



Peterborough Lakefield
Police Services Board

Public Session

TO: Chair and Members
Peterborough Lakefield Police Services Board

FROM: Niquel Pritchard Pataki, Administrative Assistant to the Board

REPORT DATE: January 2013

MEETING DATE: January 15th, 2013

SUBJECT: Accessibility Update

PURPOSE

A report to inform the Board of the progress made on the Accessibility issues with the taxis.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the recommendation(s) outlined in this Report, as follows:

That the Board receive the report from the Administrative Assistant regarding the progress made on the Accessibility Requirements with the Taxi Bylaw.

After discussion, the Board will make a decision as to whether or not they are of the opinion that there are enough accessible taxis servicing Peterborough and Lakefield and, if necessary; identify progress and steps that will be taken to meet this need.

STRENGTH IMPACT

N/A

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2011, the Board revamped the taxi bylaw to ensure it was compliant with Ontario Regulation 191/11 - Integrated Accessibility Standards.

Part of this regulation includes:

Duties of Municipalities and Taxicabs

- 79.(1) Every municipality shall consult with its municipal accessibility advisory committee, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Act, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.
- (2) Every municipality shall identify progress made toward meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs, including any steps that will be taken to meet the need, in its accessibility plan required under Part 1.
- (3) Municipalities shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1st, 2013.

Because the Police Services Board administers and licenses taxis in both Peterborough and Lakefield, we were responsible for meeting with the accessibility advisory committees for both the City of Peterborough and the Township of Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield to discuss these items by January 1st, 2013. This is to be done every five years.

At the October board meeting, the board passed the following motion:

Moved by Mayor Mary Smith
Seconded by Robert Lightbody

That the Administrative Assistant correspond with the two Accessibility Advisory Committees regarding their upcoming meetings on October 25th for S-E-L and on November 7th for the City of Peterborough in order to obtain their feedback and ideas and report back to the Board at the November meeting. –
CARRIED

The Administrative Assistant met with the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee on November 7th and corresponded with S-E-L's committee. A report to update the board was furnished at the November 20th meeting and received for information. Included in this report was a list of proposed questions the board wished to receive feedback on.

On December 7th, the Administrative Assistant sent an email along with the taxi bylaw and the list of questions to the following stakeholders asking them to distribute to their clients. The email was also sent to both Accessibility Advisory Committee contacts:

Alternatives Community Program Services	The Arthritis Society
Heads Up for Inclusion	Community Care
Community Living	The Canadian Diabetes Society
Autism Society	People First Peterborough
Canadian Cancer Society – Peterborough	MS Society
CNIB Peterborough	Canadian Mental Health Assoc. Peterborough
Five Counties	Down Syndrome Association
Four Counties Brain Injury Association	Kawartha Participation Projects
Peterborough Aids Resource Network	Peterborough County-City Health Unit
Peterborough Social Planning Council	Life After Stroke
Alzheimer Society	Canadian Hearing Society

Responses to the questionnaire were requested by December 19th.

BUSINESS PLAN REFERENCE

N/A

SUMMARY

Despite sending the information to 22 local agencies that work with and represent persons with disabilities and both Advisory Committees, only three responses were received. Nonetheless, the information provided is interesting and enlightening. Two of the respondents answered the questions; the other person spoke of personal experiences. (Information has been provided verbatim)

1. How often do you require an accessible taxi cab?

➤ 0

➤ Approximately 6 times per year for a co-worker or students to get to events or meetings.

2. Do you have difficulty in securing the services of an accessible taxi cab when needed?
 - Not used
 - I have had difficulty once when trying to book a wheelchair accessible taxi for 9 AM. They said they would be there for pick up, but then were late by 30+ minutes because they said that all of their accessible cabs were being used for school transfers. This was particularly difficult as my co-worker was late for a presentation he was giving to 40 students.
3. Have you experienced long wait times for an accessible taxi?
 - Not used
 - Only twice. The one time mentioned above, and then another time as a result of an unforeseen accident.
4. Have you ever experienced a situation where no accessible cabs are available? If so, when did this occur?
 - Not used
 - Only the one time as mentioned in question 2.
5. Are there certain times of the day or days of the week or months of the year when you experience difficulty in securing the services of an accessible taxi?
 - Not used
6. Please feel free to make any comments/suggestions or relay any concerns you may have around this issue.
 - I have not used the accessible taxi but I have heard of ongoing challenges at times of accessing such a taxi through long wait times if running late that day for a scheduled school pick up; when dropped off at destination not being dropped off at an accessible path in the winter; early arrival for scheduled pick up and being penalized for not being ready early...

Also, penalization for sick days when the scheduled appointment pick up occurs even after being notified earlier that day. Sudden illness occurs and there should be a grace period for when individuals are not well.

- Often we utilize a wheelchair accessible cab to get from Peterborough to venues in Lakefield or Warsaw where the handi-van will not travel. For these trips they seem more expensive than a regular flat rate trip for a non-wheelchair accessible taxi.

I do feel that the need for accessible taxis may be compromised by its servicing of schools. I would be curious to know how many taxis are pre-booked for school transfers during the morning and afternoon time.

- I am a student at Fleming who is an active wheelchair user. I use taxis for transportation when other forms of transport are too difficult.

The most difficult time to get accessible taxis is after midnight or after bar closing. I think there is a belief that people with disabilities don't spend evenings out with friends. On one occasion I was unable to secure a cab at all and this was after a dance at the Venue.

The usual wait time at other times is about 20 minutes which is quite good. It seems that our community might benefit from a few more accessible cabs.

To recap, both taxi firms were contacted on two separate occasions and asked if they could provide us with answers to some of our questions. Only one firm responded and provided the following information:

- They have 40 regular taxis, 10 accessible ones.
- Called regularly for wheelchair accessible taxis for anything from medical appointments to grocery shopping. These calls vary from day to day. Calls are never declined for any type of taxi.
- There's no difference really in the amount of time passengers wait for regular taxi compared to an accessible one. Both are contingent on weather conditions, time of day and time of month.
- They do work for the schools and the number of accessible vehicles used ranges from 5 – 7 during the morning and afternoon hours for pick up and drop off.

There are 12 accessible cabs servicing Peterborough and Lakefield in total between both firms.

The board needs to answer the following:

Every municipality shall consult with its municipal accessibility advisory committee, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29

(1) or (2) of the Act, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.

The board has consulted with the community and the stakeholders. The question remains as to whether or not there are enough accessible taxis in both communities.

Every municipality shall identify progress made toward meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs, including any steps that will be taken to meet the need, in its accessibility plan required under Part 1.

If the board is of the opinion there are not enough accessible taxis servicing our communities, it must decide how to go about meeting this need so this can be included in the municipal accessibility plan.

The board cannot force the two firms to purchase more accessible cabs. Accessible cabs are expensive to buy. The board could consider lobbying the provincial government for funding, rebates, tax breaks or incentives etc. for taxi firms who provide accessible taxis and service to the community.

This report will go to both Accessibility Advisory Committees and the community stakeholders for information and inclusion in their Accessibility Plan.

Prepared, Submitted and Reviewed by: Niquel Pritchard Pataki, Administrative Assistant to the Board