

Minutes
Metropolitan Taxi Cab Commission
February 13, 2003

The meeting was called to order on February 13, 2003 at 1:15 p.m. and was held at Lambert International Airport. Those present were: Tom McCarthy, Dave McNutt, Solomon Tadesse, Basil Rudawsky, Lou Hamilton, Jim Harris, Vince Bennett, Airport representative-Gerard Slay, Airport Cab Owners-Lillian Miceli, Dr. Ioan Ziub, Seifu Gudeta, On-Call Cab Owner-Eyasu Asfaw and approximately fifteen visitors.

Mr. McCarthy opened the meeting with the request that anyone wanting to speak to please keep their comments to a reasonable amount of time, 5 minutes or so. This way we can ask questions and make comments.

Dr. Ziub made the first comments, stating that there are 288 airport licenses, 12 companies, and drivers from 18 countries. He stated that there are 2 types of businesses, the first, all of the cars are owned by the company and the other, the drivers all own their own cars. Dr. Ziub said the companies all came together in January and created the Airport Taxi Council (ATC) to have one voice and have one management system and enforce the rules and regulations. Dr. Ziub stated that the airport is overloaded with taxicabs and that they have to wait 4-6 hours between trips.

Mr. McCarthy asked if all of the companies have joined the ATC? Dr. Ziub stated that not all have joined the ATC. Some of the companies don't want to give up their names. Dr. Ziub went on to state the reasons for joining the ATC, 1) if all taxis are under the same name, its easier to enforce rules; 2) something left in the cab, easier for passengers to find their items; 3) with one logo there is one rate and causes no confusion to the passengers; and 4) it will help with enforcement, better business to deal with one set of leaders.

Mr. McCarthy, how do you propose to fix the problem of too many cabs? Dr. Ziub stated that each company must reduce a certain percentage (each company should set up their own criteria for reduction) and he feels that the commission should come up with tools to help reduce the number of cabs.

Mr. McCarthy, what if the commission set a reduced number of cabs each year and said this was what it had to be, how would you do this? Dr. Ziub said with the commission's code, with the vehicles having to be newer, not as many people would be able to renew their permits.

Mr. McCarthy, what do you think about the Airport's suggestion that it bid to a single vendor? Dr. Ziub said the current drivers would not be very happy with this plan. For several reasons, 1) the Airport plan is very tough; 2) 3 million dollar security deposit – not possible from the taxi view point; 3) One owner will put all 12 companies out of business (they have very qualified drivers at the airport now); and 4) the old plan of 129 cabs/5 companies just wasn't enough cabs – the ATC plan would recommend no more