NEW YORK CITY LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING

held on Thursday, May 28, 2009

9:50 a.m.

40 Rector Street

5th Floor

New York, New York

PRESENT:

MATTHEW W. DAUS, Chairman/Commissioner

ELIAS AROUT, Commissioner

HARRY GIANNOLIS, Commissioner
THE CHAIRMAN: We are going to go to Item 1 on the agenda, the Chairs’ Report. First, I’m sure a lot of you have read and have questions about the MTA bailout taxi surcharge legislation. We still many questions about it. The good news is that the TLC, including myself personally, have been talking to Commissioner Negma from the New York State Division of Taxation and Finance and his staff, and we have been discussing and analyzing what the law means and what they want us to do to implement the law.
I don't have any further answers for the industry or for the public yet, but when we do, we will be discussing it at a future commission meeting, either June or July, and we will keep everybody posted for that. There is some time for the implementation, because November 1st is the legal effective date of that taxi surcharge.

Number 2, the Accessible Dispatch System, I have some very good news to report on the wheelchair accessible program, where we use 311 to dispatch our yellow cabs; two hundred thirty-nine or so to all the five boroughs to pick up passengers who use wheelchairs and who need service.

I want to, in particular, credit the public outreach company what they have done, including the public service announcements, which appear to be working. I want to thank WINS, PLJ, NYE, WOR, WABC as well as the Mayor's Office and the city's telephone network. Due to all the combined efforts, and the commissioners have been promoting public service announcements, making sure all new workers and even visitors are aware that if you call 311 you will get a wheelchair accessible vehicle delivered to you to get you wherever you wanted to go.

The numbers are promising. Several months before that we were averaging about four to five or six trips per day. Now the average is up to seventeen point sixeight trips. And we started the PSA's, I think in end of March, early April, so the numbers went from five or six to eleven. Now it's up to seventeen point six eight. That is good news. I want to thank the media for helping us with the public service announcements.

The Taxi Technology Request for Information.
deadline is June 15th, so if you haven't already submitted your comments and ideas, we encourage you to do so. You can do it either at our Website, by e-mail or delivering it in person.

On the Rules Revision Project where we are reorganizing our rules, there will be a hearing held in this commission meeting room on Friday, June 5th at two thirty p.m. The topic for the discussion and for the public hearing will be Chapter 10, paratransit vehicles and bases.

I'm also pleased to report that for, I believe the sixth or seventh straight month in a row, we have a record number of yellow cab drivers that are licensed by the agency. As of April 26th, we have a new record high of forty-seven thousand six-hundred twenty-seven drivers. And just updated hybrid numbers, as of May 26th, we have a total of two thousand two hundred seventy-four hybrids on the road, which is just over seventeen percent of the total. And we also have eighteen clean diesels or Volkswagons or Jettas.

Any questions? No questions. That concludes my report.

I'm going to -- we're missing a commissioner; he will be back shortly, hopefully. Why don't we go to the adoption of the minutes. Anybody have any questions on it? Any comments or issues? We can't vote it on until Harry comes back. Any questions? (No response)

The bases.

MS. GEORGIA STEELE-RADWAY: Good morning.

Licensing would like to present before the Commission
twenty-six bases with a recommendation for approval.

THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody have any issues with the basis?

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Motion to adopt the minutes and bases, pending -- we will wait for --

COMMISSIONER AROUT: Make a motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you second?

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor? We will just hold the vote open. Thank you.

MS. STEELE-RADWAY: There are three bases that Licensing is recommending for denial, with a request that the Commission grant another thirty days so they may present further items.

THE CHAIRMAN: Motion to deny?

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Motion.

COMMISSIONER FRASER: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Rules Revision Project, Chapter 6, Paratransit Drivers. Any commissioner have any questions on it? Motion to adopt?

COMMISSIONER AROUT: Motion to adopt.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor? Jeff, you're good?

COMMISSIONER KAY: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will hold that vote open as well. Let's go to Item 5, the pilot program proposals for Commission action. Five A, for group rides, multi-fare meters and livery cabs. David Klahr, would you join us at the podium?
I want to say a few words before we start. This plan, or this proposal we are going to be discussing originated with the Mayor. His state of the city address, earlier this year, Mayor Bloomberg asked TLC to come up with a plan to have drivers earn more money and passengers pay less and group ride and maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of our liveries and taxi cabs.

We are pleased, for several months we have been working very closely and very hard. I want to commend the staff on a lot of details they put together. We will now be discussing this plan, which the Mayor asked us to produce.

If you remember, a lot of this originated with the Mayor's strike contingency plan when we had the transit strike several years ago. It was very well received when we had group ride scenarios around the city, Newark, Yonkers. This pilot proposal would test various versions and applications, and we're going to see what works and what doesn't work. Today we are going to be discussing some of that and unveiling some of the details.

Without further adieu, I would like to introduce David Klahr, and he will introduce other staff members who will be helping him with the presentation. Thank you, David.

MR. KLAHR: Good morning, commissioners. As the Chair just mentioned, the Mayor, on January 15th in the State of the City, talked to -- what he talked to was a common sense idea. The city has limited resources, given the current economic situation. We should go for what we
He asked TLC to think about how can we get more people riding in cabs, in livery cars, without necessarily expanding the number of vehicles on the road, which would add to congestion. He asked us to think about how riders would save money doing this, and drivers would, at the same time, make more money.

What I would like to introduce are three separate concepts that staff has developed to address the same problem, three different ways across two different industries. I'm going to talk about a ride sharing pilot that utilizes meters that are capable of recording multiple fares at one time. Gary Roth will talk about a group riding pilot as well, and Tweeps Phillips talk about a pilot program for the livery industry where there will be livery stands in the outer boroughs, will be with the Black Line cars for people using community cars at a different price point.

I would like to talk a little bit first about multi-fare meters. As mentioned earlier, we learned as an agency a lot in both the transit strike in 2005 and the job actions of tax drivers in 2007. What we learned is when there is a real crunch in the number of available vehicles, New Yorkers rose to the occasion and learned that sharing is a good thing.

What we found out, both anecdotally and from data that we collected, that people liked the sharing concept. They didn't mind getting into a cab with strangers, as long as a couple of things happened. One was that the fare was clear. You knew what you were going to pay when you got in.
and didn't have to negotiate. And that they felt that the pricing was fair. If it was too expensive, there was no reason to share the cab. Maybe if you can share, save a little money and maybe meet somebody new who is interesting.

When we look at the data from the number of rides throughout the city, the average number of riders is one point four, but cabs hold up to four people. We don't have to necessarily cram four people into every cab, but if we can get a second person in a cab, we will increase the capacity.

Rush hour conditions make it hard to find a cab; everyone knows that from living in New York. What is not so obvious, when you look at the actual number of rides provided, who is on and off duty, people are often discouraged from getting rides during rush hour. Once a cab is hailed and there is one person sitting in the seat, the cab is locked up; you can't persuade it to pick up a second person. Drivers are discouraged from working rush hour because it's a hassle. Traffic is heavy, they're locked up with the second passenger. The rules don't currently permit it.

