



Taxicab Services Commission

Tuesday May 25, 2021

6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

MCDOT Staff:

Sam Oji, Walton Harris, Denise James,

Hellen Ojwang, and Robert Hardesty

Commission members Present:

Elizabeth (Buffy) Ellis, Chair

David Mohebbi, Nelson Biama, Belay Teklehayimanot, Francis Creighton, Becaye Traore; Joyce Plaxen, Afework Kidane, and Charles Kauffman

Ex-Officio members Present:

Christopher Conklin

Commission members Absent:

Robert Alexander

Ex-Officio members Absent:

Tom Hucker, Councilmember – Chair of the Transportation and Environment Committee

Guests:

None

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.



Action Items:

- A motion was made to approve the minutes from the April 27, 2021, meeting. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion Items:

Discussion: Ideas for expenditures from the Transportation Services Improvement Fund

- Chair Ellis provided an overview of the suggestions provided by Taxicab Service Commission members on ways to better utilize the Transportation Services Improvement Fund (TSIF).
- Commission members Kauffman and Plaxen voiced support for a marketing and public relations campaign using TSIF money.
- Commission member Creighton voiced support for increasing the subsidy to purchase a wheelchair accessible vehicle from \$15,000 to \$30,000.
- Commission member Mohebbi advocated for using as much of the TSIF money to assist the taxicab industry as possible.
- Commission member Traore discussed the challenges drivers experience in raising capital to purchase a wheelchair accessible vehicle.
- Commission member Traore voiced his support for raising the per mile subsidy for wheelchair accessible vehicles from 10 cents to 20 cents.
- Commission member Traore mentioned that some suggestions submitted for use of the TSIF were not on the list for discussion.
- Commission chair Ellis apologized for omitting certain suggestions.
- Commission members Kidane and Traore voiced support for a centralized dispatch center citing issues of equitable dispatch opportunities.
- Commission member Traore shared four suggestions for use of the TSIF including a direct payment to drivers and an allocation fleet operator to cover lot fees.
- Commission member Biama discussed the importance of money from the TSIF benefiting the taxicab industry.
- Commission chair Ellis requested MCDOT staff provide a list of grant funding opportunities at the federal, state, and county level.
- Commission chair Ellis requested that commission member rank the proposals submitted before the June 29, 2021, Taxicab Services Commission meeting.

Discussion: Scope & status of the Taxicab Services

- Commission chair Ellis postponed the discussion of the scope and status of the Taxicab Services Commission.

Other Business:

- MCDOT staff provided a brief update regarding the resumption of in-person meetings.
- Commission member Kauffman suggested monthly Taxicab Services Commission meetings, with the option of alternating in-person meetings with virtual meetings.
- Commission chair Ellis and commission member Creighton voiced support for the resumption of in-person meetings.

Commission member Kauffman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commission member Plaxen. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.