



Department of Transportation

Traffic Engineering and Parking Divisions

David C. Dryer, P.E., City Traffic Engineer and Parking Manager

Madison Municipal Building, Suite 100

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard

P.O. Box 2986

Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2986

Phone: (608) 266-4761

Fax: (608) 267-1158

traffic@cityofmadison.com

www.cityofmadison.com

Date: March 24, 2015
To: Transit and Parking Commission Members
From: David Dryer, City Traffic Engineer and Parking Manager
Subject: 2015-2017 Taxicab Operator License Renewals

OVERVIEW

The following taxicab companies applied to renew their operator licenses: Affiliated Carriage Systems, Inc. DBA Madison Taxi; Badger Bus Lines, Badger Cab Co., Inc.; Green Cab of Madison, Incorporated; Transit Solutions, Inc.; Union Cab of Madison Cooperative, Inc. There are no new taxicab operator license applicants.

In accordance with the criteria articulated in Madison General Ordinances, Traffic Engineering staff conducted an investigation of taxicab operators. The companies were required to answer a series of written questions. The written questions were developed based on: relevant ordinances; complaints received by the Traffic Engineering Division in 2013 and 2014; and lastly, current public safety and service issues associated with the taxicab industry. The Madison Police Department's no longer maintains crash reports data, therefore unlike prior years, TE staff has been unable to have access to information relating to accidents or incidents involving licensed taxicab drivers.

All companies were asked about vehicle maintenance, driver rest periods, customer/driver complaints, driver/passenger safety, operations, taxicab rates, refusal of service, and financial results.

Lastly, the applicants submitted financial and statistical data from 2013 and 2014 in annual surveys (attached). These surveys included information about passengers, profits, crashes, complaints and other data.

INDIVIDUAL COMPANY INVESTIGATIONS

Affiliated Carriage Systems (Madison Taxi)

Type of Service: Madison Taxi operates a corporately owned, metered taxi operation.

MDOT Complaints: Madison Taxi had four complaints filed with the MDOT in 2013 and three in 2014. Three out of the eight complaints took place at the Dane County Regional Airport. Three of these complaints were for rude or unprofessional behavior, two involved rate disputes and one involved alleged unsafe driving.

Madison Taxi acknowledges that it has had some customer service issues at the Airport. Management claims that poor driver communication and “overly aggressive” drivers are the root causes. Generally, passengers have complained about Madison drivers being abrupt and rude when attempting to load multiple passengers who are sharing rides. Meter cabs are allowed to provide shared-ride service during declared peak periods. However, drivers should be very polite so as to avoid making passengers feel like they are being herded into a cab to maximize driver profits without concern for passengers.

Madison is actively working on improving Airport customer service and communication through education and driver discipline. Madison Taxi has hired secret customer service employees to provide feedback to management.

Vehicle Registration: With the help of Madison Taxi management, City Staff was able to reconcile registration discrepancies in the list of vehicles initially provided by the company.

Other Information: None applicable.

Badger Bus

Type of Service: Badger Bus is a privately-owned specialized transportation service providing services to Madison Metro and local school districts. Madison Metro requires that each of its paratransit contractors be licensed with the City as a Taxicab operator.

MDOT Complaints: None reported.

Reported Crashes: None applicable.

Badger Cab

Type of Service: Badger Cab is a zoned-rate taxicab business. Badger has filed a zone map with the City Clerk and this map shows the city is divided into zones. Generally, a customer's fare is based on the number of zones he or she travels through on the way to his or her destination. Traditionally, shared-ride cabs have provided a shared-ride service. Shared-ride means that a taxicab driver may pick up a customer and subsequently transport an additional customer before taking the original passenger to his or her requested destination. A zone-rate operation works well with shared-ride rates as it is not necessary to track the distance a customer is transported in order to calculate his or her fare.

Beginning in 2013, Badger cab began allowing passengers to choose between a direct or shared ride. A direct ride means that a passenger is taken to his or her destination without picking up another passenger. The rate for this direct ride is one and one-half times greater than the rate for sharing a ride (Shared ride: \$4.00 first zone and \$1.00 additional zone; Direct ride: \$6.00 first zone and \$1.50 additional zone). The concept is that passenger may be willing to pay more to be transported directly to his or her destination. Each Badger Cab is either marked as Shared-Ride or Direct ride and has the respective rates on each door.