How can we make this happen? The concept is to really improve how efficient cabs that are already on the road are. We don't need to have every cab do this. We would like a good number of them to do it in order to get the second person in the seat, to really fill more available seats and let people with unique origin and destination points share the cab. So you don't necessarily have to herd people to a common pick-up or drop-off location.
I want to try every fare that we can think of to try and improve efficiency of the taxi fare. We wanted to start on the point where we build on the strengths of what works about medallion taxi cabs. People like hailing a cab, waving their arms out in the street. New Yorkers know how it works. We don't want to change that.

We want to make sure we are not necessarily putting more cars on the road and we don't really have the ability to go out and issue a lot of new medallions. We have to work with what we've got. We want to offer a meter discount for sharing. We want to offer a definite incentive for people to say okay, if I'm sharing, it may be good, I may not care. They would get a financial incentive to try it.

Drivers can make more by getting the second passenger in the cab, and each individual passenger would pay less. We anticipate that part of the fleet, as a whole, would participate in this pilot program; not every cab. We want to make sure if you get into a share cab, you know what the rules are up front and know what where the cabs are going. We propose having a destination sign in the windshield, like an LED sign that tells you what neighborhood the cab is going to. If I'm in Union Square and I'm trying to get to the financial district and I see a share cab go by and it says "Harlem," I'm not going to hail that cab.

How would that work? The first thing we want to do is work with the development of a multi-fare meter which can record up to four passengers at a time. We initially anticipate doing that with two passengers at a time. Major manufacturers of meters already in the New York market have
already spoken to us about this. They are interested in this, and some are already working on the project, not only for this, other jurisdictions are interested as well, such as Washington, D.C. This is something that has been bandied about before in the industry, but the technology was not there before. We want a meter that not only tracks each individual separately, but allows a separate check out.

Credit cards are an enormous plus. We want to make sure each person can pay separately by credit card. We want to also make sure that the passenger information monitor in the back will separately display everyone's information, so you know exactly what you're going to pay. You know what your fare is. Each meter is labeled Passenger 1, 2 or 3. We will have a destination sign in front to tell you which direction the cab is going to. We want to make sure that the first person in the cab gives general advice for the route of the cab. Cabs may drive up and down the avenues but don't have to make a lot of trips to the side trips. If you're the senior trip, you will get the ride that you want to. If you're the second passenger, you may not need to or want to go door to door. If two of us in the cab are going uptown and one is getting dropped off on a side street, you may say you are know what, drop me off at third Avenue; I'll walk the block. People do that all the time.

You're late for an appointment. There is too much traffic. We want to encourage that. We want to encourage two passenger trips at a time. That includes pairs of people. If you're out on a date, you don't have to
necessarily pay separate fare. If it's two people
traveling together, that is fine. If you're a child under
the age of twelve, you should not be considered a separate
person for the purposes of this pilot.

How would this work in practice? I put together a
scenario. This is kind of the hour in the life of a
typical cabbie. We will pretend it's rush hour. There
isn't a lot of traffic. There is no waiting time or
problems getting up or downtown. It's wholly applicable.
The cabbie is doing about three trips an hour; not
terrible, not great. I get in the cab at the financial
center and say, "get me to Penn Station." At Penn Station,
easily find another fare that wants to go to the Upper West
Side. Then we pick up someone that says, "take me to Union
Square." The cab does a lot of travel, almost twelve
fares. Lower Manhattan, Midtown, Upper West Side, and all
the way cross town. That takes a lot of time and is not
efficient.

How would that work with ride sharing, where you pick
up additional people along the way? The share cab picks
up the first person, same place, same destination, World
Financial Center going to Penn Station. The sign says
Midtown west. The cab is going up town, Hudson and
Houston. The cab picks up another passenger. He wants to
go to Grand Central Station. Okay, into the car.
He gets in. The two people ride together. As they go
along the way, the first person gets off at Penn Station.
Immediately after that, at 37th and Eighth, a third
passenger gets in. There are only two people in the cab,
but now the cabbie has had its third pick-up in the day. He's going to the Upper East Side.

They stop at Grand Central, drop off Passenger 2. Turn at Park Avenue and heads uptown, and at Grand Central, a fourth person gets into the cab. They're getting into Madison and 38th. The driver is able to change his destination sign to say "Upper East Side." Maybe another person wants to get in. In this case, there is not.

They head uptown and drop off the other people. As the driver is heading downtown, and luckily he picks up someone that wants to go to Mount Sinai on the West Side. At no point are there more than two people in the cab, so there is no overcrowding.

We plugged this into Google to see how much mileage. Instead of driving twelve miles in the hour, this cabbie drives a little over nine miles. It's going to add up. It's less gas, less wear and tear on the vehicle and he gets more fares. This is the win-win that the Mayor is talking about.

How does it play out with fares? This is what fares look at currently. I pretended this is the rush hour, so there is the rush hour surcharge. I put the surcharge in. The typical ride is about three miles. This is a pretty theoretical example. In the three hours, the total amount is fifteen dollars sixty cents for three separate people paying a little more than five dollars apiece.

What we're proposing for the fares is that you actually save a bit of money. The way it works, we call the drop, the initial two dollar fifty cent charge is the same for every passenger. If you're sharing the cab, you
get a fifteen percent discount. Instead of forty cents a mile a minute, it would be twenty cents. Tax of fifty cents.

If you're going to J.F.K., you get a thirty-three percent discount. That is a price point that people were very happy with and cab drivers were very happy with. How does this play out during the scenario that I just illustrated on the trip uptown? Same drop, same time, rush hour surcharge, same tax. Instead of paying more than five dollars, they're only paying four and a half dollars. They saved money, but the driver, for the same amount of time, bringing in twenty-three instead of fifteen dollars.

Again, the mandate is there from the Mayor. Passengers pay less and the driver makes more also. So what we want to find out from this pilot are several interesting questions that we're really wondering about, that we think we know the answers to, but we want to know about. Are people really interested in sharing rides?

Does this really rise to the level where people are willing to say I'm not willing to wait on a street corner for a long time to get a cab by myself?

I want a quicker experience where I can get a cab right now. We want to make sure that the cab driver makes more money. We want to know how many extra rides are provided. We want to get a sense of how many extra people are getting cabs. We need more meter technology. We want to make sure that meters that record multiple fares work well and work well in the New York market.

This is something that we see mechanically internationally. We want to see this working
satisfactorily for your needs. We want to see how it affects traffic patterns. We want to see if it's worth continuing on a permanent basis. We want to collect some new type of statistics to see how do we measure the efficiency of the meter as a whole. Instead of measuring vehicle trip miles, passenger trip miles, how many people are you carrying during that drive?

