

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

IN RE: LICENSE COMMISSION GENERAL HEARING

LICENSE COMMISSION BOARD MEMBERS:

Richard V. Scali, Chairman
Steven Williams, Deputy Superintendent
Daniel Turner, Deputy Chief

STAFF:

Elizabeth Y. Lint, Executive Officer

- held at -

Michael J. Lombardi Municipal Building
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Basement Conference Room
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
Tuesday, July 28, 2009
6:05 p.m.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. LINT: License Commission General Hearing, Tuesday evening, July 28, 2009, 6:00 p.m. We're in the Michael J. Lombardi Municipal Building, 831 Massachusetts Avenue, Basement Conference Room. Before you are the commissioners: Chairman Richard Scali, Deputy Chief Dan Turner, and Deputy Superintendent Steve Williams.

The only matter on the agenda tonight is policy discussion. The Board of License Commissioners will meet with regards to additions, amendments, and changes to the City of Cambridge taxi cab rules and regulations.

The following topics will be discussed by the Board: a meter rate increase to \$5.20 for the first mile, \$3.20 each additional mile, \$.40 each eighth of a mile, \$28 per hour waiting time after five minutes, tunnel and bridge fees including tunnel exit toll; requirement that all Cambridge taxis accept credit cards (specific details are available); amendment to the vintage

year rule, making cabs no longer than five years old; allowing other vehicles besides sedans such as vans and SUVs, which must be four years old or less; and retraining of all drivers who did not attend the Cambridge Taxi School. Drivers would be required to attend a one night class upon renewal of their hackney license.

MR. SCALI: Good evening everybody. Thank you all for coming out tonight. Just for the record, our fire exits are here to the right and to the back left where you came in. That door stays open at all times for fire exiting purposes.

MS. LINT: If anyone has a cell phone on, please turn it off.

MR. SCALI: So the topics here for discussion are proposed amendments to the taxicab rules. Again, I emphasize proposed, meaning that this is a discussion about whether or not these are put into effect. The discussion is limited to the items that are on the agenda and they are the ones that Mrs. Lint mentioned. Those items are the ones that we're going to be talking about.

So what I'd ask you to do is -- the commissioners here have read and understand what the changes are. Comments will be taken from anybody in the audience with regards to any of the topics on the agenda. If there are other items you want to talk about, we understand that you may want to do that, but we want to stick to what was advertised and what the proposals are.

If for some reason someone beforehand that speaks before you says the same thing you want to say, for time purposes just say "I agree with him or her," or "I don't agree with him or her and I want to speak further on something else." So we want to try to keep it all as condensed as possible to make sure that everyone gets a chance to speak without it going on and on about the same thing over and over again.

MS. LINT: Can I add one thing to that?

MR. SCALI: Yes, please.

MS. LINT: When one person is speaking if everyone else can please refrain from speaking.

The stenographer cannot take down testimony if there's more than one person talking at a time.

MR. SCALI: Comments or questions from the Commissioners first about the subject matter or a clarification.

MR. WILLIAMS: Just to make sure that everybody understands that this is to gain information to make a final determination. There has been no decisions made up until this point in time.

MR. TURNER: No comments.

MR. SCALI: Anybody who wishes to speak, come forward. I know Ms. Podgers had requested to speak first and we'll take you first. If you would like to come forward that would be helpful, if you're able to.

Good evening.

MS. PODGERS: Good evening. Most of you here know me because I've spoken here before. I think probably Superintendent Steven Williams hasn't seen me here before speaking.

I would like to address some of the

issues here that are directly related to what's on here but also peripherally affect people with disabilities. As you know I'm the Mass. Office on Disability Trained Community Access Monitor, and I advocate for people with disabilities as defined by the federal Civil Rights Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336. It's specifically for people with mobility disabilities, seniors, people who might be using canes. They might not be in wheelchairs so you might not identify them as severely disabled.

Therein seems to be the problem. I hate to use the word "stereotyping," but people have the idea that a service animal is a guide dog for a blind person.

MR. SCALI: I don't mean to interrupt you but I guess we need to stay with regard to topics that are on here.

MS. PODGERS: I am aware of what's on here but I need to explain what this impacts, how these changes will impact, so I want to raise those issues.

