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 1
 2 CITY OF MILWAUKEE
 3 COMMON COUNCIL
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 5 * * * * *
 6 In the Matter of: PUBLIC PASSENGER VEHICLE DRIVER'S
 7 LICENSE Renewal application for:
 8 JAGGI GHOTRA
 9 * * * * *
 10
 11
 12 Proceedings had and testimony given in
 13 the above-entitled matter, before the COMMON COUNCIL
 14 OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE, on the 1st day of October,
 15 2009.
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 1 and any written objections in these matters?
 2 Roll call, please.
 3 CITY CLERK: Alderman Hamilton?
 4 ALDERMAN HAMILTON: Aye.
 5 CITY CLERK: Davis?
 6 ALDERMAN DAVIS: Aye.
 7 CITY CLERK: Kovac?
 8 ALDERMAN KOVAC: Aye.
 9 CITY CLERK: Bauman?
 10 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: Aye.
 11 CITY CLERK: Bohl?
 12 ALDERMAN BOHL: Aye.
 13 CITY CLERK: Coggs?
 14 ALDERWOMAN COGGS: Aye.
 15 CITY CLERK: Wade?
 16 ALDERMAN WADE: Aye.
 17 CITY CLERK: Donovan?
 18 ALDERMAN DONOVAN: Aye.
 19 CITY CLERK: Puente?
 20 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Aye.
 21 CITY CLERK: Murphy?
 22 ALDERMAN MURPHY: Aye.
 23 CITY CLERK: Dudzik?
 24 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: Aye.
 25 CITY CLERK: Witkowiak?

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 1 P R O C E E D I N G S
 2 CITY CLERK: Motion to approve the
 3 recommendations of the Public Safety Committee
 4 relative to licenses. Included in the file are
 5 the following recommendations. Renewal with a
 6 ten day suspension, based on the police report
 7 and driving record of the Public Passenger
 8 Vehicle driver's license of Jacob Morowitz. No
 9 written objections have been filed. Renewal with
 10 a ten day suspension, based on the police report
 11 and driving record of the Public Passenger
 12 Vehicle driver's license of Jassar Nassar. No
 13 written objections have been filed. And renewal
 14 with a 60 day suspension, based on the police
 15 report of the public passenger vehicle driver's
 16 license of Glenn Lawrence. Written objections
 17 have been filed. A non-renewal, based on the
 18 testimony provided at the committee hearing
 19 related to rudeness to passengers and dispatch
 20 personnel of the Public Passenger Vehicle
 21 driver's license of Jaggi Ghotra. Written
 22 objections have been filed.
 23 PRESIDENT HINES: Have the members of
 24 the Common Council read the report and
 25 recommendations of the Public Safety Committee,

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 1 ALDERMAN WITKOWIAK: Aye.
 2 CITY CLERK: Witkowski?
 3 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Aye.
 4 CITY CLERK: Zielinski?
 5 ALDERMAN ZIELINSKI: Aye.
 6 CITY CLERK: Mr. President?
 7 PRESIDENT HINES: Aye.
 8 CITY CLERK: 15 ayes.
 9 PRESIDENT HINES: 15 ayes, zero nos.
 10 CITY CLERK: Are either of the
 11 following or their counsel present, and if so, do
 12 they wish to address the Common Council? Glenn
 13 Lawrence? Mr. Lawrence is present. Jaggi
 14 Ghotra? Counsel is present and the applicant.
 15 PRESIDENT HINES: Alderman Donovan
 16 moves that the Common Council resolve itself into
 17 a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of
 18 hearing arguments on behalf of the license in
 19 opposition to the recommendation in the report
 20 and the statement presented by the City Attorney.
 21 Is there any objections? Seeing and hearing
 22 none, each side shall be limited to five minutes.
 23 Arguments shall be limited to the matter
 24 contained in the report and the recommendations
 25 and any other written responses. Please come

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 1 forward. We'll start with Mr. Lawrence first.
 2 (Whereupon Mr. Glenn Lawrence appeared
 3 and addressed the Common Council.)
 4 CITY CLERK: The next item is the
 5 recommendation of the committee for non-renewal,
 6 based on the testimony provided at the committee
 7 hearing related to rudeness to passengers and
 8 dispatch personnel of the Public Passenger
 9 Vehicle driver's license of Jaggi Ghotra.
 10 PRESIDENT HINES: Again, each member
 11 shall be given five minutes containing, regarding
 12 the information in the report and recommendation
 13 and the written exceptions. With that being the
 14 case, please identify yourself for the record and
 15 who you are representing.
 16 MR. BOBOT: Good morning, members of
 17 the Common Council, President Hines. I represent
 18 Jaggi Ghotra, regarding the renewal of his Public
 19 Passenger Vehicle license.
 20 Members of the Common Council, I ask
 21 you to reconsider non-renewal, based upon several
 22 things. First and foremost, Mr. Ghotra has never
 23 had any problems with - - He has no traffic
 24 record in the last five years. He has no
 25 criminal record. He's never had, according to