The assumption is you're carrying one or two people. We don't really think about that too well. If you're carrying multiple people at a time, maybe it's how many people they carry a mile. How does it work in practice?

We would like to try it with one thousand taxis.

THE CHAIRMAN: For the first time, we would be able to track how many passengers are in the vehicle for how long?

MR. KLAHR: That's correct. We have a much more accurate measure. It wouldn't be self-reported like on the trip sheet, it would come strictly from the electronic data. We would like the pilot to last about a year. We will issue a Request for Information on that. We also have a couple of regulatory issues to resolve, so the time table for this is the State Bureau of Weights and Measures regulates meters, including meters in the city.

Since this is a new concept, we need to get a waiver to test this type of meter. We anticipate working out the operational details, probably by the late summer, and probably the prototypes meters by the mid-fall. The cars are going to be marked. We want to look at options for LED signs, or if there is a simpler way to do it, we want the method that is most visible from the street and we will
keep the staff appraised of how it's going as we go along.

I would be happy to answer any questions.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Do you have an idea what, if any, increment all costs would be, say, for the meters, and I guess the destination sign?

MR. KLAHR: A good sign, one LED sign we were looking at was about fifty dollars, and they range in price to maybe an expensive fancy one would be a couple of hundred dollars. We might not need all the bells and whistles for it to work. A wipe off board you can get at Staples for about fifty of dollars. We are not anticipating thousands of dollars in extra cost for this also because this is a pilot and there may be some interest from the meter industry on this.

We would like to see possibilities, whether they might be offered as a discount because this is a pilot. We will be looking into getting free meters. There might be a mix where some people may pay full price for the meters because they're interested and want to try it. I think once we have prototypes in the fall, we will have a better idea of what the costs are, and I'll be happy to report back.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: So, you say that the senior trip controls the route, so cabs would be able to be both share cabs and non-share cabs?

MR. KLAHR: Correct. Let's say it's four in the morning on a Wednesday and you're hailing a meter. The chances that someone is going to want to share the cab with you is minimal. You would pay the fare as you do now.

The idea of having the meters permanently installed,
you never know when there will be a rush. The typical example, everyone complains that you can't get a cab when it's raining, the meter is fixed. This opens up the scenario. Now I get in a cab and the cab driver, on his own, decides to stop and start picking up people. Can I say "don't do that?"

MR. KLAHR: We heard that from a lot of people when we started talking about that. One concept is that the first passenger would have the right of refusal; refuse to share. There are technical problems, things that have to be worked out with that. If you hail a share cab and you agree to get in it, you agree to share. There is not an option to say no, I don't want to share. If you positively don't want to share, another option would be to wait for a cab that isn't sharing. We want people to make an informed decision to share or not share.

THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with that, but we can change that if the pilot program indicates that becomes an issue.

MR. KLAHR: We are not completely rigid on that idea. We work out scenarios where that might happen. If we thought it would be difficult to give the first passenger the right of refusal because maybe people would not share a cab. I'm desperate for a cab and I have the right to and forget it, I'm not going to share.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: They have the right to do that or they don't?

MR. KLAHR: The way the proposal is currently structured, if you agree to sit in the cab, you are giving
permission to share.

COMMISSIONER GIANNULIS: You, as the first person in the car, have the right to be delivered first.

MR. KLAHR: Yes. To give an example, let's say I get in the cab here and I'm going uptown, and we pick up, and City Hall, my destination, is on the West Side. Your destination is on the East Side. You're going to go west first.

MR. SALKIN: If the second ride is within the distance, if you're going from World Financial Center to the Upper West Side and the second person is going from the West Village to Chelsea, the second person can get out. They wouldn't have the ability to manipulate the ride. That is the choice that the person is making by getting into the cab. That is their choice. We will evaluate the scenario, does it work or not work.

COMMISSIONER GIANNULIS: The issue of being able to go in and lock in, for example, somehow lock in the meter where you're not sharing the cab. We don't want to do that. We are concerned that everybody would do that.

MR. KLAHR: We don't know.

COMMISSIONER GIANNULIS: Couldn't there be a way -- at the end of the day, we're talking about two different meter systems, right, or one meter that is able --

MR. SALKIN: They can do lot of different things.

COMMISSIONER GIANNULIS: Can do two fares?

MR. SALKIN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GIANNULIS: I get in the cab,
being charged one way. Another person comes in. I'm being charged the full rate and he's being charged the lesser rate, or we're both being charged the second rate?

MR. KLAHR: That's a good question. When the second person gets in, you both get charged the lesser rate. When the person gets out, it goes back up.

MR. SALKIN: The driver is always paying the same; when the passengers are sharing, they're getting a discount.

COMMISSIONER GIANNELLI: Fundamentally, we think, at least you wouldn't be able to kind of go in and say, I'm in a bad mood today, unlike my normal self. I'm going to say no share.

MR. SALKIN: That is an interesting question.

One of the things that we have to think about, or the Commission will have to think about as a body, as the pilot works itself out, if it's working and it's something that you want to do, one question is this new meter a technology that every driver should have and that every cab driver likes.

If you have the scenario that the only option you have is the share ride, you have to have the ability to opt out of sharing. I think it's a much different question if it's an entire fleet. In this case it's a pilot. We want to have each meter company that is interested in participating to put enough meters on the road. Each meter company puts a hundred or two hundred on the road, depending on responses. The idea here is there is never really enough of the fleet that if you really want to ride alone, you can wait until two minutes and get a cab.
COMMISSIONER GIANNONI: Can anybody reject a share ride?

MR. SALKIN: Not in a share cab for the pilot.

COMMISSIONER GIANNONI: Nor can the driver or the passenger.

MR. SALKIN: Correct.

COMMISSIONER GIANNONI: Now we are hoping everybody behaves themselves in terms of disputes; who goes first.

MR. SALKIN: The biggest lessons we have, what happened during the transit strike. David alluded to how workers worked it out. This might be a little bit different. We're trying to establish clear scenarios. Using a meter, there is no question about the fare. You're either Passenger 1 or 2.

The route -- one of the questions, are people going to demand being dropped off, even if they're in the middle of traffic.

COMMISSIONER GIANNONI: What is the amount, I'm sorry, in the pilot program? Are we per medallions or meters? I'm confused how many people are in the pilot program.

MR. SALKIN: We're proposing that we allow up to a thousand cabs, and depending on the meter manufacturers that respond and how many they're interested in putting in. In one meter company's response and they want to put in a thousand.

MR. KLAHR: I think what we're anticipating is we would have several meter companies participate, and each one would have a couple of hundred cabs using their.
technology. Each one has a slightly different technology on this. We will get feedback from the drivers, which ones they like better.

We want to try out the different approaches within the standards we're required to have. There are federal and state standards.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: We will go to meter companies to market X amount of cabs, and those cabs will be share cabs.

MR. SALKIN: We get the waiver to say I partnered with this company to put in this technology and we will market it this way.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we have to do a lot of outreach to make sure passengers understand.