Again, in terms of -- I'm going to go

backwards here. In terms of retraining all the drivers, I would like you to re-emphasize this idea of stereotyping people. It's not just blind people using guide dogs that are severely disabled and using service animals.

And it's not just people who call the disability taxi. I'm not in a wheelchair and then I have the guy yelling at me, "This is for disabled people," because I can't use a wheelchair.

I just re-emphasize helping people overcome the stereotypes that disabled people are either in wheelchairs or blind with guide dogs.

Number 4, allowing other vehicles besides sedans. I think that's really really a great idea. But that one and the previous one, No. 3, about how old these vehicles must be, I'm really concerned that if we put burdens on taxi drivers right now in this economic depression. . .

In fact, you hear people reporting the unemployment rate, but the unemployment rate isn't the actual rate of unemployment that is accurately reported by the US Government. The actual rate of

unemployment reported by the US Government is the under-employment rate. Currently the national under-employment rate is 16.5 percent, up from 13.5 percent in January. You can do a Google search and find out all about why they report actual unemployment differently.

So I'm really concerned. I don't think you should go ahead with that rule right now until we get out of this depression.

Number 2, about the credit cards. I was at the City Council meeting last night and I heard all the testimony. I listened to every single word all the taxi drivers had to say. I have to say that right now, again, I support the taxi drivers, especially since we have not yet had at the federal level -- they're looking into these credit card problems. I really think this needs to get a longer and a more vigorous discussion, and not adopt it immediately. Which I wouldn't oppose a taxi driver installing it voluntarily. Of course, it would be helpful for me as a person with a disability.

But on the other hand, and that's also going to get to the one before that, I'm going to bring up the issue of seniors and people with disabilities having those little coupons that reduce the fair based on how high the fair is. I don't know how that would work if we're having credit cards.

The second thing back up to No. 1 now, if you're going to increase the fees then these discount coupons are just not going -- unless they are increased significantly.

MR. SCALI: That would be proposed at the same time.

MS. PODGERS: I think it should be included right in there. It should go hand in hand, because right now, it is unaffordable. We don't have transportation.

For example, 51 Inman Street is not accessible. There is no public transportation there. So either I have to walk or I have to call the T, which you have to make an appointment for a day in advance and they call you. It's needless.

People with disabilities and seniors should be able to take a taxi like anyone else but we can't afford it.

So I wanted to bring those issues to your attention. I hope that you pay sincere attention to my calling to your attention the under-employment rate.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MS. PODGERS: Thank you all.

MR. SCALI: We are taking comments on any one of the items. I see Councilor Reeves is here so I'm sure that he'd like to come forward.

Good evening. How are you?

MR. REEVES: Good evening. I haven't been here in a very long time.

MR. SCALI: Nice to see you.

MR. REEVES: Nice to see you and welcome back from vacation.

MR. SCALI: I apologize for missing your meeting last week but I was away.

MR. REEVES: No apology needed. Ms. Lint represented you ably with the officers. It

was a good showing.

MR. SCALI: I'm glad.

MR. REEVES: I wanted to come and comment on particularly the credit card issue, but I want to talk a little about rates at the end.

As you know, Mr. Scali, and Deputy Williams -- they have to get you a better name tag. I have been an elected official now for 20 years. I know I don't look that old. When I came to elected life I was very interested in the City and how it was perceived by others, and the whole issue of tourism in the City. I think of Cambridge as a particular kind of gem, and I wanted to see if we could shine it up and show it off to the best of our ability.

So I came up with the idea that we should have a tourism commission, and a number of my well-meaning colleagues thought, why would we do that? We don't want to have more people come into the City; it would be more congested with buses and things of that nature. I thought that's just one way to look at it. One other way would be to

manage the visiting in a way that is enjoyable for both the tourists and for the residents, and I think we have tried to do that.

That's how I kind of got involved with the taxi issue some 20 years ago, because at that time we had a very active general manager at the Sonesta, Mr. Michael Lee. He was kind of a godsend to the City because he made himself a kind of bridge between the cab drivers and the License Commission, and also there was a kind of belief that he was trying to work on behalf of the greater good.