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 1 paper. In fact, there weren't a lot of incidents
 2 documented. Mr. Ghotra is here today. He asks
 3 you to reconsider that recommendation. He wants
 4 to continue working to support his family. He is
 5 a cabdriver. He's trying to work with the City,
 6 in that he relinquished his taxicab license to
 7 somebody else, but he wants to continue driving.
 8 And I ask you to reconsider recommendation and
 9 possibly consider suspension and give him a
 10 second chance. With that, Mr. Ghotra would just
 11 like to make a short statement to members of the
 12 Common Council.
 13 MR. GHOTRA: Please give me chance, I
 14 taxi driver. I have big family. I take care of
 15 family. My record is very good. I am not
 16 criminal, not anything. In America, I'm last 15
 17 years in America. I am, everything okay. Thank
 18 you.
 19 PRESIDENT HINES: Okay. Thank you.
 20 Are there any questions that members of the
 21 Council would have of the attorney or either of
 22 the applicant? If not, I thank the both of you.
 23 We will now hear from the City Attorney's office.
 24 MR. SCHRIMPF: Thank you, Mr.
 25 President. Bruce Schrimpf. Members, Bruce

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 1 the license investigative unit, any prior
 2 complaints about him being a public passenger
 3 vehicle operator.
 4 To give just a short history of what
 5 happened at the committee hearing. There was
 6 some testimony from the owner of - - the general
 7 manager of Yellow Cab, Justice Khalsa, regarding
 8 an incident that occurred at the temple, the Sikh
 9 temple on South Howell Avenue in which - - in
 10 which Mr. Ghotra threw - - allegedly threw a rock
 11 and milk carton at him. I will tell you that
 12 that was reported eight days after the incident
 13 happened. There had been some history prior to
 14 that about alleged discrimination on the caste
 15 system in the Sikh community. Mr. Ghotra denies
 16 that allegation, as well as denying any of the
 17 other allegations that were presented to the
 18 committee hearing.
 19 I want to - - I want you to take note
 20 that there was no witnesses to any of the
 21 allegations of him being rude to passengers or
 22 dispatchers. The documentary evidence that was
 23 presented at the committee hearing was basically
 24 slips of paper. Many of them were not
 25 identified, who was the author of those slips of

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 1 Schrimpf from the City Attorney's office.
 2 It is true, of course, that Mr. Ghotra
 3 had no traffic or criminal record that was
 4 presented by the Milwaukee Police Department.
 5 The testimony that was presented was the manager
 6 of Yellow Cab Co-op, and then ultimately, because
 7 of statements made referencing, by Mr. Ghotra,
 8 referencing, the termination of his employment,
 9 or acceptance of dispatches from American United,
 10 Mr. Richard "Red" Christianson, came to the
 11 hearing when he was watching it on TV. He
 12 actually drove over to City Hall to offer
 13 testimony regarding his experiences with Mr.
 14 Ghotra.
 15 Whether you renew this license or non-
 16 renew it is, of course, repose to your sound
 17 discretion. And if you wish to impose a
 18 suspension, that again, is repose to your sound
 19 discretion. The limits are again, ten minimum,
 20 90 maximum, on a suspension.
 21 So far as the complaint about the
 22 records that were presented by Yellow - - Yellow
 23 Cab Co-op presented records that they kept from
 24 dispatchers of complaints regarding Mr. Ghotra.
 25 I think those pretty clearly fit a business

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1 records exception, because I specific -- I
 2 recall specifically asking Mr. Khalsa if those
 3 were kept in the -- in the ordinary conduct of
 4 business when dispatchers are dispatching. And
 5 he indicated that they were. Mr. Christianson
 6 also indicated that his firm had records of
 7 complaints regarding Mr. Ghotra. It is also true
 8 that Mr. Ghotra returned the overcharged fare and
 9 explained that his employer or Yellow Cab Co-op
 10 insisted that he return -- return the
 11 overcharged fare. So he did that. Any
 12 questions, I would be happy to try to answer
 13 them.