MR. SALKIN: One of the things we have been thinking about is there will be a limited number of medallions participating. One of the things participating drivers would have fliers to hand out to passengers. Once the drivers understand it, they will be able to communicate it rather clearly what is going on.

I think what we're really looking for, it's interesting, thinking of scenarios when there is a lot of cabs available. The real challenge here is what everyone on the Commission heard. Now, the cab that is going your way you will be able to get in and out; before, you couldn't. Hopefully that will ease some of the problems occurring the peak hours. I don't know we will see what happens.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before we go to the next
presentation, unless somebody has questions or objections, I know we're supposed to discuss it today. We have the resolutions. I would like to make a motion to adopt the multi-fare meter proposed route. Make the motion.

COMMISSIONER FRASER: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unanimous. Good sales job, good work. Actually, before we go to the next presenter,

Commissioner Polanco has arrived and Commissioner Giannoulis was out of the room. I believe they missed votes. If they care to vote on Items 2, 3 and 4, we all voted in your absence to adopt the minutes, to approve the bases that were submitted on the agenda and deny the three bases recommended for denial and approve the paratransit rule revision. Would you care to place your votes in favor or against?

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: I vote in favor.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOLIS: Vote in favor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The next presentation is on group rides.

Before we turn it over to Gary Roth, who works in our Taxi Technology Division with Ira Goldstein. I want to point out there seems to be interest from various stakeholders and partners.

I spoke with Chris Ward. He's supportive of doing a group ride -- that we will discuss in a little bit -- to the Port Authority Bus Terminal. At my staff's request, they reached out to the folks in charge of the Major Business Improvement District where they have stands.

I'm pleased to report that Abe Biderman is excited about it and Fred Cirullo has indicated his approval. And
I want to point out for the record that some of the major stakeholders that we need to make it a success have already indicated their assent to it. With respect to all the proposals in the New York Taxi Workers' Alliance, New York State Federation of Taxi Drivers and League of Taxi Owners have all told us that they support these efforts.

MR. ROTH: My name is Gary Roth. I'm here to talk to you about the medallion taxi cab experimental group ride plan. Background for the group ride plan is the same as the share plan, so I'm going to jump right into what is a group ride.

A group ride is when more than one passenger of two to four will travel from a common origin to a destination along a similar destination corridor. In this plan, the passengers will have a lineup wait at a designed TLC approved taxi stand, and it will be limited strictly to the morning rush hour, from six a.m. to ten a.m. There will be a flat fare in this proposal three or four dollars for the group ride. And again, all passengers will be going to a similar destination.

So, the goals of this plan are to increase the capacity of the fleet during the morning a.m. rush hour. To increase revenue for drivers, to increase number of passengers who can ride in cabs during the morning rush hour. To increase service where in some places service is scarce. In the morning rush, sometimes it's hard to get a
cab. This will provide cabs into other areas, and also increase the cab utilization. As you heard earlier, about one point four passengers per cab. We're hoping to firm them up a little bit more.

So, to select the group ride locations, we reviewed the electronic trip sheet. I have some maps coming up on the next slide. We analyzed the trip sheet for high volume locations and common drop-offs, and also used the data to help determine the average fare. So, this map shows passengers who are picked up. This is a three week period in January. They were picked up in the West 57th Street area, as designated by this blue box, and the color coding shows where they were dropped off. The green color indicates a high number of people dropped off in this area. The yellow is medium, and the red is low.

As you can see in this slide and the following slides, there is a very high demand for people to get to Midtown. This is West 57th. The second one goes to East 72nd Street. You see this similar pattern where this poor green area in the Midtown. The third slide is West 72nd, again, green.

MR. SALKIN: I want to point out to the commissioners this is the first time we used the GPS data in this fashion. One of the things that was fascinating for us in doing the analysis, to see where passengers were starting and going. We didn't think the answer would be the green. In every slide, people are taking cabs to Midtown East. It's interesting about the data and about the trips. There are a lot of shorter trips. The longer trips are not there. I wanted to point that out.
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MR. ROTH: There is one more. This is, again it shows Penn Station, and the volumes of pick-ups varied.
In the neighborhoods, they were lower. The transit hubs had extremely high pick-ups. Again, the numbers show, you can see the numbers a little bit better, this one, the numbers showed the number of drop-offs that occurred in that particular box. These are designated by census block groups. Each dot is a particular drop-off.
So, what we found in our research is that there were very low pick-up volumes north of 96th Street. Because we analyzed all of Manhattan, the volume of pick-ups was much higher on the East Side versus the West Side, virtually double. We are not sure why that is, whether it's lack of demand or lack of supply. Maybe it's because many of the taxi drivers are located in Queens. When they get a fare they don't make it to the West Side.
The fare was extremely high at the transit hubs. As far as drop-off volumes go, we saw it was low north of 96th Street and many of the drop-offs occurred in Midtown.

Looking at this data, we selected six locations for this pilot program. Three of the locations are at the major hubs, Grand Central, Penn Station and Port Authority Bus Terminal. Those locations terminate at Sixth Avenue and 59th Street. Anyone getting on at that location could get off anywhere prior to 59th and Sixth. Two people might get in the cab. One person might get off at Sixth Avenue, 42nd Street and another person might get off at 50th Street and the furthest you could go for that flat fare would be 59th and Sixth.
We have three neighborhood locations, West 57th at Eighth; East 72nd Street and Third; and West 72nd and Columbus. These three terminate at Park Avenue and 42nd Street. You have the whole corridor to ride where you wanted to get off. Each fare to be a discount from the nominal fare that passengers are currently paying.

We tried to make it simple. We wanted a round number and we made it three or four dollars, depending on the average price of the fare.

As far as how it would work, we anticipate a bus, a sign similar to the current MTA bus sign with maybe the circle, the logo up on top, the hail plan that you see on TLC cabs. The fare chart and hours of operation and contact information would be located on the sign similar to a bus sign. No dispatcher would be needed.

During the initial phase, we would have people on location to set the tone and get it started. Any cab could participate, any yellow cab could option in to be a go to the group ride stand during the morning periods.

THE CHAIRMAN: Inspectors and our staff conditioned to everybody, staff --

MR. ROTH: Of course, and the program would last for one year. If you have any questions.

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: I have a question. I'm curious to know if someone is picked up at West 57th and Eighth and the drop-off is 42nd and Park, would the driver decide how to get there? If he's driving along all the way to Eighth Avenue along 42nd, is it up to the driver to decide how to get to the end location? Does it depend on traffic?
MR. ROTH: They would basically ride the avenues. That is the goal. They get on the quickest route to the end point and they would ride the avenues. In this particular one, we said they would go across 57th Street because of the high demand, to go east and go down Park Avenue.

MR. SALKIN: It's not from that start point to that end point. What this is is this corridor that the cab is going to follow. The idea is, if you have three people going to the end point, whatever the quickest ride is to that point, the idea is you will have peel-off at different points during the way. Cabbie would take the fastest route to the first drop-off along the corridor and along the corridor people would just pop out.

