

**Taxicab Board Meeting Minutes
November 29, 2007**

Members Present: Barbara Krick Sarah Singleton
 Robert Snider Margie Teall

Members Absent: Faith Meadows

Guests:

Jason Voeller, All Points Taxi
Clair Champion, Reliable Taxi
Richard Clark, Amazing Blue Taxi
Merlyn Wade, Ann Arbor Taxi Transport
Officer Sean Lee, Ann Arbor Police Dept.
Joan Armstrong, Citizen
Attorney Andrew Fanta

CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Robert Snider.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY – None

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of regular Taxicab Board meeting minutes, August 30, 2007. **Barbara Krick moved to approve the minutes of August 30, 2007, Margie Teall seconded. The motion passed.**

NEW BUSINESS

Appeal

Clair Champion – Mr. Champion’s license was suspension by the Ann Arbor Police for operating a taxicab without a license. The annual taxicab license renewal was extended two weeks, which Mr. Champion failed to comply. Mr. Champion plead no contest to the ticket that was issued which is treated as a guilty plea and which triggered a two-year suspension per city Ordinance. Mr. Champion stated that he was contacted by Officer Lee to renew his license. He stated that due to a financial situation and the many traumatic and stressful circumstances in his life at the time, renewing his license slipped his mind. Mr. Champion apologized for missing the deadline. Mr. Champion also stated that in addition to the circumstances mention above, he was also trying to serve Merlyn Wade, of Ann Arbor Taxi Transport, on an appeal for a Personal Protection Order made against him. Mr. Champion has appeared in court for the PPO and it was terminated. Mr. Champion said that there is an additional PPO made against him by another taxicab driver which he believes to be bogus. Mr. Champion said that he is being harassed and slandered by other taxicab drivers to put him out of business. He has witnesses to testify to the harassment complaint.

Mr. Snider stated that Mr. Champion's counter charges are not really what the Board is concerned with in the appeal. The counter charges are considered only as a distraction that may have added to the reason Mr. Champion missed the renewal deadline.

Attorney Andrew Fanta spoke on behalf of Mr. Champion. Mr. Fanta said that they are not disputing that Mr. Champion knew his license had expired, but is suggesting that there are other factors that have been in play that contributed to Mr. Champion missing the deadline, such as the harassment from other drivers and the PPO against Mr. Champion.

Joan Armstrong appeared before the Board as one of Mr. Champion's customers that was offended by other taxicab drivers. She stated Jason Voeller from All Points Taxi has cursed her using very offensive language. She also witnessed him running off an elderly couple getting into Mr. Champion's cab. She stated that the couple seemed afraid. Other drivers have also told customers approaching Mr. Champion's taxi not to take Mr. Champion's cab because he is a crackhead. She said that she has nothing to gain by coming before the Board but wanted to help Mr. Champion because he provides great services.

Barbara Krick stated that the dispute between the cab drivers is not for the Taxicab Board to decide, it is up to the courts to make the decision.

Margie Teall stated that although Officer Lee did contact Mr. Champion to review his license as well as extend the deadline for all license renewals, she believes it is a technicality on some level because Mr. Champion has been driving so long.

Barbara Krick moved to grant Mr. Champion a temporary license for one year. Any new violations from today forward, in lights of the court, infractions of driving, or other violations, other than the arguments between drivers, should be reported to the Board and they will follow with the appropriate action. Margie Teall amended the motion asking that Mr. Champion return to the Board in three months (February 28, 2008). Margie Teall seconded Mr. Krick motion to grant Mr. Champion a temporary license for one year with the stipulations indicated. The motion passed.

Merlyn Wade asked if the same treatment will be given to the drivers of other taxicab companies as given to Mr. Champion. The Board stated that each situation will be handled on an individual basis and that all drivers will receive the same consideration.

Approval of Taxicab Company Applications

Margie Teall moved to approve the taxicab company applications from Blue Cab and ACab. Barbara Krick seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Approval of 2008 Taxicab Board Meeting Calendar

Barbara Krick moved to approve the 2008 Taxicab Board Meeting Calendar. Margie Teall seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Other Business

Margie Teall stated that she may be replaced by another council member to represent the Taxicab Board. Council member Mike Anglin is expected to serve.

Suggestions were made to post a notice on the web, CTN, and/or the newspaper for open Taxicab Board positions.

Mr. Voeller from All Points Taxi asked that the Board define the word “operate”. Does operating mean strictly driving, does it mean interacting with the customer, or does it mean some gradation between these two points. The Board agreed that they will discuss the matter along with the Assistant City Attorney, Kristen Larcom.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Krick moved to adjourn the meeting, supported by Ms. Teall. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.