TAXI REFORM SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
1:30 p.m.
Thursday, June 18, 2009
Hamilton Convention Centre
Albion Rooms, 2nd Floor, 1 Summers Lane

Present: Councillors S. Merulla (Chair), C. Collins (Vice Chair), B. Morelli

Also Present: M. Hazell, Director, Parking & By-law Services
B. Young, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement
V. Ormond, Coordinator, Municipal Law Enforcement
S. Paparella, Legislative Assistant, City Clerk’s Office

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR INFORMATION:

(a) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (Item 1)

The Committee Clerk advised of the following changes to the Agenda:

(i) Added as Item 5.2 – A written submission from Virginia Fleming respecting the use of Shields and Cameras in Taxicabs

(ii) Added as Item 5.3 – A written submission from John C. Williams, President of the Business Skills College respecting Skills and Service Training for the Taxi Industry. Mr. Williams will also speak to this item.

(iii) Added as Item 5.4 – A Petition Containing thirty-four (34) names respecting the use of Shields in Taxicabs

(iv) Added as Item 5.5 – June Noonan has requested to be added to the Speakers List respecting various matters regarding the Taxi Cab Industry

(Morelli/Merulla)
That the Agenda for the June 18, 2009 Taxi Reform Sub-committee be approved, as amended.

CARRIED
(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

(c) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 3)

3.1 March 26, 2009

(Morelli/Merulla)
That the Minutes of the March 26, 2009 meeting of the Taxi Reform Sub-committee be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

(d) Taxi Reform Sub-committee Overview & Direction (Item 4.1)

Marty Hazell, Director of Parking and By-law Services, provided a portion of the presentation and an overview of the matters before Committee.

(e) DELEGATIONS/WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS (Item 5)

Written Submissions:

(Morelli/Merulla)
That the following written submissions, respecting the use of Taxi Cab shields, cameras and skills training for Taxi Cab Owners/Drivers, be received:

(i) Correspondence from Paulette Fortier respecting the use of Shields in Taxicabs – Not in Support of Shields in Taxi Cabs (Item 5.1)

(ii) Correspondence from Virginia Fleming respecting the use of Shields and Cameras in Taxicabs – Not in Support of Shields in Taxi Cabs (Item 5.2)

(iii) A Petition containing thirty-four (34) names respecting the use of Shields in Taxicabs – In Support of Shields in Taxi Cabs (Item 5.4)

Delegations:

(i) John C. Williams, President of the Business Skills College respecting Skills and Service Training for the Taxi Industry (Item 5.3)

Mr. Williams comments included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Believes that Taxi Cab Owners should know what the Taxi Cab Drivers are learning.
• Recommends a different course designed specifically for Owners; especially those who do not and never will drive a taxi. Course could a “Train the Trainer” format, and add other items such as personal taxes, minimizing risk (insurance), personnel management and by-laws. This course would not require the Owner to be tested or evaluated when the course is complete.

Mr. Williams also provided a written submission, which is on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

(ii) June Noonan, Passenger (Item 5.5)

Ms. Noonan’s comments included, but were not limited to, the following:

• Has used the service of two taxi companies regularly for many years, but even more so over the last three years.
• Has spoken to many drivers (all male) respecting the use of shields in taxi cabs; the day time drivers are opposed and the evening drivers are in agreement with the shields.
• New York City has been using shields in taxis since the 1950s and continues to do so.
• The drivers (male) do not want cameras in the taxi cabs.
• Has noticed the smell of smoke in many cabs. Has been told that drivers have accepted passengers who smoke so that they do not lose the fare.
• Has also seen drivers (while parked) smoking in their cars, but with the cigarette out the window. She is not opposed to them smoking, but wants to make them aware that the smell does stay in the cars.
• Has had drivers who were talking on their cell phones when they picked her up and have continued to do so when they start to drive the cab. She asks them to stop talking on the phone while she is in the cab, and noted that the drivers have done so immediately and without any resistance.

(iii) Wayne Gallant, Passenger (Item 5.6)

Mr. Gallant’s comments included, but were not limited to, the following:

• Suffered from a brain injury from a car accident and cannot drive; therefore, uses taxi service several times a day.
• Believes that it is better for Taxi Cab drivers to have shields in their cabs to prevent harm to the drivers.
• Mr. Gallant is in support of shields in taxi cabs.
(iv) **Theresa McFarlane, Passenger (Item 5.7)**

Ms. McFarlane's comments included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Common-law wife to Wayne Gallant (Item 5.6).
- While coming from hospital today in a taxi with a female driver, Ms. McFarlane asked the driver how she felt about shields in taxi cabs. Ms. McFarlane stated that the female driver agreed with shields during all hours of the day, for her own safety.
- Ms. McFarlane is in support of shields in taxi cabs.

(Morelli/Merulla)
That Items 5.1 through 5.7 be received.  

CARRIED

(f) **Use of Cameras and Shields in Taxi Cabs, and Skills Training for Taxi Cab Owners and Drivers**

(Morelli/Merulla)
That the correspondence and information received at the June 18, 2009, Public Meeting for the Taxi Reform Sub-committee be received and referred to staff for review and a report back to the Taxi Reform Sub-committee.

CARRIED

(g) **ADJOURNMENT (Item 7)**

(Collins/Morelli)
There being no further business of the Taxi Reform Sub-committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor S. Merulla  
Chair, Taxi Reform Sub-committee

Stephanie Paparella  
Legislative Assistant  
June 18, 2009