

Capital Regional Taxicab Advisory Board (CRTAB) Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2015 - 3:30 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*

The Honorable Reva Trammell - *City of Richmond Council*

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

None

Others present

Ms. Von Tisdale- *RideFinders*

Ms. Cherika Ruffin - *RideFinders*

Troy Bell - *Capital Region Airport Commission*

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 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 October 9, 2014 and January 13, 2015 meeting minutes were voted on and approved on a motion made by the Honorable Ed Via and seconded by Mr. Berry.

Old Business

Mr. Jack Berry - Update on TNC Legislation & Taxi Industry Concerns- The General Assembly did pass legislation on Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) which was signed into law by the Governor and allows companies like Uber and Lyft to legally operate in Virginia. The legislation has caused great concern for the local taxi industry. Mr. Berry reviewed the history of this legislation and the background on this industry. Some of the main concerns from industry are the inconsistency of regulation including fare structure, vehicles, the number of passengers and inspections which creates an imbalance between the taxi industry and Uber. Mr. Berry noted that this situation is similar to when there was legislation regarding the limousine industry. It was also noted that the limousine industry and TNCs are regulated by the State, but the taxi industry is regulated by local jurisdictions. There was discussion by CRTAB board members and the industry regarding these issues.

There was also brief discussion on whether or not anything can be done at this point regarding regulating TNCs since that falls under the purview of the State. It was noted that the CRTAB has advisory power and can advise members of the House and Senate regarding these issues. It was also stated that CRTAB can review the current ordinances for the taxi industry to find a balance between the taxi industry and companies like Uber.

Ms. Von Tisdale- Administrative Staff Update- RideFinders has been the staff liaison to CRTAB since February 2011 and will serve in that capacity until December 2015 when it will be passed on to another entity. Currently there are two subcontractors that are used to help fulfill those administrative duties (hotline, website, customer service training). Lifelong Education will continue to provide the customer service training through the end of this fiscal year, June 30, although its contract expires March 30, 2015. The contract with Customer Star Service, which oversees the website and hotline project, will expire on March 30, 2015. Nikki from Nicholau & Associates, a subcontractor of Customer Star Service, will now undertake the project until December 30, 2015. In the interim,

Ms. Tisdale noted that she and Nikki Nicholau will work together to create the scope, function, administrative level, and changes when working on an RFP. Classroom structure may be changed depending on the outcomes of the subsequent meetings and feedback from the industry. Ms. Tisdale will continue to keep the board apprised of any updates as this process moves forward.

New Business

Appointment of Review Committee of the Current Ordinances for the Taxi Industry- There was discussion on appointment a review committee of the current taxi industry ordinances to help level the playing field for the taxi industry. Some discussion topics included: looking at TNC vehicles from a tax revenue perspective on the local level, possible deregulation of the taxi industry to allow for more flexibility, reviewing the public safety aspects, evaluating jurisdictions are keeping taxi drivers safe and protecting while working and comparing the regulations for TNCs and the taxi industry. Mr. Barrett emphasized that even if deregulation is a reviewed as a possible solution to not eliminate the public safety aspects for the taxi industry.

There were some suggestions that the CRTAB members become more vocal during next year's General Assembly to help the industry's voice be heard and be there with the industry hand-in-hand. Board members were asked find out who the industry's friends are and to reach out to those members of the General Assembly.

A subcommittee will be appointed to review the current ordinances for the taxi industry as well as the above mentioned discussion topics for consideration. A meeting date to address these concerns and review the ordinances will be held very soon. Mr. Jack Berry volunteered to chair the subcommittee. The following people volunteered to serve on the subcommittee: Jonathan Trainum from Napoleon Taxi, Troy Bell, Nikki Nicholau, and William Barrett III. Others that are interested in serving are to provide their contact information to Jack Berry. Mr. Berry will contact all jurisdictions to ensure representation from all stakeholders.

The subcommittee will establish timetables/deadlines, gather information and report back to the CRTAB with recommendations. Once CRTAB has reviewed, discussed and approved the recommendations, the ordinances will be presented to each jurisdiction for review. The jurisdictions must approve the regulations of the taxi industry. There are also public hearings and public input/comment that will be included in this process. Mr. Berry noted that this is a process and will not happen overnight although there is a sense of urgency. Mr. Berry will send out the subcommittee meeting notice to all interested parties.

After the subcommittee's review, the CRTAB will hold another meeting tentatively scheduled for April 14, 2015.

Nomination of members of the taxi industry to the CRTAB Board- Mr. Trainum broached this subject by reviewing the existing CRTAB Bylaws under Article III- Membership, sections 3.1 and 3.2. The Chairman read those sections. Mr. Trainum noted that the current taxi industry representatives have exceeded their term limited. Mr. Trainum nominated himself. He was voted on, approved and appointed as one of the taxi industry representatives. Mr. William Barrett III was nominated, voted on, approved and appointed as the second taxi industry representative.

The Bylaws will also be reviewed on the subcommittee level.

Richmond Region Tourism Update- Sarah Hunter provided the following update: the new 2015 publication is available, the Visitor's guide has been provided to those in attendance, a new and improved pad maps (front and back) is available outside at the desk. Ms. Hunter provided a handout of Peak Hotel usage with projected dates for the year.

Mr. Trainum thanked the CRTAB for the time and efforts in helping the industry. Ms. Trammell thanked everyone for attending. The Chairman thanked the board for their time and thanked everyone for attending.

The next meeting date is tentatively scheduled for April 14, 2015. The subcommittee meeting is TBD pending notification to all jurisdictions. The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mr. Yates.

Meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
RideFinders, a division of GRTC Transit System