

COMMUNICATION 131107

Received From: Stacey Blair, Clerk
Jennifer Hughes, By-law Administrative Clerk
Addressed To: Council
Date: September 22, 2020
Topic: Draft Taxi By-law to Repeal and Replace By-law 83-2005

UPDATE

The draft Taxi By-law, which would repeal and replace By-law 83-2005, was considered by the Committee of the Whole on September 8th, 2020. At that time, concerns were raised by members of the Committee that staff had not been able to gather input from each of the Town's taxi operators.

One taxi operator had already submitted their comments on the draft By-law and staff was directed to meet with the other operator to gather their input.

Subsequently, staff met with the other operator on September 15th, 2020 to hear their concerns.

The following points were brought to staff's attention at this meeting:

- The proposed maximum fee for charging customers for cleaning is too low and does not account for the cost of cleaning bio-hazards;
- The length of time it takes to get a new driver licenced;
- Appreciation for only requiring drivers' abstracts on a bi-annual basis for driver renewals in good standing;
- Concern for the safety of drivers/abusive passengers; and
- Enforcement of the by-law and the provisions granted to By-law Officers

DISCUSSION

After a very productive and positive meeting with the taxi operator, staff is recommending the following amendments to the proposed draft by-law:

- Increase or remove the proposed maximum fee for cleaning;
- Add a provision under Passenger Conduct, making it an offence to verbally or physically abuse a taxicab driver.

Staff recommends increasing the maximum fee for bio-hazard clean-up to \$250.00. In the version of by the By-law presented at Committee of the Whole on September 8, 2020, the fee was recommended at \$75.00 (increased from \$20.00 in By-law 83-2005). Council has the authority to include this provision in the By-law in accordance with Part II, Section 11 (2), 8 of the Municipal Act, as amended which permits a lower-tier municipality to pass by-laws respecting protection of property, including consumer protection.

In terms of the amount of time that it takes to licence a new driver, it is the opinion of staff that the Town shall continue to work with the taxi companies and their drivers to

licence individuals in the most efficient manner possible, however the Town is not able to licence drivers before the required documents are submitted. To reduce the amount of expenses that are incurred by taxi drivers, the Town shall only require drivers' abstracts on a bi-annual basis from drivers that have been licenced in the previous year and who are in good standing. Staff consulted with the OPP on this matter and they were in agreement that a bi-annual requirement would be acceptable, however vulnerable sector checks shall continue to be required on an annual basis by all drivers.

After hearing about the concerns from the operator regarding the safety of their drivers and the abusive actions that can be taken by riders, staff felt that it was necessary to include an additional provision which reiterates that riders need to be respectful of taxi drivers.

Lastly, in terms of enforcement, these elements of the proposed new by-law were taken directly from the previous by-law. Staff encouraged the owner to communicate with Town Staff and members of Council should they have concerns with how the by-law is being enforced.

For the convenience of Council, newly amended sections of the proposed By-law have been highlighted in yellow.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT By-law No. 82-2020 (To licence, regulate and govern operators and drivers of taxicabs and to repeal By-law 83-2005) be read a first, second and third time, and finally passed.