



MEMORANDUM

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

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To: Robert J. Bauman, Chair
Members, Public Works Committee

From: Richard L. Withers, Legislative Fiscal Analyst ext. 8532

Date: April 24, 2014

Subject: Review of Public Comments on Proposed Quarterly Dispatch Records Report Requirements and Non-Cash Payment Acceptance Policy for Taxicabs

Notice was given on March 20, 2014 requesting public comment on the proposed Quarterly Dispatch Records Reporting Requirements and Non-Cash Payment Acceptance Policy for Taxicabs. In addition to announcement of the request at the Public Works Committee meeting of March 19, 2014, the request was posted on the City website and individual notice was sent to taxicab permittees and other interested parties whose e-mail addresses were on record in the offices of the City Clerk License Division. Electronic copies of the proposed requirements and policies were made available on the City website and paper copies were available in the offices of the City Clerk License Division.

The deadline for comments was April 21, 2014. Six comments were received on or before April 22, 2014, and are summarized below. Copies of the comments are attached to Communication File Number 131608.

1. Andre Robitaille - March 24, 2014

Mr. Robitaille states that every major city he's travelled to this year has a high quality credit card reader that can be swiped from the back seat without handing the driver your credit card. He urges Milwaukee to adopt the proposal.

2. Haytham Hammad - March 25, 2014

Mr. Hammad's comments did not address the proposed non-cash payment acceptance policy requirement. He did comment that he felt independent operators would make a good effort to supply necessary reporting data to assist the city in studying and planning.

Mr. Hammad objected to the lottery and its results stating that "...80% of the winners have nothing to do with the business and will never drive a cab." He also objected to the affiliation requirements stating his understanding that the requirement would require signing-up with one of 2 dispatch companies at a cost of approximately \$1,200 per month. He concluded that the requirement would continue the taxicab monopoly.

3. Mostafa Abdelhafez - April 1, 2014

This owner and operator of a licensed taxicab states that he has operated at Mitchell Airport for fifteen years and intends to submit the required quarterly reports. He has been accepting credit cards for 10 years and intends to provide an authorized credit card machine in the back seat.

In addition to noting his intent to comply with the proposed reporting and credit card requirements, he objects to the requirement of joining a certified taxicab affiliation and expects

that the cost of participating in an affiliation will be \$600 per month and 20% of his credit card receipts.

4. Vadim Zhukov – April 14, 2014

Mr. Zhukov objects to the requirements for accepting credit cards and installing equipment stating that the requirement will take "...extra money from drivers pockets." He urges that drivers be allowed to decide whether dispatch service is needed.

5. Harjinder Singh Virk - April 21, 2014

This owner and operator of a licensed taxicab states that he has operated at Mitchell Airport for 15 years and intends to comply with the quarterly reporting requirements. He has been accepting credit card payments for 10 years and intends to provide an authorized credit card machine in the back seat.

In addition to noting his intent to comply with the proposed reporting and credit card requirements, he objects to the requirement of joining a certified taxicab affiliation and expects that the cost of participating in an affiliation will be \$600 per month and 20% of his credit card receipts.

6. Robert Wilkening – April 21, 2014

Mr. Wilkening provided comments as Dispatch manager for American United (AU). The attachment to Mr. Wilkening's correspondence provides a response to each of the specific data requests proposed for quarterly reporting.

Vehicle Data

AU can provide the vehicle permit numbers and dates that vehicles joined and left the affiliation as well as whether the vehicle is handicapped accessible.

AU states that the following data cannot be provided based upon the software provided by its current vendor: whether the vehicle is owner-operated, leased, hybrid, CNG, electric, or uses other alternative fuel; information about vehicle hours of operation, hours idle, hours not operated or hours leased.

Passenger Ride

AU can provide the following: date and time of request (hale or appointment); date and time of pickup; wait time; driver name and PPV driver license number; vehicle permit number; distance travelled in miles; and the date and time of drop off.

AU states that it cannot provide data as to type of vehicle whether handicapped accessible, hybrid or van based upon its current software.

AU states that its current system does not allow reporting of the following: zip codes (only collects address and 'zone' data); whether pick up or drop off is at hotel, airport or intermodal station; manner of payment; whether subsidized; complaints and complaint types.

AU reports that state law prohibits it from collecting information about: fees; tips; and total payment.

Driver Information

AU reports that, other than driver name and PPV license number, its system cannot identify: owner-operators; total trips by driver; trips rejected; complaints by driver; complaint resolution; average hours worked per day.

AU supports the **Passenger Rights** requirements except it seeks clarification of the service to disabled passengers (urging utilizing Milwaukee Transit System rules for ParaTransit that a wheelchair passenger must be ambulatory. No comment is made relating to prohibiting a surcharge for minimum distance or establishing minimum fare.

AU also supports the Non-cash Payment Acceptance Policy requirements except it makes no comment on the prohibition of a minimum distance or fare. It urges clarification that the prohibition against surcharges applies only to the taxicab fare.

Summary

The comments generally supported the requirement to provide rear seat card swipe availability and related requirements. One comment objected to the cost of installation. Several comments raised concerns that, though passengers would not be subject to surcharges for use of non-cash payment methods, the drivers would, in fact, be charged a percentage.

Quarterly reporting was generally supported, but current dispatch systems, usually provided by national vendors, would require modification to capture much of the data requested. American United also claims that it cannot require drivers to report fees, tips and total amounts of passenger charges under state law; no citations were provided.