14 PRESIDENT HINES: Thank you. The Chair
 15 recognizes Alderman Bauman.

16 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
 17 President. Mr. Schrimpf, are we entitled to rely
 18 on the existence of complaints even though the
 19 actual complainant was not present and that the
 20 committee was basically unable to determine the
 21 truth or falsity of the complaint itself?

22 MR. SCHRIMPF: Well, it's always --
 23 The short answer is, yes, I think you are,
 24 because of the business records exception.
 25 Obviously, the most desirable situation would be

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1 MR. SCHRIMPF: Correct.
 2 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Was not true.
 3 MR. SCHRIMPF: That's right.
 4 ALDERMAN PUENTE: And he could speak on
 5 that behalf, that when he stated that he left,
 6 Mr. Christianson said that is not true.

7 MR. SCHRIMPF: Right. The -- The
 8 testimony was, and I re-checked it in the
 9 transcript, that Mr. Ghotra left American United
 10 because of the rates that were charged, I
 11 believe, either the mileage rates or the rental
 12 rates for the cabs. He thought they were too
 13 high. Mr. Christianson testified that American
 14 United let him go because of his conduct towards
 15 passengers.

16 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Thank you.
 17 PRESIDENT HINES: Thank you. Are there
 18 any additional comments or questions of Assistant
 19 Attorney Bruce -- or Attorney Bruce Schrimpf?
 20 Seeing and hearing none, Alderman Bauman moved
 21 that the committee now rises. Hearing no
 22 objections, so ordered. Are there any motions
 23 relative to these matters? The Chair recognizes
 24 Alderman Zielinski.

25 ALDERMAN ZIELINSKI: Thank you, Mr.

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1 to have the individuals who were involved in the
 2 complaining situation actually present the
 3 testimony regarding it.

4 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: Extremely unlikely.
 5 MR. SCHRIMPF: But this is a committee
 6 hearing. It's an administrative proceeding, and
 7 the rules of evidence are somewhat relaxed
 8 precisely because of that.

9 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: Thank you.
 10 PRESIDENT HINES: Thank you. The Chair
 11 recognizes Alderman Puente.

12 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Thank you, Mr.
 13 President. Mr. Schrimpf, didn't Mr. Christianson
 14 come down to the committee, also, for the reason
 15 stating that the applicant lied to us, and he
 16 came to us and said he perjured himself in front
 17 of the committee?

18 MR. SCHRIMPF: Well, it was Mister --
 19 That is true. That was Mr. Christianson's
 20 testimony. However, it's not Mr. Christianson
 21 who is determining if Mr. Ghotra lied. It's the
 22 committee and the Council.

23 ALDERMAN PUENTE: I understand that.
 24 But he -- He told us what he said about his
 25 termination or how he left the cab company.

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1 President. I'd like to make a motion with regard
 2 to the previous item, Mr. Ghotra. As was
 3 mentioned earlier, this individual has no traffic
 4 violations, no history of that, no criminal
 5 records. It seems that Mr. Christianson is the
 6 primary reason why this particular individual is
 7 in the process of losing his -- his license.
 8 And I think after hearing all the information, a
 9 90 day suspension is -- is more equitable. That
 10 would be my motion, to move for a 90 day
 11 suspension in lieu of the revocation of the
 12 license.

13 PRESIDENT HINES: That is an appro --
 14 appropriate motion as put forth by Alderman
 15 Zielinski. That's a 90 day motion on the table.
 16 Are there any discussions relative to the motion?
 17 Chair recognizes Alderman Witkowski.

18 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr.
 19 President. I will not support the motion. We
 20 have two companies that have indicated that this
 21 person has been a problem driver, rude to the
 22 passengers. We're talking about the visitors and
 23 -- to Milwaukee. This is our -- our front
 24 door, our cab system. And it was for that reason
 25 that I voted to revoke this license or not renew

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 1 this -- this license. In fairness, the
 2 committee also handled his taxicab license, which
 3 could have cost him greatly if that was not
 4 renewed. He owns a license to a cab. And that
 5 was transferred. This -- I believe that this
 6 driver does not exemplify the type of driver we
 7 want representing Milwaukee, and that was the
 8 reason for my opposing the license at that point,
 9 and the reason I will not support Alderman
 10 Zielinski's motion now.
 11 PRESIDENT HINES: Thank you, Alderman.
 12 Are there any additional comments on the motion?
 13 Chair recognizes Alderman Puente.
 14 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Thank you, Mr.
 15 President. I, too, will not support that for the
 16 reasons that Alderman Witkowski just mentioned,
 17 but, also, in we are charging the people that
 18 come to this City and use taxis, I think it's
 19 just sending the wrong message, plus the totality
 20 of all the testimony that was given that day.
 21 Thank you.
 22 PRESIDENT HINES: Thank you, Alderman.
 23 Any additional comments on the motion put forth
 24 by Alderman Zielinski? Seeing and hearing none,
 25 I'm going to take a roll call on the motion, of

