

Capital Regional Taxicab Advisory Board (CRTAB) Meeting

Thursday, October 9, 2014 - 2:00 p.m.
The Greater Richmond Convention Center

Meeting Minutes

Members of the Board present

The Honorable James M. "Jim" Holland - *Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors*
Mr. Jack Berry - *Richmond Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau*
Todd Eure for The Honorable David Kaechele - *Henrico County Board of Supervisors*
Mr. Larry Yates, Jr. for Mr. Larry Yates - *Taxicab Industry representative*
Mr. Joe Alberti - *Capital Region Airport Commission*
The Honorable Ed Via - *Hanover County Board of Supervisors*
Mr. William Barrett - *Taxicab Industry representative*

Members of the Board absent

The Honorable Reva Trammell - *City of Richmond Council*

Others present

Ms. Von Tisdale- *RideFinders*
Ms. Cherika Ruffin - *RideFinders*
Detective Malvin Caldwell- *City of Richmond Police*
Officer Craig Alviti - *County of Henrico*
Officer Campbell Hundley- *County of Henrico*

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by the Chairman, the Honorable Jim Holland. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. All CRTAB members introduced themselves. A quorum was present.

The February 20, 2014 meeting minutes were voted on and approved on a motion made by Mr. Eure and seconded by Mr. Via.

Old Business

Research Summary Results- Mr. Jack Berry stated that at the last CRTAB he was tasked with looking at the maximum number of years/miles, wheel base, wheel size and curb weight for the universal parameters described by all four jurisdictions. He reviewed comparable sized cities and found that the Richmond region is in a great position. He noted that wheel size is not a significant issue in other cities. For wheel base, the Richmond region is in conformity with other cities. He provided the report below:

Cities	# of Taxicabs	# of Companies	Maximum # of Years/Miles	Wheel Size	Wheel Base	Curb Weight
Richmond Region			More than 12 model years or 300,000 mi	14 in.	106 in.	2,900 lb.
Raleigh, NC	961	110	10 years or 250,000mi	N/A	106 in.	None(Sedan)
Hartford, CT	963	103	N/A	16 in	104 in.	None
Jacksonville, FL	668	137	10 years	N/A	105 in.	None
Tampa, FL	598	90	N/A	N/A	105 in.	None
Louisville, KY	250	44	8 model years	N/A	N/A	N/A
Milwaukee, WI	321	110	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Charlotte, NC	(4260 Drivers)	183	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Mr. Berry recommended that the region proceed as normal with no change to the process. The recommendation was accepted.

Taxicab Hotline & Website Update - Ms. Nikki Nicholau provided the taxicab comment/feedback hotline- 855-346-TAXI (8294) and social media contact information- <http://rvataxi.net/>, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Capital->

[Region-Taxi Feedback/534909323230998](https://www.facebook.com/rvataxiscare), <https://www.facebook.com/rvataxiscare>, <https://twitter.com/RVATaxi>, and <https://twitter.com/RVATaxiFeedback>. Customers can also email feedback to info@rvataxifedback.com. She noted that the telephone is the most popular method that people use to communicate feedback.

The following update was provided:

Capital Region Taxi Comment Line
Quarterly and YTD Report – September 30, 2014

October – December 2013		Total Contacts	6
Web	1	Compliments	1
Telephone	5	Complaints	5
Other	0	Other*	0
January – March 2014		Total Contacts	11
Web	4	Compliments	3
Telephone	7	Complaints	6
Other	0	Other*	2
April – June 2014		Total Contacts	13
Web	2	Compliments	3
Telephone	7	Complaints	7
E-mail	3	Other*	3
Other (Twitter)	1		
July – September 2014		Total Contacts	9*
Web	0	Compliments	2
Telephone	6	Complaints	4
E-mail	1	Other*	3
Other (Twitter)	0		
Fiscal Year Totals		Total Contacts**	39*
Web	7	Compliments	9
Telephone	25	Complaints	22
E-mail	4	Other*	8
Other (Twitter)	1		

*Total Contacts “Other” includes some owner/operators calls for decals, general comments, information, or not in Capital Region service area.

*Correction – 10/9/2014

**Contacts are individuals, not number of total contacts with RVA Taxi Comment Line, as some individuals communicate with the comment line more than once and by more than one mechanism.

