

**Minutes of the Taxicab Advisory Group (TAG)
March 8, 2011 - 2:30 PM
140 W. Flagler Street, Room #908**

Members Present:

Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Fred Wong, Jr.	Seaport Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer
Dawood Akhtar	Chauffeur
Ilene Hyams	Office of ADA Coordination Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Chauffeur

Members Absent:

William Samek, Ph.D.	Consumer/Chairperson
Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative

Staff Present:

Joe Mora	Director, PTRD
Steven Bobes	AO3, PTRD
Ivan Cotayo	Taxi Stand Coordinator
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, PTRD
Nancy Perez	Senior Executive Secretary, CSD

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call and informed the Vice Chair a quorum was present.

Vice Chair Moskowitz called the meeting to order, welcomed members and stated he would be presiding over the meeting as Dr. Samek had requested an excusal to attend a meeting in Tallahassee.

Mr. Moskowitz requested review of the October 26, 2010 minutes. Ms. Hyams moved the 10/26/2010 minutes, seconded by Mr. Feliciano, with unanimous Committee approval.

Chauffeur of the 4th Quarter (2010): Mr. Wong nominated driver 4-3 as Chauffeur of the 4th Quarter, seconded by Mr. Ms. Hyams, with unanimous approval. The Committee also voted on the Chauffeur of the Year Award from the four quarter recipients. Ms. Beltran nominated the 3rd quarter recipient, seconded by Mr. Moscowitz, with unanimous Committee approval.

Taxicab Stand Update: Mr. Mora read into record newly created and reinstated taxicab stands located throughout Dade County. The locations identified were: The Grand Beach Hotel and a 4-car stand at the Airports new Rental Car facility. The stand at the American Airlines Arena was reinstated. Throughout the Art Basel event 15 temporary stands were available on Miami Beach together with a 9 car stand operating in Midtown Miami. A 5 car stand was established for the Homestead NASCAR event along with a 6 car stand at the Miami Beach Boat Show. In total: 187 taxi stands have been established, providing a total of 463 spaces, to exclude the Airport and Seaport locations..

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Mr. Mora noted the taxicab stand information is updated monthly and available thru CSD Website. Mr. Feliciano congratulated County staff for their hard work and persistence. Ms. Beltran reiterated to the industry that taxi stand users must remember they are facility guests. Drivers should not use inappropriate language, behave badly or abuse the facilities premises or surrounding area.

Legislative Updates:

Commissioner Souto's Vehicle Age Extension Ordinance

Mr. Mora advised that Commissioner Souto's ordinance on vehicle age extension had been adopted March 1, 2011 by the Board. The newly created ordinance will affect a total of 47 vehicles. Most other vehicles had already been placed into service prior to the Commissioner's proposed ordinance to grant a December 2011 vehicle age extension.

Comm. Martinez proposed Ordinance

County Staff anticipates a return of Commissioner Martinez's proposed ordinance at the April 11, 2011 Regional Transportation Committee meeting.

Comm. Diaz proposed Ordinance

Commission Diaz proposed ordinance would allow veterans who have been honorably discharged to participate in an open lottery, conducted by the department, for 6 medallions. Vehicles must connect to a Passenger Service Company and operate 7 days a week, 24-hours a day, with a fixed base and be equipped with technology.

Much discussion pursued regarding the differences between these two proposed ordinances. Members discussed their desire to have both ordinances move together and the need for technology in vehicles. While the underlying question resonated, who would be responsible for payment. Those answers remained unsolved. Members believed a loss of technology is a critical part in their efforts to move this industry forward.

Members suggested writing a letter or schedule meeting with Commissioner Martinez to review TAG's concerns. Although, it was suggested this may delay or disrupt the legislative process.

Mr. Feliciano offered the following motion: TAG draft a letter of their desires to Commissioner Diaz and request in his proposed ordinance technology to vehicles be added and while moving thru the legislative process the two ordinances stay together, seconded by Mr. Moscovitz.

Members agreed there were substantive changes in these ordinances and the above motion would impede the movement, therefore could not vote for this motion. They suggested a conversation only with the Commissioner would be better appropriated.

Mr. Feliciano withdrew the above motion and offered the following: A phone call to Commissioner Diaz office to discuss technology package in lieu of a reduction in the

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purchase price to \$5,000.00, seconded by Ms. Hyams. Motion passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed

Gas Prices:

Mr. Mora stated due to the rising cost of gas prices CSD staff anticipates implementation of the fuel surcharge with an effective date of March 29, 2011. A public campaign will be launched along with various press releases to inform the public of the surcharge. And the decaling process would be conducted in various staging locations, at no cost to drivers.

