



**THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE
NEW YORK**

PUBLIC HEARING

**(REGARDING PROPOSED
CHANGES TO THE TAXI ORDINANCE)
MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 22, 2013 6:15 pm

City Hall

Chairman Mallory called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Yvonne Flowers – 31 Lent Street – Former Councilperson. When this ordinance went into place, I was on the Council. Something came up as an amendment that I was a little concerned about. That was in regards to private livery cabs – about them having a contract when they're actually being inspected by a police officer. I had a chance to speak to Mr. Brady regarding it, to get more clarification on it. According to the wording on here, this was something that came up before us as a Council when we were having meetings with some of the taxicab drivers that, when they have a livery cab service and they're en route to pick up a person because of some type of arrangements that were made over the phone or so, that they would not have an executed contract at that point, until they reached that person. In this particular place, I was told that a Police Officer cannot stop a livery cab for this particular issue if they don't have someone in the cab with them. So, if they pull them over, it's because they have someone in there and they're questioning if they have a valid contract. If they don't, then they can be violated; I understand that, because you don't want someone just riding around in a livery cab, stating that they're a livery cab service when they're really going around picking up fares without having a contract. I understand that, and agree with that. If everyone else understands that, including the Police Department, they can't violate that person unless they have someone in the cab and they don't have a contract in their possession. This doesn't mean that when they're riding, they can be questioned about where they're going and then give them a ticket or violate them for not having a contract for a fare they're about to pick up. As long as this is clarified and that's the way this is, because they way it is written, it doesn't seem that way to me. I just know there's been some issue in the past of the way parts of this has been enforced and the Police Department has handled it pretty well for those complaints that have been given to them, especially by me. So, I

just hope that there was...thank you for the clarity to that, but that was one of the concerns that I had, to make sure that that doesn't cause a problem for the livery cab services that are transporting people or going to the airport or for other services. So, thank you for that clarity.

Pamela Casinova – 27 Lexington Avenue – I commute to New York City and I take taxis all the time. They're an invaluable service to me. The smaller ones are more reliable than the larger ones. This seems geared more toward the larger companies, and I think is providing less diversity in the marketplace and less choice for consumers, particularly when the bus service of the City, I understand is going to be phased out and given to the Loop next year. Not a good idea, because it's a privately run company and you're better off (inaudible) government. So, I saw a lot of things that were problematic. Some things were good, like the drug testing. You want to make sure you're getting into a safe taxi, but I've found 95% of the time, when I need to get to a train on time, the big companies won't come on time and are not reliable. When you have a smaller company, you have a relationship and it's better. Some of this may be problematic legally for the Police Chief in stopping people and asking for documents. I mean, that whole thing would have to be investigated, wouldn't it...before it went forward? And the other question was, after the public comment, how long before this becomes the Law?

Chairman Mallory: I'll address that on the Chairman's comments.

Ms. Casinova: OK.

Constantine Kazolias – 47 Noxon Street – Taxis park in front of people's residences. This should be considered because it deprives the people living in those residences a parking space on the street. While staying in Spring Valley in Rockland County, I saw that they have a flat rate anywhere you go in Spring Valley. In other words, the City of Poughkeepsie should have a flat rate. They double up, but that's another thing, but they should have a fixed rate. There's a tip in there too. A lot of people don't have the money for the tip, but I don't think they'll be gouged for an in-city transport. I appreciate that.

Kevin Dyer – 38 North White Street – First, I want to say, "Rules for Taxiing is very important, but we need to keep one thing in mind. We are also running a business. Taxiing is actually a business. We pay taxes: Federal, FICA, etc. We do all that. No. 1: We have a proposal here for a taxi, that the vehicle should be processed for inspection. Or, the driver and the passenger...the police should pull the vehicle over and check if the driver has a passenger. I find that very disturbing. The taxi only moves when there is a passenger in it. The vehicle is parked all the time. Now that it's moving, that's the time it's going to be checked by the Police Officer. No. 2: We want everyone to have a valid contract in the vehicle. I was under the impression that we would only be able to transport certain people of a certain age, because now we can't enter into a contract with people of a certain age, so I'm just trying to figure out if we're only allowed to transport a certain age group. I see where we have waiting time where people should sit around for \$1.00 for 5 minutes. There is nothing actually in this proposal that is going to protect the company or the drivers. The driver could sit at an address for 5, 6 [minutes] or even an

hour waiting for whatever reason (babysitter didn't show up, mom didn't bring the money, etc.), you lose your money. You're supposed to sit and wait for them for 5 minutes for \$1.00. At least make it \$1.06 so you can at least get a cup of coffee if that's going to be the case...(laughs). The next thing is, we're implementing a new law where we are going to put a bag over the roof light of the taxi. I'm just trying to understand - driving all night, you've got a 15 passenger van at Marist and you're out of service now and you have to use a stepladder to climb on top of the van in rain, snow or sleet and put a plastic bag over the light. Keep the light off and drive home and, in the process, bag probably flew off. God forbid, it kills somebody or they're crippled for the rest of their life, just because it's too simple for taxi drivers to turn the light off when they working. Let's climb on top and put a bag over it. I think these rules could be much better. We just sat in this meeting approximately a year ago - we implemented rules, we implemented laws. Fingerprints have to be taken every 10 months. I brought my hack license. I've been driving a taxi on these streets since 1997. I'm not part of the problem - I'm part of the solution. So, if we're implementing laws, why don't we come together and make laws that work? There was a proposal for changes to the taxicab. When I came in, I was told the "changes were in the process of being changed." So, I could not come in and have an intelligent conversation because I don't know what the changes are. If we are making laws, let's make laws that work. Don't have people taking fingerprints every 10 months. Now we're going to do better; fingerprints are going to be taken once every 3 years. I was explaining, I have these beautiful fingerprints, but I got to go downstairs every 10 months. These are the same fingerprints I had since I was born. Why do I have to keep taking fingerprints? School bus drivers and teachers are fingerprinted once, that's it. When it comes to taxi drivers there seems to be a war on them. You're a taxi driver, a second class citizen, an immigrant. This is what we say you're going to do, regardless. You're going to run around, take your fingerprints, regardless if it's raining, etc., you're going to put plastic over your roof light when you can simply turn it off. Rules are supposed to be put in place to protect us and the community. There's nothing wrong with making rules. Make it fair, make it clear so everyone could understand it. There was supposed to be a proposal from \$5.00 to \$6.00. I didn't see it in the proposal. But we all can say whatever we say it sounds good. Next one I'll make quick. The City-Town of Poughkeepsie say the hack license is \$55.00. You go downstairs to pick it up, it's \$65.00. They tell you one thing, but when you go to pick it up, they tell you that you need to do a 3 year search. I go to the Town and say, "I just did the search last year - 10 months ago. I don't need to go back for 3 years. I just need the one year." I'm told, "No," you have to pay for something you already have. These are facts, not opinions. This is not something I'm second guessing. It's something that I've been through, so I know. Bottom line is, make rules, make laws for the community. Make it fair across the board. Thanks for listening.

Ken Stickle - 118 Catharine Street - This Council passed an ordinance on Taxis. I still see cabs parked out on the streets. We definitely have a problem with it. We need to enforce the laws that have been passed already. I do believe that we should be making it easier for these cab drivers to get their fingerprints done. These guys shouldn't be paying out an exorbitant amount of money in order to get a job and come off Social Services,

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and so on and so forth, but as far as them parking on the street, I believe the Ordinance should be enforcing the ticketing on that.

Chairman Mallory concluded the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Dated: April 16, 2013

I hereby certify that this a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Public Hearing held on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

City Chamberlain