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 1 CITY CLERK: Witkowiak?
 2 ALDERMAN WITKOWIAK: Aye.
 3 CITY CLERK: Witkowski?
 4 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: No.
 5 CITY CLERK: Zielinski?
 6 ALDERMAN ZIELINSKI: Aye.
 7 CITY CLERK: Mr. President?
 8 PRESIDENT HINES: Aye.
 9 CITY CLERK: Five ayes, ten nos.
 10 PRESIDENT HINES: Five ayes, ten nos.
 11 The motion fails. Are there any additional
 12 motions relative to this case? The Chair
 13 recognizes Alderman Hamilton.
 14 ALDERMAN HAMILTON: Not on this case,
 15 but on the previous one.
 16 PRESIDENT HINES: I apologize, this
 17 file. So are there any motions relative to this
 18 file?
 19 (Whereupon other motions were
 20 presented.)
 21 PRESIDENT HINES: Why don't you take
 22 the roll call on the files, Mr. City Clerk?
 23 CITY CLERK: This is on the approval of
 24 file number 090444.
 25 CITY CLERK: Alderman Hamilton?

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 1 the 90 day. Mr. City Clerk, please call the
 2 roll.
 3 CITY CLERK: On the amendment, Alderman
 4 Hamilton?
 5 ALDERMAN HAMILTON: No.
 6 CITY CLERK: Davis?
 7 ALDERMAN DAVIS: No.
 8 CITY CLERK: Kovac?
 9 ALDERMAN KOVAC: Aye.
 10 CITY CLERK: Bauman?
 11 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: No.
 12 CITY CLERK: Bohl?
 13 ALDERMAN BOHL: No.
 14 CITY CLERK: Coggs?
 15 ALDERWOMAN COGGS: No.
 16 CITY CLERK: Wade?
 17 ALDERMAN WADE: Aye.
 18 CITY CLERK: Donovan?
 19 ALDERMAN DONOVAN: No.
 20 CITY CLERK: Puente?
 21 ALDERMAN PUENTE: No.
 22 CITY CLERK: Murphy?
 23 ALDERMAN MURPHY: No.
 24 CITY CLERK: Dudzik?
 25 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: No.

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 1 ALDERMAN HAMILTON: Aye.
 2 CITY CLERK: Davis?
 3 ALDERMAN DAVIS: Aye.
 4 CITY CLERK: Kovac?
 5 ALDERMAN KOVAC: Aye.
 6 CITY CLERK: Bauman?
 7 ALDERMAN BAUMAN: Aye.
 8 CITY CLERK: Bohl?
 9 ALDERMAN BOHL: Aye.
 10 CITY CLERK: Coggs?
 11 ALDERWOMAN COGGS: Aye.
 12 CITY CLERK: Wade?
 13 ALDERMAN WADE: Aye.
 14 CITY CLERK: Donovan?
 15 ALDERMAN DONOVAN: Aye.
 16 CITY CLERK: Puente?
 17 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Aye.
 18 CITY CLERK: Murphy?
 19 ALDERMAN MURPHY: Aye.
 20 CITY CLERK: Dudzik?
 21 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: Aye.
 22 CITY CLERK: Witkowiak?
 23 ALDERMAN WITKOWIAK: Aye.
 24 CITY CLERK: Witkowski?
 25 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Aye.

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1 CITY CLERK: Zielinski?
2 ALDERMAN ZIELINSKI: Aye.
3 CITY CLERK: Mr. President?
4 PRESIDENT HINES: Aye.
5 CITY CLERK: 15 ayes.
6 PRESIDENT HINES: 15 ayes, zero nos.
7 The file is adopted. If there is no further
8 discussion, I would request a vote of those
9 Council members present to - -
10 The Court Reporter is dismissed.
11 * * * *

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3 STATE OF WISCONSIN)
4)
5 MILWAUKEE COUNTY)
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7 I, JEAN M. BARINA, of Milwaukee Reporters
8 Associated, Inc., 5124 West Blue Mound Road,
9 Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208, certify that the foregoing
10 proceedings is a full and complete transcript of the
11 Common Council Public Safety Committee - Ghotra taken
12 in the foregoing proceedings.
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JEAN M. BARINA
Court Reporter

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22 Dated this day of October, 2009.
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