organizational abilities and can assist with gathering information, deciding how to handle employment benefits, and may have to go to Jefferson City.

Mr. Dunne asked if the over all reaction of the taxi industry is good, bad, or indifferent to the Commission. Mr. Earls stated that the taxi industry is dependent on government regulation and are extremely suspicious of any new government. Mr. Earls, however, thinks the Commission's general strategy is good. Mr. Tedesse stated that people are asking him about the changes. Mr. Rudawsky stated that there will be companies legally or technically going out of business if we have enforcement. Mr. McNutt and Mr. Hamilton agree that we need to inform the businesses of what is legal. Mr. McNutt stated that he believes the Commission should be prepared to hear a lot of complaints that the Code is not fair. Mr. Dunne stated that the Commission needs better knowledge of what is really going on in legitimate business to understand the operation of the business and make it a win/win situation. Mr. McNutt stated that airport taxi permits must be reduced. The Commission is going to have to enforce and fine. The police only do it sporadically. Mr. McCarthy commented that there will probably be a combination of attrition and voluntary quitters. However, we have to protect the public with better cars and faster service. Mr. Earls stated that lawsuits caused the county to open up permits. Mr. McCarthy stated that the Commission may have to deal with the problem that all the airport taxis are hoping that the other one leaves.

Mr. Earls pointed out that age is still in the definitions and could be a problem if sued over standards.

Mr. Rudawsky suggested that Commissioners review and comment on the Code.

Mr. McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hamilton seconds. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote.