

ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

June 21, 2018

CALL TO ORDER:

Newberry called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Corinne Vièville, Joseph Graf, Bruce Borgerson, Sue Newberry, David Young

Commissioners Absent: Kat Smith

Council Liaison Present: None

Staff Present: Paula Brown, Taina Glick

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: April 19, 2018

Commissioners Borgerson and Vièville m/s to approve minutes as amended.

All ayes. Minutes approved.

PUBLIC FORUM

Heulz Gutcheon 2253 Hwy 99

Spoke to rate by which busses accelerate and the benefit of electric busses.

Rev. Hillary Moser 500 YMCA Way #209

Introduced concept of green waving: a method of hitch hiking to reduce use of gasoline vehicles.

NEW BUSINESS

Transit Feasibility Study

Nelson Nyygard Consulting Associates representatives Jamie Dempster and Paul Leitman presented the draft Transit Expansion Feasibility Study and Technical Memorandum #1. See attached.

Commissioners sought clarification on some data presented.

Borgerson felt that the presentation was a good representation but that climate change impact and autonomous vehicles need to be considered.

Young informed the consultants that the TC identified local transit as their number one priority and that community support exists for the efforts of the consultants. Young stressed to the consultants the importance of commission involvement throughout the process.

Graf inquired if data exists showing the number of citizens traveling into or out of Ashland for work who utilize transit. His concern was emissions generated by commuters in individual cars. Graf questioned if a paratransit shuttle to route 10 would be well received. Graf would like free parking addressed in the study.

Dempster reminded commissioners of the RVTD study in process and elaborated on some of the regional transportation issues they are considering.

Newberry commented on the Technical Memo and questioned to whom emailed questions could be sent.

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Roy Sutton 989 Golden Aspen Pl

Spoke to the difficulties of downtown parking and believes a shuttle to the downtown area would be beneficial. Further, he wondered how consultants got information from Mountain Meadows.

OLD BUSINESS

Draft ordinance relating to vehicles for hire

City Attorney David Lohman spoke about a broader ordinance to replace AMC 6.28. He suggested to the chair that he provide a brief introduction, then take community input, ending with a discussion of City Council questions. Lohman explained that Katrina Brown and he spoke to City Council of his perception from the April TC meeting that there was enough support from the TC for the Council to proceed with the ordinance as drafted. Council preferred to have a formal recommendation from TC. Lohman informed commissioners that the ordinance has not changed since the last meeting.

Newberry expressed her belief that there are 3 questions that need to be answered:

- Do we want this service in Ashland
- Do we want a set of rules that pertains equally to whatever type of company they are
- Is this the ordinance we want or should it be changed

Borgerson believed only two issues need to be resolved:

- Passenger safety
- Service to residents with disabilities

Bill Langton 87 Crocker St

Langton encouraged the commission to recommend approval of an ordinance allowing TNCs.

Pam Merritt 3306 S Pacific Hwy #71 Medford, OR.

She is an Uber and Lyft driver and spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

Evan Lasley 172 Poppy Bay Pl Talent, OR.

Spoke as representative of Oregon AFL/CIO spoke in support of requiring a wage board for TNCs as a means of supporting driver well-being. He expressed concern about how the city will ensure equity for consumers and drivers.

John Hutter 355 High St

Spoke of his belief that utilization of experienced, qualified workers makes for a positive outcome.

Rebecca Person 2801 Old Greensprings Hwy.

Spoke in opposition of allowing TNC companies to operate in Ashland.

Wes Brain 298 Garfield St

Supports a wage board to ensure that riders and drivers each have a voice in how transportation decisions are made. Believes a standard should be established that supports area beliefs.

Nancy Buffington 3295 Hwy 66

Buffington is the Cascade Airport Shuttle owner and read from a letter in opposition of TNCs. See attached.

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Debi Smith 820 Ashland St
Spoke in opposition of allowing TNCs in Ashland and read from a letter. See attached.

Michael Schroer 2020 Hwy 99 N #22
Spoke in opposition of allowing TNCs in Ashland.

Heather Hoeber 555 Freeman Rd Unit 19 Central Point, OR
Spoke as an Uber partner and was in support of allowing TNCs.

Cleve Twitchell 555 Freeman Rd Central Point, OR
Retired, but enjoys attending events in Ashland. He has utilized Uber spoke in support of allowing TNCs.

Joseph Forika 1657 Peachey Rd
Spoke as the manager of Crater Lake Taxi in opposition of allowing TNCs into Ashland.

Louise Shawkat
Thanked TC for revisiting the TNC issue. She would like to see a study done to show advantages.

Lohman gave commission the option to consider information provided and postpone decision to a future date as the topic is important and should be given adequate time for deliberation. He reminded commissioners that he provided them a list of questions to consider.

Newberry acknowledged that, at the last meeting, commissioners discussed only details of the proposed ordinance, but did not discuss what the commission was trying to accomplish.

Borgerson was not convinced that passing the ordinance modeled after Medford is the right choice but would consider support if passenger safety and equity could be assured.

Vièville felt strongly that Uber was attempting to hold the city hostage and that rules should be established and the TNCs can conform or not do business in Ashland. She stated that wage boards are outside the purview of the commission.

Young supported a regional standard for ridesharing services that maintain current standards for taxis but does not believe that a regional agreement could be reached. He educated the audience about the purview of the commission. Young expressed his stance of never supporting a multi-national company affecting change of local laws.

Graf thanked Young for his comments and is concerned if the TC chooses to support the proposed ordinance they are stuck with the decision and will be unable to conduct a study after-the-fact or to amend the ordinance. He was concerned about safety, insurance, background checks, inspections, and that the proposed ordinance puts taxis at a disadvantage. He felt strongly that the commission should not support companies who exploit workers. He is concerned about 1 on 1 replacement of workers traveling out of town with TNC rides which result in a round trip.

Borgerson stated evidence exists that shows introduction of TNCs to an area such as the bay area increased use of intercity rapid transit.

Newberry suggested that our ordinance does not allow for taxi companies to operate under a more progressive model and expressed the opinion that the fee structure should not differ between types of service provided.

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Lohman responded that there is nothing in the ordinance to prevent taxi companies from changing their business model. He explained the process used to establish the fees used in the ordinance and the difference in insurance requirements.

Young asked Lohman to explain the difference between a taxi and a TNC. Lohman responded that a taxi must have a taximeter. He indicated that a taxi company could become a TNC if they opted to switch from a meter to an app.

Vièville wanted to know how the app determines price. Borgerson offered his opinion of how.

Brown made a point of order reminding the chair when debating with audience members the conversation is not recorded and recommended to not do that. Further, if the commission does not have a recommendation for Council at this time, this agenda topic can be continued at the next meeting. Brown suggested any remaining questions could be submitted to staff to be compiled and forwarded to the Legal Division for answers.

Vièville made a motion to continue this topic to the next meeting. Borgerson seconded. All ayes.

Lohman suggested the Chair inform audience members that additional speaking at the next meeting will not be allowed by those who have previously spoken unless new information is provided. Chair informed audience members that they will not be permitted to speak on this topic at the next meeting if they've already given testimony.

Brown suggested to the Chair to forego the remaining agenda items as they are time-allowed and we were 30 minutes beyond normal meeting timeframe. Commissioners discussed and opted to forego remaining agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:40

Respectfully submitted,

Taina Glick

Public Works Administrative Assistant