If you work at 54th Street and I worked at 42nd Street, you would get off before me and I would get off next.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's flexible. If there is a road closure or emergency, they can deviate from the route and come back.

MR. SALKIN: The idea is to create a framework in which it's fair for the driver and fair for the passenger, and everyone knows the game plan. People will deviate as they need to in ways that are fair. These are the rules that set the framework.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: I have two questions, the same questions as before. The first question, any incremental costs to the driver or the medallion owner.
Number two, are from logistics perspective you have to pick a location. Say, for example, Grand Central Terminal corridor, end point being 59th and Sixth Avenue. Is that corridor end point then become a potential new pick-up point? How does the driver know what corridor they're going to operate under next?

MR. SALKIN: The first question is there is no cost here. We are just going to put stands and anyone can participate. The driver just has to know how it works.

THE CHAIRMAN: There may not be any costs to the city. Some of the bids have already agreed to pay for the signage.

MR. SALKIN: It's not technology, it's really just information. The question on what happens at the end point, again, I want to stress there is nothing about a person getting to the end point. This is the route that the cab is going to follow. If all three passengers get off before the end point, the cab is not going to make it to the end point.

The cab is just taking people where they want to go. If you have Park Avenue, you have some people that want to go to Madison or Lexington or Third. If they're going to all share that ride, they will have different places that they want to go out. The cab is not taking them to these places, it's taking them to Park. You walk the distance.

You're getting a discount for your ride, which is helping ensure that there is availability for the cab. You're getting a discount so you're not guaranteed door-to-door and you know where your going before you get in. Everyone agrees that you're going to take the Park
Avenue route because that is the only one that is available. No one ever says the cab goes to 42nd and Park. If the stand is empty, they take a regular fare.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: The last passenger that gets out, I figure out how does the cab driver decide --

MR. SALKIN: If they are livery, if they want to go back to the group ride stand, they have to somehow indicate they're not available for service and pass up rides. What we anticipate happening during the morning rush is they will do the ride during Midtown east, drop people off, and if they're available, they will be hailed again.

COMMISSIONER FRASER: Once people get in at the group ride stand, the cab is indicated as unavailable and no one would hail it. The drivers drops off the last passenger, the cab is now indicated as available, he's now obligated to take a street hail at this point.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUTIS: The driver can pick up people along the route.

MR. SALKIN: No, at the designated group ride stands, Grand Central, Port Authority, Penn Station, it's a pick-up location. We are trying to filter people in a general area to a pick-up point so the cabs will go there. On the West Side, we don't think a lot of cabbies go there because it's not to their benefit. If we encourage them to get there, they will potentially get three fares.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUTIS: Do these mirror bus
routes?

MR. ROTH: They don't mirror bus routes, but one of the ideas is that during the morning rush hour is the hardest time. That is the expensive time for the MTA. That is when they have to expand their capacity the most. If the TLC can expand their capacity the same period, it will take the burden off the MTA, and Park Avenue is an area where there are no bus routes.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOLIS: How many people are allowed in the cab?

MR. ROTH: Four.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOLIS: When I pay, let's say three bucks at the pick-up location, I know how many people are going in there. There could be four stops along the way on this corridor.

MR. SALKIN: Yes. One of the things we're going to try to encourage, since everybody knows the fare before the end of the ride, we will encourage people to pay while the trip is en route. When they get to their destination, they just get out. There is no exchange of money at that time.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOLIS: It's about twenty city blocks?

MR. ROTH: I didn't really count.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOLIS: I'm just guessing here they say are short additions.

MR. SALKIN: We looked at the data. One of the things that are surprising is just how short the trips are that people are taking. Here is a map. That's one of the things you see, the red. The pink is places with less...
density drop-offs, and the green is the places with the most density. You see the blue squares where people started.

One of the things that surprised us is how much green is close to the blue square. Untrue. You would think that people were using cabs for longer distances. That is not the case, people are using cabs to get places quickly. Maybe mass transit doesn't take them to the destination, or maybe it's just a little too far to walk.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUlis: Would that necessitate a new meter.

MR; SALKIN: No, it's a flat fare.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is a pick up chart for these drop-offs?

MR. SALKIN: The blue box is where the pick-ups are. There are no new meter. The meter doesn't click as you drive. It's a fixed fare.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUlis: The meters currently have the ability to plug in a fixed fare like the airport fare?

MR. SALKIN: Like you're going out of town fare.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUlis: Four people get into a cab. They press the button four times. The driver will collect the money.

MR. SALKIN: Or pay by credit card.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOUlis: It will be four payments of three dollars and the meter is off, okay, until the last passenger is out and the car is out of service.
MR. SALKIN: Is engaged.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: One last question.

Assume that the customer pays. When the passenger pays when they first enter the cab, would he still be able to capture the destination? Currently, I'm assuming that you got the monitor. It will pick up or identify a pick-up and when the customer pays, that identifies the drop-off.

MR. SALKIN: Within limitations on what the meters are able to do. What we're aiming to do is capture where the destination starts and ends. We might not be able to do that. You are probably not going to have exact data where each person gets off, but you will be able to track where each person gets on. You see how many times people pay three dollars in a fixed, fare but you wouldn't necessarily know where they got out.

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: How would it work again in terms of people would just stand there? It says no dispatchers needed.

MR. SALKIN: There have some groups rides there right now. There is one on York Avenue. People go out there. The cabs are waiting. They wait for four people to get in the car. When there is four people, they go.

Sometimes there is a line of people, sometimes there is a line of cabs. The idea is, it's developed over the years, it's become, everyone kind of understands the rules. We are mimicking that kind of behavior.

One of the concerns we had here is a location that is very hard from mass transit, it's a far distance to a common destination. Wall Street, which is a common geographic area. We are expanding the drive up. We
anticipate lining up from a feeder location. You figure anyone will walk five or ten minutes to get to a feeder location, and then they will go along the corridor.

The idea is to see if it works, to see if it works at the point. If it doesn't work, to see if there is something we can do. Maybe the corridors are incorrect. Maybe the fares are too low or too high, or maybe the corridors need to be changed. Maybe it's doing well and we want to expand the locations. Maybe there is a way to figure out how to do it in the evening.

Right now we want to test the concept. We don't know how people will react.

THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with Andy that we have to tweak it in terms of a pilot. I'm confident in the proposal. I don't know if you're aware that there is an authorized Wall Street One on 79th and York. It's been in effect and existence with very few problems recorded over the years, from 79th and York where there is the exact same scenario. Passengers pay less. Everyone goes down to Wall Street because is there an absence of mass transit on the far East Side.

I am confident that we may tweak locations or other aspects of the signage. Basically, it's been working so long and so well that there really isn't signage necessary or supervision. The Wall Street one can run itself.

Any questions or issues? Motion to approve the resolution for the group ride pilot route. Make a motion.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor? It's unanimous.

