

Meeting Summary for Taxi Commission 08-2024

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Quick recap

Commissioner Dowser proposed an amendment to report number 4 and presented plans to address unlicensed taxi drivers and a scam involving fake taxicabs. The meeting also discussed the launch of a new, more interactive website for the Kingston Area Taxi Commission and a proposal to extend the deadline for taxicab inspections. Lastly, Commissioner Dowser led the celebration of Commissioner Abreu's birthday and looked forward to the next gathering in September.

Next steps

Staff to report back to the Commission in Q4 2024 on potential options for taxi stand creation and enforcement.

Staff to report back to the Commission in Q4 2024 on unlicensed taxi drivers, including enforcement and administration penalty options.

Staff to extend the deadline for taxicab inspections to September 30, 2024.

Summary

Proposed Amendments and Enforcement Plans

Commissioner Dowser proposed an amendment to report number 4, which concerned a minor adjustment to the drop rate and an increase in the access fee, originally set to commence on August 1st. The amendment pushed the start date to October 1st, allowing for the summer vacation season and the back-to-school rush. The decision was supported by all attendees.

Commissioner Dowser also presented two miscellaneous business items: a review of taxi stand creation and enforcement, and a plan to address unlicensed taxi drivers. The former aimed to examine potential areas for taxi stands and revise the bylaw to include penalties for parking in access spots. The latter proposed revising the current bylaw to impose administrative penalties on unlicensed taxi drivers, with potential escalations including vehicle seizure.

Fake Taxicabs and Rideshare Safety Concerns

Commissioner Chaves and Dowser discussed a scam involving fake taxicabs in the Kingston area. The scammers use fake taxi signs to deceive unsuspecting victims into using their debit cards, which are then cloned for fraudulent purchases. Commissioner Dowser advised everyone to be cautious when choosing their rides and only use legitimate taxicabs, such as Amy's and Modern, which are easily identifiable. He also urged residents to report any suspicious activity to the Commission. Commissioner Chaves raised concerns about rideshare services like Uber, emphasizing the need for drivers to verify their passengers' identities to prevent abductions. Both commissioners stressed the importance of personal safety and urged caution when using any transportation service.

Kingston Area Taxi Commission Meeting

Commissioner Dowser led the discussion on the Kingston Area Taxi Commission's meeting minutes and the launch of a new, more interactive website. The new website offers various features, including accessibility options, sign-up programs for the Loyalist accessible transit pass and the New Kingston Area Transit Pass, a newsletter sign-up, and a ride verification tool. Commissioner Dowser also reported that the new data update system was experiencing minor issues but was set to go fully live soon. Lastly, a proposal to extend the deadline for taxicab inspections to September 30th was passed to accommodate individuals on summer vacation.

Commissioner Abreu's Birthday Celebration and Appreciation

Commissioner Dowser led the celebration of Commissioner Abreu's birthday, with Commissioners Fraser, Budarick, Chaves, and others expressing their wishes. There was a light-hearted discussion about Abreu's recent travel and a suggestion was made to track his future adventures using a GPS. The conversation ended with Commissioner Dowser declaring the meeting adjourned and looking forward to the next gathering in September.