Interior Blue Decals:

Mr. Mora requested members review and provide feedback of an interior blue decal the department created to display signage and lettering in a more prominent fashion. Members commented on the placement of the taxi number and suggested, the boxed area move upward, be printed in bold and visible in the dark.

Taxi Receipts – Section 31-86(a):

Mr. Mora reviewed the taxi receipt policy: all customer receipts whether hand-written or generated by a taximeter, shall contain the required pertinent contact information such as: driver name, Operating Permit #, Passenger Service Company Name & Telephone number along with the information to call "311". This information must be printed on all receipts as stated in the Code.

PSC Dispatching Rotation:

This item is in follow-up to an earlier discussion regarding a PSC dispatching rotation process suggested by Mr. Moscowitz for the handling of all wheelchair accessible vehicles. The thought process behind the suggestion was to utilize all 6 PSC companies on a rotation basis to better serve the disabled community. Concept: one fixed telephone number, one trip, six rotating passenger service companies with radio dispatching and GPS capabilities.

This topic created much controversy, many suggestions and opposition. Members agreed this matter should be placed on the next TAG agenda for further discussion.

OTC Tower II:

Mr. Mora informed member of the department's intent to relocate in May to the Overtown Transit Towers located at 601 NW 1 Court, 18th floor, Miami, Fl Mr. Mora assured the Committee, although he didn't believe the move would occur as early as May, the new facility would have ample office space, conference rooms an adequate parking to accomplish the department's mission.

Mediation Center:

Mr. Mora advised members of departmental procedure changes that will soon occur. CSD' Mediation Section will commence the handling of all for hire complaints. This reorganization will provide a greater enhancement to the complaint handling process and facilitate the division's enforcement officers in the performance of other related investigative duties.

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Provided as general information, Mr. Mora discussed a press release regarding recent coverage of a "BOD" operation that was conducted throughout Dade County by CSD Staff with the assistance of the Police Department thru signage of an Interlocal Agreement.

Mr. Mora stated CSD Staff continue to work diligently with municipal law enforcement agencies to develop partnering opportunities and establish Interlocal Agreements such as the one for the City of Aventura.

Mr. Wong noted staging guidelines for Seaport were in the loop and would soon be accessible online.

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Mora reiterated to members, to please forward their agenda items to him in advance of scheduled meetings. This will facilitate discussion with the Chair when establishing an agenda for future meetings.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Akhtar moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Eisenberg, and approved by all. Therefore, the meeting adjourned.

CHAUFFEUR NOMINATIONS
October – December 2010
4th Quarter

Nomination #4-1

CR original application 06/24/2009
Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an email to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Dear Mr. BTV Miami Dade:

I want to report excelent very good service from (the nominee). I took a Taxi Cab on November 10, 2010 from the Dolphin Mall to the Hyatt Place hotel.

(the nominee) was:

- Extremely respectfull
- Very, very clean unit
- A good flavor scent smelled in all car
- A good music compilation
- He gave a good conversation during trip
- He helped me with my luggage
- I strongly recommend (the nominee) as a taxi driver, and if I the opportunity, I will choose his car for a new trip for sure

Thank you very much for your choosing (the nominee), and keep selecting people like him.

Kindest regards,
Juan Carlos Gilbert
Samsung Electronics Ecuador

Nomination #4-2 Intentionally omitted

Nomination #4-3

CR original application 04/14/2004
Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In a letter to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

Yesterday (December 13, 2010 I got a ride with a taxi driver from MIA to my house. In the mean time I lost my purse. A short time after my ride the taxi driver returned to my house knocked on the door and returned my purse. I checked the purse and everything was there. I became so happy which can't be described in words when I got my purse

back which was very important to me because it contained my resident card, social security card library card, bank credit cards, other important documents, and money too.

I really appreciate your service and I really appreciate the excellent service of that taxi driver (the nominee). I was really surprised by his honesty. The most wonderful thing is that he returned the purse without having been called or telling me that he would bring it by when he had free time. He did not want me to worry so that is why he brought it to me right away, during his busy time.

I am suggesting as a customer, to keep honest drivers to help customers like that. I will recommend everyone to use his service with great trust.

Finally, I also appreciate, and am thankful to all of the authorities of the Miami-Dade Consumer Service Department for your best service.