Thank you, Gary, good job.
The last presentation on Item 5-A, is Tweeps Phillips with us?

MS. PHILLIPS:   Well, I'm presenting on the satellite base and livery stands pilot proposal. The other two proposals presented today basically focused to enhancement to the taxi industry. This pilot program seeks to do an enhancement to the livery services currently provided throughout the five boroughs, and looking specifically to areas outside of the Central Business District that are generally very well served by yellow back grounds.

There are four hundred eighty-eight livery bases throughout the boroughs. Two thousand two hundred eighty-seven livery vehicles. As per TLC rules, livery services are to be dispatched. That means a person who is interested in service calls a local base and that base dispatches a vehicle to that customer. Liveries provide critical transportation throughout the five boroughs an enhancements to this industry would be of great service to both the customers and industry.

Over the past couple of months, we conducted many site visits throughout the five boroughs, sort of acting to observe liveries in their natural habitat, and get an idea of what is going on. We observed two main things: The first is there are two types of services provided. There is legal, and illegal. The legal services are as I described, a customer calls a local base. That base dispatches a TLC licensed vehicle and driver.

The illegal fall under three different types. There
is the lineup service, which is basically vehicles waiting in anticipation of customers. This can be found at many locations, including ferry terminals, bus terminals, the terminus of major train and bus lines, the street hail. And finally there is sort of a satellite base mini-dispatch model where there is either a dispatcher or courtesy phone set up by the business entity contracted with a home base to arrange for rides for their customers.

While out in the field, we also took some time to talk to passengers and sort of understand their experiences and their concerns. And overwhelmingly, the response that we got back is they're interested in on-demand service. They would not want to be able to get a ride when they want a ride if they have packages or small children, what have you. There is concern about how this on-demand service would be provided, because currently without a dispatcher there is no record of trips being made. There is no verification of whether the driver is licensed, whether the vehicle is licensed, whether there is even base affiliation. There is no verifying as to TLC standards being met. No clear fare structure.

A customer sort of negotiates the fare on the spot with the driver. There is no recourse for poor service. What happens if the customer leaves a package, if something happens? Essentially, it sort of ends with being hitchhiking; which obviously is great concern. The entire point for the difference between livery and yellow cabs.

MS. PHILLIPS: This pilot proposal in essence would create an on-demand dispatch service and would
encourage and provide safe transport and accountability.
And we sort of see it as potentially emulating the services
black car companies currently provide, based on contract,
and we think this would be really helpful.

So in concept, the on-demand dispatch service would be
only approved private locations. There would be a
satellite office on the site which would be a licensed base
that would dispatch licensed vehicle and drivers. Either
by use of an on site dispatch or courtesy phone, and this
livery stand would be clearly marked with ample space for
staging of vehicles and customers. So some of the
requirements that we think would be important to the pilot
proposal is obviously only TLC licensed bases, licensed
vehicles and drivers, license on site, a fare chart. A
business plan that clearly outlines the relationship and
responsibilities between the base and business entity.
Clear hours of operation, base contact information, either
a dispatcher or courtesy phone on site. Receipt of service
for the customer and trip records to be kept by the base
and we believe this will add additional accountability for
the customer.

The TLC pilot proposal process, we will be issuing a
R-5 that will seek to provide two pilots per borough. The
pilots should last about a year and we will continue to do
analysis and go out and speak to the customers and driver’s
and bases and business entities to find out how things are
going, and bring back that information to you for your
review.

And so that concludes my presentation on the satellite
base and livery stands. If you have any questions, I’d be
happy to answer them.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: I have some questions.

Is this like a virtual base?

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, exactly.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: Are we just legalizing what is illegal?

MS. PHILLIPS: It's a virtual base. We see it assort of a satellite location for a license base to provide services at that location.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: I would walk up to -- it's a dispatcher or a phone?

MS. PHILLIPS: Correct. Now I walk up to a stand and say I'm going to Jackson Heights. Great. Click. And I walk into the cab that is sitting there.

MS. PHILLIPS: Something like that.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: How much different than that?

MS. PHILLIPS: An example would be say at Atlantic Terminal there is a customer who has tons of bags after shopping at Target, decides they want to take a ride a couple of blocks to wherever they live. They go down to the stand. They either speak to the dispatcher or pick up the courtesy phone and arrange for that service.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: The notion that historically that there is a safety component, like people knowing where the pick-up was, they're picking up at my house or place of business, that is fundamentally gone? A lot of people go to the shopping center.

THE CHAIRMAN: You can argue, Harry, that there
COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: At various high density places, like shopping centers, where there isn't an exclusive contract for a base that is licensed that is providing supervision. That often happens at the shopping centers and even Staten Island ferry, and you have people with no licenses and people carrying all their bags and they want a ride and they don't care what they are getting into. This would hopefully eradicated that, if it's done right.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: Those other folks are going to leave because there is a legal stand there.

COMMISSIONER KAY: Or sign up at that base because there is accountability.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: That is the fundamental idea?

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER AROUT: You mention about a phone or dispatcher. I don't think a phone is going to help, not as far as I'm concerned. A dispatcher, yes, because when a car pulls up and there is nobody there by the phone. You can get an illegal cab, pull over and take it away. It's very important to get rid of a phone. It has to be a dispatcher.

MR. ROTH: To a point, we agree whole heartedly. What we want to do is since we are putting out requirements for R-5, if you have a facility twenty-four hours a day, it may be prohibitive twenty-four hours a day.

COMMISSIONER AROUT: I understand that, but they should be there at the crucial time.
supplement the dispatcher at various points. We will fully monitor that. If it becomes a problem, we will get rid of it.

MR. ROTH: If we get more proposals than we can handle, we will look for places that are effectively managing their business during effective hours of operation. Obviously, the best way is a dispatcher.

THE CHAIRMAN: I can assure you I always objected in the past to this concept when the council brought up for one reason, only because you need the supervision. This kind of service, you have private people providing the supervision, but we need our people to make sure that it's up and running for the first couple of weeks.

Once the entire industry sees there is order to it and there are enforcement officers, that sets the tone and parameters. That is exactly what happened. Even though it's slightly analogous, the group ride stand up on Wall Street. They actually used to have a title called TLC Dispatcher Civil Service Stand. After a while, people get used to it and are aware what is expected, and now it runs itself with little or no supervision.

I want to assure you that we are not going to start these bases and not have our inspectors there to make sure everything is working smoothly.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: So we are going to allow a certain amount of private businesses that you're going to pick?

MR. SALKIN: The intent for the pilot is to put
The respondents would be Queens Plaza, not X car services.

MR. SALKIN: If it's Queens Plaza, let's say Queens Plaza comes to us with a base.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOS: That is a requirement?

MR. SALKIN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOS: The private companies come to us with a base. Through the use of the virtual base, those folks are going to have exclusive rights of street hails.

