

**MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2011**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL,
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Wayland.

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
Commissioner Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Reminder to Speak Clearly Into Microphone and to Turn Off All Cellular Phones and Pagers

The Commissioners and public were reminded to speak clearly into their microphones to accommodate the public record tapes and the hearing-impaired.

C. Roll Call

Commissioners present:
David Eichman, Steven Greene, Scott Schmidt, David Warren,
Steve Wayland

Commissioners absent:
Lindsey Horvath, Leon Shparaga

Staff present:
Melissa Antol, Long Range and Mobility Planning Manager
Jackie Rocco, Parking Operations Manager
Rob Winrader, Taxi Specialist
Michael Barney, Assistant Planner

Danny Casillas, Administrative Specialist III

- D. Approval of the Agenda
Motion: Approve the Agenda of January 18, 2012, Transportation Commission meeting.
Moved: Eichman Second: Greene
All ayes.

Motion passed.

E. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Approve minutes, Commission meeting of December 14, 2011. With the following corrections;

Page 4: insert "payment".

Page 6: correct "clarified".

Page 7: correct "technical"

Page 8: correct "Westside COG"

Page 9: correct "Bicycle Task Force"

Moved: Eichman Second: warren

All Ayes:

Motion passed.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

No items.

III. ITEMS FROM PUBLIC

Michael Arrigo, WEST HOLLYWOOD, introduced himself as the Disability Advisory Board Liaison.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

A Five Year Extension to Current Taxicab Franchise Agreement

Staff report from Rob Winrader

Commissioner Eichman asked if the 530 limit was established in 2004.

Rob Winrader confirmed that it had and added that since then, there were adjustments and reallocations.

Commissioner Eichman asked if there were seven companies in 2004.

Jackie Rocco said that there were.

Commissioner Eichman confirmed the location of the seals on cabs then asked about a separate "greening" provision.

Rob Winrader said, currently, no vehicles over seven years of age are allowed in the fleets, but there is a "greening" overlap with Los Angeles, since most are licensed there are well.

Commissioner Wayland asked for a definition of "Greening".

Rob Winrader explained.

William Rouse, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Martin Shatachyan, LOS ANGELES, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Vazgen Aghaeian , LOS ANGELES, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Hettabai Ahmed, SANTA MONICA, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Commissioner Eichman asked for a breakdown of the Cab Companies and how many cabs they have licensed in the City.

Rob Winrader read the list.

Commissioner Eichman asked if there is a process in place that monitors customer satisfaction.

Jackie Rocco explained that complaints are monitored and that there is a mandated code of conduct in the contracts. She added that the number of complaints has gone down since West Hollywood indexed their rates with surrounding cities.

Commissioner Eichman asked what happens if there is an inordinate amount of complaints about one company.

Rob Winrader said that there are measures in place, but there hasn't been any need to go beyond that, yet.

Commissioner Eichman asked if there is anything that triggers a change in allocation of seals.

Rob Winrader said that there is not a system in place that revokes and re-allocates seals based on complaints. Cab companies can only lose their seal if a cab is not sealed within sixty days.

Commissioner Eichman surmised that the only way for a cab company to get more seals is if the City increased the number of cabs that may be sealed.

Jackie Rocco said that other than cab companies obtaining unused expired seals, there is no process for increasing their number of licenses. She added that staff is aware of the companies' desire to increase their numbers and staff is always looking at other similar, surrounding cities for comparison and to gauge the appropriateness of the number of cabs that are licensed in our City.

Commissioner Eichman asked if the historical number of 530 limit was determined by staff to be the appropriate amount.

Rob Winrader replied, that his research leads him to believe that, most likely, staff recommended a smaller number and Council increased it at the time of their decision.

Commissioner Eichman asked what the negative impacts would be if the number of cabs is increased.

Jackie Rocco listed some concerns and considerations, including limited staff and enforcement coordination.

Rob Winrader added that there are traffic and parking issues to consider as well.

Commissioner Greene asked if more than 350 drivers may drive the 350 cabs.

Rob Winrader replied that any number of licensed drivers may drive the sealed cabs.

Commissioner Greene asked if there are any complaints about not enough cabs in the city.

Rob Winrader said there were not.

Commissioner Greene asked how long the seal is good for.

Rob Winrader replied that it is good for the Franchise year, but is interchangeable within the company.

Commissioner Warren asked how the allocation was determined.

Rob Winrader replied that it was determined by the number of cabs per company.

Commissioner Warren asked if the Commission approved staff recommendations, then there would only 530 cabs in the city for five more years.