Yours Sincerely,

Yamileth Zeledon

Nomination #4-4

CR original application 06/19/2007

Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Hi Steven,

I am writing to you because I wanted to recognize a kind act from one of your taxi drivers, (the nominee) His driver # is xxxxx.

Last weekend, I left my phone on his taxi and when I called my number (the nominee) answered my phone and asked for a number where he can reach me so that he could return my phone and as promised he called me as soon as he was heading over to meet with me and returned my iPhone.

I have to say I am very pleased to know that there are still honest taxi drivers and many others should follow his actions.

Best Regards,
Maritza

Nomination #4-5

CR original application 11/14/1986
Citations 2 (Paid) – Complaints 1 (unfounded)

In an e-mail to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

I write this email to let you know that I'm very happy for the service given to me and my family by (the nominee). He took us in his cab to the greyhound bus station and explained things that we, as desperate tourists wanted to know, then as we were in a hurry because of our cancelled flight we left a laptop with a hard drive carrying very important information for me in the backseat of the cab.

We went back to the airport and (the nominee) very gently founds us back at the airport and gave us everything, intact. I ask him a way to thank him and let his boss know that he's doing a great job. I'm very pleased and if all the employees were like (the nominee) things would be different. You're lucky to have him and we were lucky to have left our stuff in his cab.

Thanks a lot.

Elva Ontaneda R.

CHAUFFEUR NOMINATIONS

2010 Chauffeur of the Year

First Quarter 2010

Nomination #1-2

CR original application 06/15/2001

Citation(s) 1 Paid – Complaints 1

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department, the customer wrote:

Dear Mr. Bobes,

Thank you for calling me back so quickly.

I am the director to EF International Language Schools located at 2469 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, FL. One of our new students from Russia got into a cab somewhere in South Beach and was dropped off at the Grand Beach Hotel at 4835 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33140-2751. When he got out of the cab, he left behind a bag with his passport, student visa, cellular phone and credit cards inside.

When the driver looked in the bag, he saw the passport with the visa which has the name and address of our school. He came to the school and dropped everything off with our receptionist. This morning, when I told he student we had his bag, he could not stop hugging and kissing me. He was so happy.

As I told you on the phone, I run a staff of 20+ people, at a school with an average of 350 to 400 students per week, and what I always tell them is that the most important thing we can do for our customers is to give a damn. And this driver does. He gave a damn about the person and took the time to come here and drop the bag. He has saved this young man, who barely speaks any English, an amazing amount of trouble. The closest place for him to replace his passport is Washington DC, and let's not even talk of the nightmare it would be to get his visa and credit cards replaced.

I hope my report will help you find this driver and recommend him for some sort of recognition. In a city not famous for customer service, this driver is a bright spot that deserves recognition

Thank you for your attention

Ana van Gilst
School Director
EF Miami
2469 Collins Ave
Miami Beach - FL - 33140

**Second Quarter 2010
Nomination #2-5 -**

Nominee A (Chauffeur with the property)
CR original application 09/27/2002
Citations 1 (Paid) – Complaints 0

In an e-mail to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

I am sending a very long over due thank you and acknowledgement of appreciation for a couple of the cab drivers registered within the Miami / Dade County system.

April 1st my family of 5 (mom/dad and 3 kids) traveled to Miami for a much anticipated trip to Miami and proceed on to a 3 day cruise to the Bahamas. When we arrived into the Miami airport we immediately caught a cab to our hotel, spent the rest of the day and evening exploring the Bayside area on the water and having a great time.

Upon returning to our hotel room our 10 year old was looking for his PSP and that was when we discovered he must have left his cinch sack bag in the cab we rode in from the airport. By this time it was 10pm and I was concerned we would never find the bag again. This bag contained not only his PSP, but an IPod, multiple games and movies for the PSP, a fleece jacket not to mention power cords of all the equipment, all total we estimated the value of contents of the bag to be about \$500, we were very depressed.

With little to go on I started making phone calls to a company I thought was the cab service we were in (as it turned out it was the wrong company), I also tried to call the airport, but of course with the time of night there was no one in answering phones. The only real clue we had about who we might talk to was that the cab drivers first name was (deleted) and his last name started with (deleted).

The next morning we caught a cab to the cruise ship dock and during the ride we started telling the cab driver, (nominee B), our dilemma with the lost bag, he totally understood our despair and offered up many potential solutions. He was incredibly helpful and went so far as taking my cell phone number, giving me his and offered to make a few phone calls and talk to some folks at the airport and get back to us before our ship took sail at 5pm that evening with any information he might have been able to find out about the possibility of finding the bag.