Badger is a leased-cab operation and each driver is an independent contractor and leases a vehicle from the company on a daily basis. Drivers retain the revenues collected during their shift but must make a lease payment to Badger for the vehicle and other services provided. The City does not regulate these lease arrangements. There are no driver-owned vehicles.

MDOT Complaints: The City received one Badger Cab driver complaints in 2013 and six complaints in 2014. Two were for rude or unprofessional drivers or dispatchers, and two were for unsafe driving, and three were for cab being late or not arriving.

Vehicle Registration: With the help of Badger Cab management, City Staff was able to reconcile registration discrepancies in the list of vehicles initially provided by the company.

Other Information:

Below are Badger Cab's rate changes as submitted to the City Clerk for 2014:

November 2014:

Shared ride

First Zone was change from \$3.50 to \$4.00

:add zone \$1.00

:add pass \$1.00

Outer zone charges: \$0.25 per 1/10 mile

Wait charges: \$0.50 per minute

Direct Ride

First Zone was changed from \$4.45 to \$6.00

Additional zone changed from \$1.00 to 1.50

Green Cab of Madison, Incorporated

Type of Service: Green Cab began operation in September 2010. It is a zoned-rate taxicab business. Green Cab has filed a zone map with the City Clerk and this map shows the city is divided into over 250 zones. Generally, a customer's fare is based on the number of zones he or she travels through on the way to his or her destination. Traditionally, shared-ride cabs have provided a shared-ride service. Shared-ride means that a taxicab driver may pick up a customer and subsequently transport an additional customer before taking the original passenger to his or her requested destination. A zone-rate operation works well with shared-ride rates as it is not necessary to track the distance a customer is transported in order to calculate his or her fare.

Beginning in 2011, Green cab began allowing passengers to choose between a direct or shared ride. In order to avoid confusion, passengers must request a direct or shared ride at the time service is ordered via dispatch or as a passenger gets in a cab. A direct ride means that a passenger is taken to his or her destination without picking up another passenger. The direct rate is one and one-half times greater than the shared rates (Shared ride: \$3.00 first zone and \$1.00 additional zone; Direct ride: \$4.50 first zone and \$1.50 additional zone). Each Green cab has direct and shared-ride rates posted on the door of each taxicab.

Green Cab is a leased-cab operation where each driver is an independent contractor and leases a vehicle from the company on a daily basis. Drivers retain the revenues collected during their shift but must make a lease payment to Green Cab for the vehicle and other services provided. The City does not regulate these lease arrangements. There are no driver-owned vehicles.

MDOT Complaints: Green Cab had three complaints in 2013 and six in 2014: one for unsafe driving and three for rude or unprofessional behavior by a driver, and two for rude or unprofessional behavior by a dispatcher , one complaint for a rate dispute and on for a cab that was late or did not arrive.

Vehicle Registration: With the help of Green Cab management, City Staff was able to reconcile registration discrepancies in the list of vehicles initially provided by the company.

Other Information:

Green cab has not changed its rates in the 2013 to 2014 period.

Transit Solutions

Type of Service: Transit Solutions is a privately-owned specialized transportation service providing services to Madison Metro. Madison Metro requires that each of its paratransit contractors be licensed with the City as a Taxicab operator.

MDOT Complaints: None reported.

Reported Crashes: None applicable. 2013-2015 Taxicab Company License Renewals, Page 5

Union Cab

TE staff is still waiting for Union Cab's renewal application. Union has assured staff they will be applying for license renewal, but have been delayed in filing application and other required information.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff finds the responses to all questions acceptable. It is apparent from these questions and visual inspections that: a) vehicles are being maintained properly (there were no maintenance-related crashes in 2011 and 2012 by licensed carriers); b) drivers appear to be getting adequate rest periods; c) there has been relatively few MDOT complaints; d) driver and passenger safety is a high priority among carriers; d) refusal of service is rare; and e) the vehicles listed in each operation are currently registered or the company is in the process of replacing a vehicle listed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the operating licenses for five of the six currently licensed carriers be renewed, and that the attached resolution be recommended for approval