Decal Distribution	2477	(April 2013 – September 30, 2014)	
5x7 inches	1517	April - December 2013	1386
4x4 inches	679	January – March 2014	416
2x4 inches	281	April – June 2014	1975
		July – September 2014	0

Companies Receiving Compliments

Airport Taxi
 Cynthia Bacon (company unknown)
 Galaxy Taxi (2)
 Napoleon Taxi
 Richmond Flyer (2)
 Translink
 Unknown

Types of Complaints (Some complainants had more than 1 complaint)

	Thru March 2014	April – June 2014	July – September 2014	YTD
Wait too long	4	1		5
Overcharge/added fees	2			2
Took longer route	2	1		3
Refused service	1	1		2
Dirty cab	1	1		2
Verbally abusive	1		1	1
Permit not visible	1	2		3
Refused to take credit card	1			1
Driver smoking		1	1	1
Cab smelled of marijuana			1	1
Driver watching game on phone		1		1
General from operator/owners	3	3		6
Total	16	11	3	30

Ms. Nicholau stated that the Region has a good system in place. She encouraged everyone to think of ways to drive more traffic to the website and social media platforms.

Mr. Chair thanked Customer Star Service for their ability to provide this service to customers and the industry.

New Business

Customer Service Training Presentation- Lifelong Education Development Services, LLC/Acquanetta Anderson:

Ms. Anderson provided an overview and format of the customer service training curriculum which includes focusing on the driver, professionalism, tourism, skillsets needed, finding positive resolutions of conflicts between passengers and cab drivers, certifications, customer expectations, safety and good customer service. She encourages each driver to have a cab kit that includes guides and maps for the area, providing service area materials to customers and knowledge of events and attractions in the area.

She noted that one of the key issues from the class is the congestion and the overcrowding. The current venue can seat approximately 60 people. One suggestion is to possibly separating the class into two separate classes- one for veteran drivers and one for new drivers. Another suggestion is to have the instructor come directly to the cab company to conduct the class onsite. Ms. Anderson stated that a larger venue is being explored and encouraged operators to not wait until the last minute to take the class. She would be willing to contract out the cab companies to offer the class onsite in the future if permitted by CRTAB and RideFinders.

Another issue that was discussed is the right of the customer to accept or refuse a cab. One driver stated that drivers have been told this verbally, but feels that it should be posted on the Customer Bill of Rights decals that a customer can choose their cab. It was noted that there have been instances where drivers on the taxi line have had disputes with each other in front of passengers when a customer refused one driver to ride with another. Ms. Anderson will relay this to the officers in each jurisdiction and regulatory authorities. Ms. Tisdale also encouraged drivers to submit their comments, questions, future agenda items and suggestions via the hotline and use the comment form provided by RideFinders and return the form to her and she will distribute to CRTAB members to address.

Mr. Chair thanked Ms. Anderson for her presentation.

Discussion of Transportation Network Companies (Uber, Lyft): Many issues were discussed by taxi drivers regarding Uber and Lyft. They were as follows:

- The Governor overrode the cease and desist order from the Commissioner of DMV granting Uber and Lyft transportation broker's licenses and temporary operating authority. Mr. Bell stated that the Governor and Attorney General issued a temporary operating authority as Transportation Network.
- It was noted by Mr. Chair that we are a market driven economy.
- Public safety issues should be discussed regarding these entities. Start taking pictures and documenting issues to show lawmakers.
- Regulation of Uber and Lyft including these organizations do not have the same insurance coverage as taxicabs.
- Certification of Uber and Lyft drivers. Are they required to be certified?
- Uber and Lyft are being considered as rideshare, but are operating as taxicabs.
- These companies are operating at a lesser cost than taxicabs.
- It was noted that there is no representation from the Richmond Region on the Virginia Taxicab Association. It was strongly encouraged that the region is represented.
- Voices from the taxicab industry are needed on the legislative level and taken to the General Assembly.

Jonathan Trainum from Napoleon Taxi suggested that an industry meeting should take place in the near future before addressing the CRTAB during which time the industry would provide its recommendations to the board for action. Mr. Jack Berry will coordinate and host the industry meeting at the Convention Center with a date to be determined. Mr. Chair stated that the CRTAB looks forward receiving to the feedback and recommendations from the industry.

Transitioning of program from RideFinders, Von Tisdale: Ms. Tisdale publicly notified the CRTAB and the industry that RideFinders will end its tenure as the administrative arm for CRTAB in December 2015 due to limited staffing, budget constraints and lack of connection to the core programs of RideFinders. She acknowledged the board, the industry, the instructor and law enforcement for their commitment. The process of transitioning has started and is currently working with the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) to review legislation on the program to ensure we follow the legal process for the transition.

Mr. Chair thanked RideFinders for its service to the CRTAB.

The next meeting date, place and time to be determined. The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Eure and seconded by Mr. Via.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
RideFinders, a division of GRTC Transit System