(Nominee B) left us about 11am at the dock and by 3pm he was calling me back with a phone number and a name of a person at the office in Miami that oversees ALL the cab drivers in Miami. That person was Steven Bobes and he too was incredibly helpful, when I explained to him our situation and I asked if there was anyway to search his system for an (deleted) with a last name that started with (deleted) he was not quite sure, but offered to try.

Sure enough he came across only two (deleted). At that point Steven offered to call them both and see if either of them had found a back with electronics. Within 30 - 45 minutes, Steven was calling me back with news I truly did not think I would get, he FOUND the BAG!!!!!! Steven than gave me the cell phone number of (the nominee B), who was the cab driver we rode with on Thursday April 1st, and who had found our bag in his car just that morning Friday April 2nd!

I immediately called (nominee B) to not only figure out how we could get the bag back from him, but also to thank him for being so kind as to admit he found the bag! With a bag of unidentified electronics like this, it would have been so easy for anyone to say no, haven't seen it and keep or sell the equipment for cash. Not (nominee B) though!!!! He was so kind and helpful and wanted to do whatever he could to get the belongings back to the family that lost them.

Because our ship was about to sail within a couple hours, there was no way to meet up with (nominee B) before we left for our weekend trip on the ship. With that, he offered to hold on to the bag and protect it for us over the weekend and we could contact him on Monday when we docked to meet him to get the bag back. That was exactly what we did.

We called him as soon as we were off the ship and he agreed to meet us back where he originally had dropped us off on Thursday April 1st and we would get the bag back, so that is what we did and our 10 year old son could not have been happier when he saw the (nominee B) pull up.

So to end this very long email, I just want to say without the help of (nominee A), Steven Bobes, and of course (nominee B) our vacation could have really had a sad memory built into it, but because these 3 gentleman, in our opinion went way above what they would have had to do, our vacation has nothing but WONDERFUL memories! Please recognize the nominees and Steven for being outstanding cab drivers and employees of the Miami-Dade County cab service system!!!!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Yours Truly the Schmitz Family
Russ, Brenda, Landon, Katie and Nolan (the winner in this whole event, because he got his bag back)

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Third Quarter 2010
Nomination #3-4
CR original application 07/22/2009
Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Hello my name is Charles Hobbs and on August the 3rd I had an appointment in Miami. On that morning I came out of my hotel am my car wouldn't start so I had to call a cab.

3Q\Taxi Driver Incentive Program\2010\10 Chauffeur of the Year\10 Chauffeur of the Year Nomination
Outline_TAG.doc

The driver showed up and we talked on the way to my appointment and I enjoyed the conversation so I had him give his personal number so I could call him and get a ride back to my hotel.

I told him about my car not starting and when we got back to my car he got out and took a look at it. It turned out it was just my battery so we tried to boost it off and it wouldn't work so I had him take me to walmart to buy a new battery. After purchasing the battery we went back to my car where he got out again to help me install the battery. The bolt that mounts the battery was very rusted and we couldn't get it to loosen. He then went, and out of his own pocket, and bought me a can of WD-40. We sprayed it on the bolt and was waiting a few minutes for it to soak in and he got a call for a trip and he told me he would be back.

I kept trying to get the bolt off and sure enough he showed back up. It was very hot that day so we took turns back and forth trying to get the bolt off. He then got another call and told me he would be back. I figured at that point I would be on my own because we had spent close to an hour already trying to get the bolt off. The only thing I could think of was to find something to break the bolt with so I started walking to find an auto parts store.

After walking a few blocks my new friend spotted me walking and did a quick turn around and took me to a mechanic shop to get the stuff to break the bolt. We then went back to my car and he helped me break the bolt and install my battery. He made sure the car got started and we were saying our goodbyes and I asked him how I could call his boss and let him know just how good of an employee and person he had working for him. He gave the information and that's why I'm writing this letter.

During our time together I told him that I had a set of twins that were 11 months old that have cystic fibrosis and how bad I needed to get back home, and he shared his story of his family being out of the country and how much he missed them. Maybe that is what made him make the extra effort, I don't know. But I do know without the help of your cab driver I wouldn't have made it home to my family as quick as I did. If all of your drivers have the same caring soul as this one, then you run a great community service.

The driver's ID number was xxxxx, I'm not sure if you have any type of awards for employees that go the extra mile for their customers, but if you do he would be the perfect candidate.

Thank you for your time.

Charles Hobbs
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Pikeville, Ky 41501
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