Jackie Rocco replied that it would, but within that five years staff could perform a needs assessment to determine if an increase in cabs would be warranted, and that it could inform the development of the next RFP. She added that staff would prefer a five year window to determine other factors that would affect the next RFP, which would be, in essence, starting over.

Commissioner Wayland asked for an explanation of the revenue numbers.

Rob Winrader explained.

Commissioner Eichman asked if all of West Hollywood licensed cabs are also licensed in other cities.

Rob Winrader said not all of them are. 73% are licensed in Los Angeles. Some are licensed only to operate in the City of West Hollywood.

Commissioner Eichman said that that skews the numbers since most of the cabs aren't in the city most of the time. One can't say what number of cabs are in the city at any given time.

Jackie Rocco said that there is a constant flux between cities.

Commissioner Warren asked for the differences between West Hollywood's requirements versus other cities.

Rob Winrader listed differences.

Commissioner Schmidt joined the meeting.

Commissioner Greene stated that he finds it odd that there is no mechanism for changing the number of cabs.

Rob Winrader said that the number of cabs isn't unchangeable, it could be changed in the next RFP.

Commissioner Eichman added that he is concerned that there is no formal process to evaluate the companies. He suggested that staff perform an annual evaluation based on customer satisfaction and performance.

Jackie Rocco replied that that could be part of the process of creating a new RFP.

Commissioner Eichman asked if any of the surrounding cities have a performance evaluation process.

Cab Company representatives present said that they do.

Commissioner Schmidt suggested that staff forego a consultant assessment and let the free market decide. If someone wants to bring in 700 cabs and they are willing to pay the fees, let them.

Jackie Rocco said that it is not feasible, based on need, licensing, staffing and many other considerations.

Commissioner Schmidt asked what would be the process to facilitate more.

Jackie Rocco said staff would need to start with a needs assessment.

Commissioner Greene said he disagrees with a needs assessment and would prefer "performance measures" that would affect the allocation of seals.

Rob Winrader said that process could be implemented during a new RFP process.

Commissioner Warren stated that he doesn't see the need to renew the franchise agreement for five more years, in view of changes that the Commission wants to see. That is a long time to wait for changes.

Commissioner Schmidt stated that he thinks the City could serve the people better. He listed some examples, such as new technology, a flat rate to Burbank Airport and reallocating funds from the Taxi Voucher Program. He said the City should gain leverage and reward those who give the City what it wants.

Commissioner Wayland said that there seems to be a consensus to see performance evaluation become part of the process. He

added that he is pleased with the current service and grateful for programs for people with special needs. He suggested renewing the agreement for less than five years.

Jackie Rocco pointed out that the extension, however long, would not be the status quo. Given that the current companies are doing a good job and have demonstrated their dedication to the city, five years would give staff a better opportunity to identify ways and means of improving the level of service to the community to be implemented in the next RFP.

Commissioner Wayland confirmed that the number of cabs would not change within the time that the Commission extends the agreement.

Jackie Rocco said that the Commission could address that through their recommendation to Council.

Commissioner Schmidt suggested raising the taxi voucher amount to \$32.

Jackie Rocco said she is not comfortable addressing something run by another department.

Commissioner Schmidt requested a flat rate to Burbank Airport.

Commissioner Greene asked if the flat rate is part of the Franchise Agreement.

Rob Winrader said the LAX flat rate is part of the agreement and it is based on the consistent rate to that destination during standard traffic conditions. He pointed out that there are too many variables between West Hollywood and Burbank to determine a simple rate.

Commissioner Greene suggested an evaluation of flat rates to popular destinations be part of the RFP process.

Commissioner Warren asked what the implications are of renewing for 2 years versus 3 years.

Jackie Rocco stated that a solid RFP process would benefit from more time.

Commissioner Greene said that he doesn't see the need for three years.

Motion: Approve a two year extension and begin an RFP Process which includes performance measures.
Moved: Greene Second: Warren
All ayes.
Motion passed.

V. COMMISSION CONSIDERATION

A. Bicycle Improvement Projects

Staff report from Michael Barney

Commissioner Schmidt confirmed that approving staff recommendations would mean approving updating the plan to develop five key streets.

Commissioner Warren said he hopes it means starting a planning process including public input, but no definitive decisions would be made yet in advance.

Michael Barney said that is correct, but these are the five streets that the BTF recommends.

Commissioner Schmidt asked if any Council members showed concern for any of the five key streets recommended.

Commissioner Wayland stated that their concerns were about public input, not the recommended streets.

Melissa Antol pointed out that approving an update is not approving any specific streets. She reminded the Commission what Council direction was, including returning with possible projects.

