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Governor

TERRY REYNOLDS
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KARL W. ARMSTRONG
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DAN R. REASER
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Members
J.D. DECKER
RUSTY GRAF
DONALD SODERBERG
JAVIER TRUJILLO

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 15, 2023, BOARD MEETING

1. Call to Order

Chairman Dan R. Reaser called the meeting to order on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., at the location of the Nevada State Business Center, 3300 West Sahara Avenue, Suite 400, Nevada Room, Las Vegas, Nevada 89102.

Present from the Nevada Taxicab Authority Board

Chairman Dan. R. Reaser

Member J.D. Decker

Member Donald Soderberg

Member Javier Trujillo (via audio/visual technology—Teams)

Member Rusty Graf

Henna Rasul, Senior Deputy Attorney General (via audio/visual technology—Teams)

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Compliance with Open Meeting Law

Acting Secretary Amy A. Porray stated that the meeting was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.

4. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Chairman Reaser introduced the new Taxicab Authority Board Member, Rusty Graf. Item closed.

5. Action Item: Approve Board Meeting Minutes from February 15, 2023, Board Meeting

Chairman Reaser stated that Member Graf is disqualified from participating in this action item because he was not present at the last Board Meeting. No changes, additions, or corrections requested by any Board Member. Member Decker moved to approve the February 15, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes.

Member Soderberg seconded the motion. All Members are in favor of approval. (Member Graf did not participate). Motion passes and minutes approved. Item closed.

6. Industry Discussion

George Balaban, Desert Cab, discussed March Madness and the conventions and business is good overall. But still have the challenges that the industry is facing in getting drivers. Being a cab driver does not pay well for the number of hours and what they have to go through, and so the industry is trying to incentivize persons to be taxicab drivers. Mr. Balaban stated that driving a taxicab is a hard job to begin with, but now with all of the construction and the streets torn apart, it is incredibly more difficult. There is an issue now where when the drivers are involved in an accident or their car has broken down, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) will not allow the driver to wait with the vehicle for their company tow truck. Metro wants the accident taken care of quickly and requires the taxicabs to be impounded rather than allowing the driver to wait for a tow truck. One example is where a driver was in an accident, which was not the driver's fault. Metro required that the taxicab be impounded. However, the other driver was able to have their car towed to their home. It was \$500.00 to get the car back along with all of the other requirements.

It is a nightmare for the companies to get the taxicabs back after they were impounded. Also, the cab driver is left there on the side of the road waiting for the company to come and get them. This has happened at least five times in the past month. Mr. Balaban does not know how this has come about and it is a new issue that the industry is dealing with. There is something broken in the system.

Administrator Armstrong stated that he would have a discussion with Metro about the situation. He has also met with other agencies. The Taxicab Authority works cooperatively with Metro. It should not matter that the vehicle involved in the accident was a taxicab and it should not be towed to a yard. Administrator will meet with Metro and hopefully have an answer by the next board meeting.

Chairman Reaser asked about timing for the companies getting their tow trucks to an accident. Mr. Balaban responded that it takes approximately 30 minutes for a tow truck to get there because it must come from the taxicab company. Metro's tow truck is able to be there in minutes. The supervisor had given the time when the tow truck would be to the accident, but Metro said that was unacceptable.

Administrator Armstrong asked whether it was a situation where the vehicle was undrivable or if the supervisor was able to drive the vehicle back. Mr. Balaban responded that the taxicab was not drivable.

Member Decker commented that there is no law that says that the taxicab must be towed. Metro would be calling whichever tow company was on contract and taking it to that yard. Once of the factors for calling a tow truck and impounding the taxicab could be danger and safety. Administrator Armstrong should ask Metro if that is their policy to not let the legal owners to initiate the tow.



Member Decker asked if the Taxicab Authority is primarily responsible for accidents involving taxicabs. Administrator Armstrong stated that they need an increase in staff to be able to investigate all taxicabs. Right now, the inspectors are in charge of accidents, but if there is a bumper scratch, dispatch inspects the taxicab to make sure that it is safe. Administrator Armstrong will talk to Metro about responding to accidents and will work something out to increase the TA's response. He may ask them that the TA be able to respond rather than Metro. Member Decker stated that the TA cars have lights and sirens that Metro has and should be able to get to an accident quickly. Administrator Armstrong discussed the timing issue.

Member Decker stated that there is no issue with timing and that there are all kinds of accidents where the primary responder is not the closest unit. It would be a matter of agency capability and policy. The TA had historically been able to go to all accidents. Metro and NHP could secure the scene and then the TA would get there to investigate. If the TA appears at the accident, that is better than the driver having to wait for the supervisor. Administrator Armstrong responded that he has requested additional staff from the Legislature to be able to build staff back up to previous levels.

Mr. Balaban stated that it is a problem if the taxicab is being impounded but the other driver is able to drive away. It makes no sense to him, and he wonders if it was a policy change. Administrator Armstrong stated that they need to know what Metro's policy is. Mr. Balaban stated that there must be some options other than towing to the yard—push the taxicab out of the way and wait for the company tow truck to come.

Chairman Reaser stated that the other issue is whether there is a fiscal reason for doing this. He questioned whether Metro was making money from these situation(s). They need to know whether this is fiscal or just safety.

Administrator Armstrong stated that he would ask carefully and diplomatically. Member Decker stated that, if fiscal, the TA should have primary jurisdiction over accidents.

No further comments. Agenda item closed.