MR. SALKIN: No, there is a dispatcher. The cars are there. The dispatcher arranges. There is a record of where you are going to where you went.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's a more efficient on-demand prearranged dispatch. Records will be kept. The fares are there. It's not a hail up the street. It's not a street hail, cars cruising around and you put your hand up in an orderly line with records.

MS. PHILLIPS: Your classification is the best, it's a virtual new base classification.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOS: It's actually my classification.

THE CHAIRMAN: You can walk into any storefront base.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOS: That is why I used the word "virtual base." It's just moving the base to another
COMMISSIONER FRASER: The reason it has to be a pilot, our current rules limit the base to one location. The pilot will test to see if it works, and if it works, we will obviously change the rules.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: We don't really address it. Those individuals, both the business, let's call it, and car service, are able to reject people from standing in line, I guess to some degree.

MR. SALKIN: Part of the R-5 proposal is they have to tell us how they're going it manage it. It's not like here I go, we have to have a business plan, how many rides they anticipate, how many vehicles. The business has to be committed to providing the vehicles.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: Are people able to, under our rules, allowed to enter into quick relationships? I mean, joining the base is a little bit more complicated than me pulling up.

MR. SALKIN: In theory, the dispatcher is an extension of the base. They can't be dispatching to their friends who show up in their own car.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: Can they dispatch somebody who is part of another base?

MS. PHILLIPS: No.

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: A base in that area would have exclusivity in that area. If there are thirty bases in that area --

COMMISSIONER KAY: If you want to call a base that you normally use, a car can come and pick you up. Nothing is going to stop you from doing that. If you used
one company for the last fifteen years, and you want to use
that company, what you're supposed to do is pick up the
phone and call that company and have them come to the
shopping center.

You can choose not to make the phone call and say you
know what, the base is right here. I am going to use
them. It doesn't exclude the car company from doing the
illegal street hail that they have been doing for the last
fifteen years.

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: Let's say can other bases
join into the program.

MR. SALKIN: For the pilot, we want to measure
are we able to provide this more add hoc on demand dispatch
in a way that is effective and safe. We wanted to do that
with a level of accountability. That is why we're limiting
it to private property. That is why we want entities to
come to us with a joint partnership. There is ideas that
we rejected. There is a dispatcher and they can join their
little dispatch crew. We don't know who is dispatching

what. There would be issues of fighting. We want to see a
satellite base, a separate location.

The partnership is location. We don't know how this
would work if an entity like Queens Plaza thinks they will
have so much business and they want to propose three bases
as part of the proposal, and it becomes complicated. Two
bases get contracts and they get into fights and it's
unclear who is the dispatcher is.

THE CHAIRMAN: We provide for a little
flexibility in this proposed pilot. We don't want to shut
any doors. You can potentially have two or three entities
submit an application. It could be a shopping center, a car service base and business improvement district all partnering together. Any of the entities could provide an employee.

MR. SALKIN: Information has to be collected. It has to be information that the vehicle that you're getting into is the correct vehicle and it's licensed. That information is going to be in the field. You don't have to have a license to be a dispatcher.

COMMISSIONER GIANNoulis: The virtual base does not have all the requirements of other bases.

MR. SALKIN: It's a subset of another base. We are not asking you to have records going back five years.

COMMISSIONER GIANNoulis: If Councilman Jay calls up and decides this actually was a bad idea and there are cars backed up --

MR. SALKIN: It's on private property. The pilot is on private property.

COMMISSIONER GIANNoulis: They're not going to be on the street?

MR. SALKIN: Ample space within the facility to handle the pilot. If we can do the service in a safe way where there are other places to extend it, to put it on public property raises a whole set of other issues that we are not prepared to tackle now.

COMMISSIONER GIANNoulis: They're not going to have the requirements of bases?

MR. SALKIN: They will be a virtual piece of another base. Off street parking and other things are for the main base. You don't get affiliated with the
individual base, you get affiliated with the main base. If it gets really big, you have to have additional parking and record keeping.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: How would that not count against the base?

MR. SALKIN: It would; that is what I'm saying.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: They're providing services at this other location and they have more cars?

MR. SALKIN: They still have the requirement of having off street parking and other requirements that come with that.

COMMISSIONER FRASER: I think it was Commissioner Polanco was asking about bases that might want to join in. The resolution is written to permit multiple bases to partner with one of these private property owners. The reason was, I think a lot of the bases are just too small to handle the high volume that might occur at one of these locations. The point is, we are trying to get high volume. It might take multiple bases to handle the car volume. That would sort of be up to the proposer making the proposal to us, and we will evaluate whether they have sufficient capacity to handle the volume that they and we would expect.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: There will be a financial relationship between the two entities?

COMMISSIONER FRASER: I don't know whether we expect it; I think we're indifferent. I think we want to know, but I don't think we have a requirement on it.

MR. SALKIN: One thing, by providing a dispatcher on site, there will be an additional cost.

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There will be some kind of capital commitment by the entity to put up the signage and the dispatcher.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: There won't be anything on public streets. If I'm in the Queens Mall there might be a booth in the Queens Mall that says "Carmel Car Service." I don't know who these guys are. Raise your hands. I don't know who you are. There you are. You're a nice guy.

Here's a booth. You go there, a transaction occurs, either by phone or by person. You're told go to Queens Boulevard and 49th Street and there is a car waiting. You're in the mall, the car is not in the mall.

MR. SALKIN: The stand will be outside, or it can be in the parking facility. It has to be on the private property of the mall.

THE CHAIRMAN: We're not ruling out if it works, looking at the private street-public street issue.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: That means we have a taxi stand, then the city should be making a lot more money off this. It's a very nice deal if someone is able to set up in the mall a taxi stand with public parking.

COMMISSIONER KAY: That is not public parking, it's all private.

MR. SALKIN: It's a big issue. If we can establish a way to have the service happen that everyone feels is safe and effective.

COMMISSIONER GIANNOULIS: People I assume are going to try and come to us to get that public space.

MR. SALKIN: That is something we have to monitor, if we
determine there is value to it that is something we have to look at down the road.

Commissioner Gianoulis: How far down the road are we going with franchise and concession?

Commissioner Fraser: That is one of the reasons we decided to limit it to private property.

The Chairman: That is a way to supervise more closely what is happening in other areas. For instance, Western Beef. If we want to create a new form or expand an existing form, we have to make sure it complies with our rules.

Commissioner Gonzales: It's feasible with the pilot program to capture details on the dispatch with respect to what, a dispatch via phone or human dispatch.

Mr. Salkin: All the records are supposed to be kept. One of the things we expect to be doing for the pilot is getting those records and reviewing them.

Commissioner Gonzales: We will have that detail?

Mr. Salkin: I wouldn't know that, Ed Gonzales got in a car with a bunch of bags.

Commissioner Fraser: Should we be able to distinguish between a phone dispatch and dispatcher dispatched ride?

The Chairman: Any other questions? Everybody okay with that? Motion to approve the resolution that went to the commissioners.

