



Taxicab Services Commission

Tuesday December 8, 2020

6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams



Attendees:

MCDOT Staff:

Michael Pollard, Denise James and Walton Harris

Commission members Present:

Francis Creighton, Chair

Robert Alexander, Afework Kidane, David Mohebbi, Nelson Biama, Belay Teklehayimanot, Elizabeth Ellis, Joyce Plaxen, Becaye Traore, Charles Kauffman and

Ex-Officio members Present:

Christopher Conklin

Commission members Absent:

None

Ex-Officio members Absent:

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

Guests:

Shawn Brennan – Transportation and Mobility Manager. Department of Health and Human Services

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Action Items:

Chair Creighton made the motion to approve the minutes from the September 29, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commission member Kauffman. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion Items:

Update on resolution to reduce certain taxicab fees

- Staff member Harris provided a status update regarding a resolution to reduce certain taxicab fees.
- Commission member Ellis requested that a press release/statement be issued that would acknowledge the Taxicab Services Commission's role in working to reduce these fees.
- Ex-Officio member Conklin indicated that the press release/statement should not be released until after the resolution has been transmitted to the County Council.
- Ex-Officio member Conklin requested that staff start work on a release in advance of the transmittal of the resolution.

Discussion with Shawn Brennan regarding providing excellent service to passengers with disabilities, a growing segment of taxicab customers

- Commission guest Brennan shared a video with Commission members and discussed the important of providing quality transportation services to individuals with disabilities.
- Commission member Ellis discussed her experience regarding wheelchair accessible taxicabs in Washington D.C.
- Commission member Mohebbi indicated that his fleet has few, if any, wheelchair accessible vehicles stationed on the lot due to lack of demand.
- Commission member Kauffman discussed a program that would incentivize seniors to relinquish their driver's license and sell their vehicle with the proceeds going to a fund to provide that individual taxicab service.

Review and feedback from the taxicab industry regarding the ReOpen Montgomery Grants Program – CARES Act

- Staff requested feedback regarding the experience by applicants and potential applicants to the County's ReOpen Montgomery Grants program.
- Commission member Biama discussed hearing from other drivers about the complexity of the grant application process and onerous requirements to qualify for reimbursement.
- Commission member Biama discussed the delay in getting paid for trip provided through the Medicaid program.

- Commission member Ellis requested that Sam Oji, Chief of Enhanced Mobility and Customer Relations for MCDOT, attend the next Taxicab Services Commission meeting to discuss the concerns raised by commission members regarding the delay in payment.
- Commission Traore discussed challenges with drivers, who are PVL holders, who might not retain receipts that would qualify them for the grants program.

Discussion of Taxicab Services Commission Leadership

- Staff discussed nominating a new Taxicab Commission Chair.
- Commission member suggested nominating a new Chair at the next Commission meeting.

Discussion of dates of future meetings

- Staff provided meeting dates for the 2021 calendar year.

Meeting adjourned: 7:22 p.m.