7. Staff Report

a. Administrator's Report:

i. Update on the joint operation with City of Las Vegas Downtown Parking Enforcement

The TA had a joint operation with the City of Las Vegas last Friday and Saturday with joint enforcement. It was a success. This is the first of a series of joint operations that the two agencies will be doing. He also wants to talk with Gaming Control about increasing taxi stands and issues with writing tickets when someone is in a taxi stand or not in a taxi stand. It is his understanding that the problem is not as acute on the Strip, but it is Downtown. He asked Parking Enforcement and Airport how it deals



with a driver who has been trespassed from a property. He asked that they allow the TA to have primary jurisdiction, rather than calling Metro, so the TA can deal with the problematic driver. He wants to deescalate the situation with the drivers. The TA is continuing to work toward a partnership with Airport Parking Enforcement. He wants more enforcement so that the TA staff is visible.

Member Decker asked if the issues involving drivers occur with picking up and dropping off. Administrator Armstrong responded yes and especially at the Airport. The situation was that when a driver became belligerent or had multiple encounters, the Airport would not allow that driver back because of that situation. Previously we were not aware because it was reported to Metro and not the TA. Administrator also wants additional officers at the airport. He has asked the Airport to change their policies regarding this.

Member Decker commented that Administrator has given good justification for additional staff. Administrator commented that he will be adding two additional officers but will need more. They will have to do a work program for more staff, but he does not want to shock the Legislature too much.

Member Decker stated that there are four months where there should be no mention of work programs. Administrator Armstrong responded that he was not asking during the session for additional, unbudgeted positions. He took over the TA in April 2022, and when he took over, the budget was closed. It closed in January 2022. He is getting the staff that he can with the current budget in place. Member Decker asked if Administrator would be asking for more positions in the 2025 budget. Administrator answered affirmatively. Member Soderberg discussed options of how to strategically ask for new positions. Administrator stated that there were a lot of questions to consider with the budget. The money that is being discussed is in the industry fund and not the general state fund, but that argument is not always well received.

No further questions.

ii. Update on the Nevada Legislature and potential legislation

Administrator will be testifying tomorrow before the Legislature on the recommendation made by the Sunset Committee regarding possible consolidation of the Taxicab Authority into the Nevada Transportation Authority (NTA). Member Decker asked if the recommendation was to combine the two agencies. Administrator stated that the committee is to review and create a study in government affairs. This will be a two-year study for the NTA and TA. There will be a full and complete review of the regulations. The current TA and NTA regulations are old. Until the laws are revised, there cannot be an intelligent discussion about what should happen. The regulations must be modernized. The TA is currently reviewing all regulations per the Governor's order. The TA is determining what should be revised and removed. Administrator will provide an update on this once the Governor responds.

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Member Decker stated that he is doing the mandatory regulation review and he came across overlap with the NTA. He wants to get together with the NTA beforehand to make sure that there is no cross-enforcement. Member Graf asked what the proposed bill number is. Administrator answered that it is AJR6.

No further questions.

b. Enforcement/Compliance Report: NONE

c. Stats

Administrator Armstrong presented the industry stats first. The rides per month are down, but it is not that significant. The trip revenue has stayed the same. There has been an increase over year-to-year. The lease revenue is higher per trip than the employee revenue. Credit card transactions are down. The industry has been doing well with the elderly/disabled ride program and are working to make sure that this continues to do well.

He discussed court stats next. He also discussed vehicle inspection and that part of what the vehicle inspectors do each month is the yearly inspection of the taxicabs. He wants to increase enforcement on impounds to help the industry and hotels. They will be doing stepped-up enforcement and are concerned with people who are trying to make a business out of impounds. He is changing enforcement shifts to more nights and weekends. He wants to make sure that they are working during times when the industry has problems. Member Decker commented that there are hundreds of UPT drivers who are not capable or disqualified from getting a permit or Uber & Lyft. This results in the worst of the worst making illegal money in stolen vehicles giving rides and presents the most danger to the public. Many cases people could get into a wanted felon's stolen vehicle. It would make him happy to see enforcement stepped up in that area. Administrator Armstrong stated that this enforcement must be done, and the TA will work with the NTA to ramp up enforcement.

Member Soderberg asked how the TA was doing with hiring. Administrator Armstrong responded that they are doing background checks on two officers and are opening a position for an AA3. If all positions are filled, then there would be no vacancies under the existing hiring allotment. Member Decker asked if the TA was at one hundred percent enforcement officers. Administrator stated that the TA is hiring two officers—one is post certified and the other has to go to the academy. The plan is to have them on sight before going to the academy. They are still deciding which is best. Member Decker stated that DPS is free and the post in Carson City is \$600, but if money is not an issue, then they do not need to go to that. Administrator Armstrong wants to use the academies that are connected to the law enforcement agencies that the TA deals with.

Chairman Reaser asked if on the last four reports with the monthly stats, will the TA add year-to-date stats.



d. Legal Counsel: Neither Amy A. Porray, Esq. of the TA nor Senior Deputy Attorney Generals Henna Rasul had anything to report.

e. Future Agenda Items:

Chairman Reaser would like selection of a Vicechair on the Agenda. No other members had any future agenda items.

No additional items requested. Item closed.

8. Public Comment

Members of the public are invited to comment on items on the meeting agenda or on items not contained therein. No action may be taken upon a matter raised during Public Comment until the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an item for possible action. Because of the time considerations, speakers are urged to avoid repetition of comments made by previous speakers.

Chris Anderson, the Transportation Manager for the Airport appeared by audiovisual technology—Teams—to make comment. He wants to let the industry know that on March 20, 2023, the T1 taxi staging area will be undergoing construction. This will be done in two phases over 12 weeks. They will lose one-half of the taxicab staging area. They will add overflow to move taxicabs. He is hoping that the projected 12 weeks to complete will be cut to 10 weeks, but they will not know until they are done with phase one.

No further comments. Item closed.

9. Adjournment (Action)

Member Decker moved for adjournment. Member Soderberg seconded the motion. All Members in favor of adjournment. Motion passes. Meeting adjourned.