Commissioner Arout: Motion.

Commissioner Gonzales: Second.
THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor? It's unanimous. Thank you very much.

MetroKing, 5-B, real quickly. Good morning again.

MR. ROTH: There are no slides for this one. Gary Roth. This is a pilot proposal for a vehicle manufacturer to approve a pilot for a vehicle called the MetroKing, which is intended to be used as a general service taxi cab as well as provide wheelchair accessible service. The formal proposal was set in October and November. The vehicle prototype was in.

There are several safety issues that came up at that time with the vehicle. They asked them to make changes and respond to that. They did not for a particular amount of time. This was tabled last month.

I want to say for the record what the actions were and what happened. The nature of the response was -- the nature of the complaints was first, that the side doors for passenger use were not ADA compliant. Second issue, that a passenger ramp for wheelchair passenger use was not ADA compliant.

There were visibility issues for the driver of the vehicle. When the driver was sitting in this vehicle -- this is a modification of a Chevrolet pickup truck that has an additional cab added and placed in the rear of the vehicle. The way that the vehicle is currently compiled is that when the driver sits in the driver seat and any passenger sitting in the rear, the way that the partition and window are configured, you cannot see out the rear window at all. You can only see out the side windows.
There was no proposal for where the final T-PEP system would be installed.

Their response was that they disagreed with the measurement, whether or not the ramp and side door was ADA compliant. We obtained our own measurements by measuring it by hand in our own inspection facility, and we will stand by the number. The proposal for the T-PEP was incomplete. They responded by T-PEP would be placed -- it was placed at the front of the cab in the way of the ceiling line where passengers would sit at the rear of the cabin. No human could reach up and touch the T-PEP system, especially someone in a wheelchair. It's not suitable for their use.

The recommendation of staff now that we had the response, is decline this pilot and ask if they wish to resubmit it, that they make the modifications recommended by the Safety Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN: We pulled this off the agenda at the last meeting to give them a chance to comply. They still haven't. This has been kicking around for a long time. We have a number of safety issues and it doesn't meet our rules and specifications. It's a forgone conclusion. Motion to deny by Mr. Fraser, second by Mr. Gonzales.

One of our commissioners has to leave us.

(Commissioner Kay left at eleven twenty a.m.)

We will have to adjourned 7-A and B. We have a quorum to continue this meeting, but I usually recuse myself from deciding appeals on my own decisions, so I won't be joining you.
We have one more agenda item on the open meeting agenda, Item 6-A. Staff presentation on the FHV Accountability Rule Update given last month and Samara Epstein, she will brief the commissioners on what happened since then, during your testimony before the City Council.

MS. EPSTEIN: Just a few slides. We will try and get through pretty quickly. I wanted to give you a presentation on the comments we received since the last commission meeting.

So as you know, I know you, the commissioners had some correspondence with you. We continued to accept comments until May 11th; that's the last comment that we received.

Really the comment period, the thirty days, we have had meetings regarding the rules. Some of the persons we met with are listed here. I won't run through all of them.

On the next slide, I'll talk a little about the comments that we received. Most of them are points we had already gotten before April 16th; some of the comments reiterated. Particular concern about the point system is that a base can receive a point for the owner's behavior; however, most of the time, when we discussed how the points worked in more detail, they are more comfortable with the idea. There are only a few owners can defend themselves in TLC court.

TLC posts information on the Website. We have been for a few years. All licensees can check the status of their licenses. Website will show how many points the bases and vehicles have accumulated. There are guidelines which we are going to do a mailing to the bases soon. All the Website notices are going to go up before then. That
will help them understand how the information looks.

In meeting with some of the industry, like last week, they're also doing their own ways of using the information quickly. When you automate, it's quick to access.

The other vehicle bases are concerned about posting the licenses in the cabs. Something else that I have seen in the last few years, industry is working hard with some of the meter manufacturers to develop license holders that are clear, that are unlocked with a key so it's difficult to get those out. Many, after we talked, they feel more comfortable with the concept. So I think that has been positive.

Then for the next steps today, if you feel comfortable that we can move forward, the rules will be published in the City Record following approval by the City Law Department, who has to do a final review, following July 31st. The driver would post his license inside, and the Livery Passenger Bill of Rights also inside the vehicle for liveries only. We will continue a dialogue with FHA industry to make sure everybody understands what is expected of them so we can implement this as quickly as possible.

We will do a ton of outreach. We will develop a Website dedicated to the new rules so passengers and owners can access it. I'm working on outreach with the communities' boards. We will reach out to the City Council and other elected officials interested in this stuff. TLC staff are working hard to get everything in place so that everything goes smoothly.

TLC staff is going to be working on the vehicle decals
to make sure the bases have those to give to their affiliated vehicles. It will be temporary stickers until we have the permanent ones.

THE CHAIRMAN: Questions?

COMMISSIONER POLANCO: Where are we in terms of the point reduction program?

MS. EPSTEIN: The point reduction program, we issued a Request for Information on the education, RFI, which the Chair mentioned before. The deadline for response is June 1st so we can incorporate the comments in as quickly as possible. We haven't gotten comments yet.

THE CHAIRMAN: I sent it to the commission as well. I think I sent you a final.

MS. EPSTEIN: I know a bunch of people say they wanted to submit something. They haven't submitted anything yet. Staff is already working on things themselves.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the outreach is very important. Things have calmed down a little bit since the last meeting. I don't know if it's a coincidence. Today is the eleventh year anniversary from 1988 when the commission passed the most sweeping batch of reforms for the industry. We had a lot of trepidation and concerns, lawsuits. We had City Council hearings. There was a lot of concern and questions. Everybody was uptight.

As it actually played out, and the rules actually worked, I wouldn't say the industry thanked us for it. I think no one can dispute that we got a lot of bad drivers
out of the industry. The rules worked.

I think similarly, these rules will have the same effect. If they don't, we can take a look at them. Instead of going out and issuing thousands of summonses to people that don't post the Livery Bill of Rights, we can do outreach and get people to comply. We are not going to start summoning people left and right for this.

I think what Samara is talking about is important. I ask the commissioners if they have ideas or render any assistance in the outreach efforts, that we welcome that.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: I want to reiterate my appreciation for TLC staff for staying on top of this particular item, and I look forward to seeing it implemented.

THE CHAIRMAN: Questions? As soon as we have an idea what is going on with the point reduction program, we will pass it along. Thank you, Samara. That closes the agenda. Motion to close.

COMMISSIONER AROUT: Motion.

COMMISSIONER GONZALES: Second.

(Time noted: 11:28 a.m.)
I, JUDI GALLOP, a Stenotype Reporter and Notary Public for the State of New York, do hereby certify:

THAT this is a true and accurate transcription of the NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission meeting held on May 28, 2009.

I further certify that I am not related, either by blood or marriage, to any of the parties in this action; and

I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 4th day of June, 2009.

JUDI GALLOP

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