

ITEM
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 18
COUNCIL MEETING 43
89/06/19

RE: LETTER FROM AL BAXTER WHICH APPEARED ON THE AGENDA FOR JUNE 05 COUNCIL MEETING
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXICAB SERVICE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Finance be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
DATE: 89 06 14

FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM MR. AL BAXTER WHICH APPEARED ON THE AGENDA FOR 1989
JUNE 05

PURPOSE: TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE TAXICAB SERVICE.

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RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Al Baxter, Room 106, ECU 1, Burnaby Hospital, 3935 Kincaid Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 2X6, and to the Burnaby Hospital Extended Care Unit Resident's Council.

REPORT

This report is presented in response to a letter from Mr. Al Baxter, on behalf of the Burnaby Hospital Extended Care Unit Resident's Committee, which appeared on Council's agenda for 1989 June 05. The letter expresses concern regarding the availability of wheelchair accessible taxicab service and the need for curb drop ramps for wheelchairs in Burnaby. The issue of curb drop ramps is addressed in a report from the Acting Director Engineering which appears in the Manager's Report in this agenda. This report responds to the issue of availability of wheelchair accessible taxicabs in Burnaby.

A. Background

Prior to Council's approval of six wheelchair accessible taxicab licences on 1989 April 24, wheelchair accessible taxicab service in Burnaby was provided by Custom Transit/HandyDart and by Vancouver Taxi Ltd. under the vice versa provision of their Motor Carrier Commission (M.C.C.) Licence. In addition, it would appear that Vancouver Taxi Ltd. provided additional service within Burnaby and to other communities in the region without M.C.C. or Burnaby approval. It is our understanding that this "informal" unlicensed service was provided where licenced alternatives did not exist.

In 1988 October, Vancouver Taxi Ltd. applied to the M.C.C. to licence this service in Burnaby and surrounding communities. The M.C.C. denied the application in 1989 January. The M.C.C. reaffirmed this decision in 1989 March.

As reported to Council on 1989 March 06, we wrote to the M.C.C. regarding Vancouver Taxi's application, informing them that no taxicab licences were available in Burnaby and that we were reviewing taxicab service in order to properly address future needs.

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Following Council's decision on 1989 April 24 to issue new licences to the two Burnaby companies, Vancouver Taxi Ltd. stopped providing the "informal" unlicensed wheelchair accessible service in Burnaby. The position of Vancouver Taxi Ltd., as expressed by Mr. Jim Prakash, Manager, is that they are servicing all trips that are in compliance with the "conditions of licence" set forth by the M.C.C.

The impact of this position is that Burnaby residents, such as those in Burnaby Hospital Extended Care, who are confined to wheelchairs and who had previously relied on the "informal" service provided by Vancouver Taxi Ltd., find themselves with reduced wheelchair accessible taxicab service.

B. Wheelchair Accessible Taxicabs in Burnaby

Since Council approved the new taxicab licences, one wheelchair accessible taxicab has been placed into service by Bonny's Taxi Ltd. Mr. Turner, General Manager for Bonny's, assures us that they will have four more wheelchair accessible cabs in service by 1989 September and that they are making every effort to bring these taxicabs into service as soon as possible. Mr. Oldham, owner of Burnaby Select Taxi, is not certain when he will be able to provide the wheelchair accessible taxi approved by Council.

C. Burnaby Hospital Extended Care Unit Resident's Council

When Council received the letter from Mr. Baxter on 1989 June 05, they resolved that the Chairman of the Taxicab Review Committee and staff meet with the Resident's Council to discuss their concerns.

On 1989 June 13, Alderman Sawicki, Chairman of the Taxicab Review Committee, and staff met with approximately 20 residents of Burnaby Hospital Extended Care Unit. Mr. Baxter, who wrote the letter to Council, was in attendance.

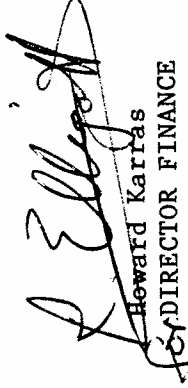
It was evident at the meeting that the residents had come to rely on the "informal" service provided by Vancouver Taxi Ltd. and that many were feeling frustrated that the service was no longer available.

The residents were informed of Council's commitment to reliable Burnaby based wheelchair accessible service, and of the recent efforts of Council and the Taxicab Review Committee to ensure that this service is provided in Burnaby.

The residents were appreciative of Council's concern and are hopeful that the Burnaby based taxicab companies will provide the necessary service.

We have concluded that while there is a shortfall in wheelchair accessible taxicabs operating in Burnaby at this time, most of critical needs of the community are being met by the one wheelchair accessible taxicab now in service, and the introduction of additional wheelchair accessible taxicabs by 1989 September should improve the situation considerably.

It is recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Al Baxter, Room 106, ECU I, Burnaby Hospital, 3935 Kincaid Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 2X6 and to the Burnaby Hospital Extended Care Unit Resident's Council.


 Howard Karris
 for DIRECTOR FINANCE

RE:vm

cc: Chairman, Taxicab Review Committee