Tim Carlson, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Owen Ward, LOS ANGELES, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Commissioner Greene pointed out that he didn't see Staff responding to specific Council direction. He would like to be more ambitious and recommend more implementation. He suggested striping on Fairfax.

Melissa Antol explained how staff recommendations apply to Council direction.

Commissioner Wayland commented that updating the plan is implementation and agreed with Commissioner Greene about striping Fairfax.

Commissioner Schmidt agreed with Commissioner Greene that Council direction means more than just planning and he doesn't want to see something that can be done in eight months be sacrificed for something more controversial.

Commissioner Wayland stated that he feels staff recommendations are responsive to Council directive and asked if staff intends to go back to Council with specific bike safety enhancements.

Melissa Antol replied that they would be specific, but they would be vetted, first.

Commissioner Wayland asked if the specific items would be coming back to the Commission before Council.

Melissa Antol explained that staff would go to Council with the current recommendations and return to the Commission as specific projects are ready for implementation.

Commissioner Warren stated that he feels that Council wants something more specific this time around. He said he's concerned that the Commission may be seen as not taking the Council's direction with the proper sense of urgency. He suggested being more specific now and changing details later, as needed.

Commissioner Schmidt suggested moving forward with the current recommendations, designating San Vicente and Fairfax as implementation projects.

Commissioner Wayland stated that he would like to see specific streets named for bike improvements.

Commissioner Greene suggested striping Fairfax and extending class 2 bike lanes on Santa Monica Boulevard to Beverly Hills as possible projects to be done within eight months.

Commissioner Schmidt suggested having a neighborhood meeting in the Vista/Gardner area.

Melissa Antol said those suggestions are valid.

Commissioner Wayland stated that the improvements at Vista/Gardner would take more than eight months.

Michael Barney said that of all the streets recommended for bike improvements, Vista/Gardner would be the easiest.

Commissioner Wayland said that he feels that bicycle safety enhancements would be more feasible. He would love to see Sharrows on Fountain.

Commissioner Greene cautioned that Sharrows require some engineering, so it would not be as easy as may be perceived.

Commissioner Warren stated that ultimately the goal is to get more people biking, in order for that to happen they need to feel safe. He then said he would like to see more outreach and education implemented. He suggested starting each item in the staff report with a concrete idea.

Commissioner Wayland suggested that a staff member act as a Community Bike Liaison

Melissa Antol replied that, basically, that would be her.

Commissioner Warren asked for a timeline on the bike rack installation.

Melissa Antol said it would be happening in March.

Commissioner Warren suggested adding a timeline with detail to the staff report. He also suggested removing language from the report that prematurely accredits West Hollywood with being a leader in certain areas.

Commissioner Greene suggested listing projects based on what can be done in eight months, regardless of possible reception and suggested applying for a planning grant.

Motion: Recommend to the City Council the approval of bicycle improvement projects provided that;

1. Bicycle safety enhancements include specific projects,
2. Add outreach and education,
3. Perform a rudimentary bike count,
4. Apply for a planning Grant.

Moved: Warren Second: Greene
Aye: Eichman, Greene, Warren, Wayland
No: Schmidt

Motion passed.

VI. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

No items.

VIII. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR: Items removed from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion are considered at this time.

IX. LIAISON REPORT

No report.

X. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Antol

- Commission item follow-up
- Joint Meeting with Public Safety Commission in February
- Bike/Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting
- Audible and countdown signal presentation at Disability Advisory Board.

XI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Greene

- Moving images at West Hollywood Gateway+

Eichman

- Complicated right turns at Santa Monica Boulevard/Westmount Drive+
- Parking meters at loading zones+

Wayland

- Transportation Program Brochure+

Warren

- Notice when Commission approved items are implemented
- Willouby as a bike friendly street+

XII. ITEMS FROM PUBLIC

No items.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

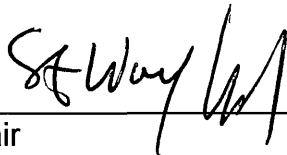
Action: The Transportation Commission adjourned at 9:22 p.m. until the next meeting on February, 15 2012, 7:00 p.m., at West Hollywood City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA. 90069

Moved: Schmidt Second: Greene

All ayes.

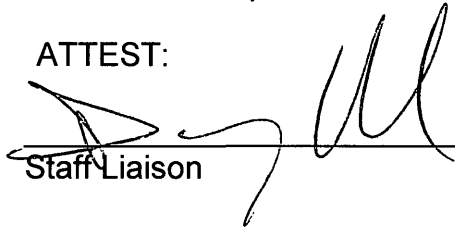
Motion passed.

APPROVED BY MOTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THIS
15TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2011.



Chair

ATTEST:



Staff Liaison