In the early days, and now we're in the early 1990s, together with some of the drivers, Mr. Gervais has continued, and Bill Cavalier, and others you know, they jointly with the Commission started the Taxi School. To many of them that school has been a very important part of the industry relationship with drivers, et cetera, and so on.

So I, for many of the last ten years, have not had to be involved at all with the taxi

industry, particularly because I thought things were going reasonably well. We're getting different types of cabs, et cetera. But I've had a recent occasion to be able to sit in some meetings with drivers and driver owners. They have a litany of concerns, but tonight I'm only here to speak about two of them.

The first is that there is any real vehement reaction around mandatory requirement of the credit card machine. Some of the arguments that are raised are things like there are convenience stores that don't credit cards, why should we as independent business owners be forced to have credit cards if we simply don't want them? Why don't we just have it be voluntary and then that way who wants it could have it and who doesn't want it could have it. There a whole plethora of reasons that are offered.

After listening to his and some great great discontent about attending taxi meetings and just not being heard, in the opinion of those who are stating it; that they can come and say what

they say but it doesn't get incorporated in any way that is meaningful to them.

Any time citizens come to the City and say that a City body is not hearing them, the Council often will try to be a part of the solution. So I chair the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Training, and Jobs and that subcommittee had a meeting on Thursday, which was an official meeting of the City Council, to hear those who wanted to be heard on the issue of the issues that are before us tonight. There will be a record of that meeting with minutes.

There was a Council order that I submitted for Monday that came in which had to do with the industry. It came in as a lay order, which essentially requested the City Manager to kind of monitor the issue of the credit cards as well as whatever is the lack of a kind of consensus finding feature that may be here.

I think something good happened from the hearing because the Chamber of Commerce was there as well as the Office of Tourism, and there

was some sidebar conversations with members of the industry that may be helpful. I do hope I'll get to speak to Mr. Scali at greater length about what are or not concerns, and whether or not we can be helpful.

I do absolutely feel that if we go to mandatory credit cards, we will have tripped a lever that is unnecessary. And this is a time when the levers that are unnecessary shouldn't be tripped I would say.

So I don't want to take up a whole large large time. Some other industry based arguments from tourism were that when Europeans come here they expect they could just use the card and that's helpful. We understand that. In Boston, they apparently have not got mandatory but they were moving toward it, and apparently a recent court decision about the hybrid cabs and about credit cards seems to have been put on hold. An injunction is what I'm given to understand. So you're in the industry, you would better know. But this is something that just happened late last

week.

MR. SCALI: It was the hybrid issue that's been ordered by the court.

MR. REEVES: I do know Boston has the credit cards. I actually had a meeting to bring in somebody to talk about it. They seemed not to be under the mandatory but many people get this machine for \$39 from given companies. Some companies, fleets of cabs require them because that's what they want to do. These independent drivers really feel that if a fleet wants to do it that's the fleet's business. It can have that part of the business. They're not looking necessarily to do that at this point.

I still wanted to talk about rates. There is also a reaction about retraining pre-1994 drivers. I will let members of the industry tell you more about that but there is a real feeling that the more recent drivers are not trained at all. I don't know how to review that because I don't know all the drivers.

I do know that I have a little

Godchild who sang the National Anthem about two weeks ago on a Sunday at the Red Sox game. She's from Rhode Island and they had Rhode Island Day. So we called a cab and got in the cab and said we want to go to Fenway Park, and the driver said, "Could you help give me directions?"

MR. SCALI: That was a Boston driver.

MR. REEVES: It was a Cambridge driver. I was stunned because who doesn't know how to go to -- so whatever the training is it can't be exhaustive because that was unimaginable. I've got witnesses; I have a car full of people who can tell that this happened.

So I would listen to them and their rationale there. They have a lot of concerns about beefing up and having a real taxi school of a high-quality is something they brought up a lot.

The last thing I'm going to say is what I said to Ms. Lint. I guess I came over right after the Committee, or the day before.

MS. LINT: Right before.

MR. REEVES: I know part of what

you're putting forward tonight is a rate increase, and the drivers haven't missed the coupling of the rate increase and the credit card. It's not a great enough sweetener I guess.

I have an overall concern which I have expressed to the members of the industry that I have talked to. About now, if I call a cab to go to the airport I'm easily \$40-something when I get to the airport, and then if I tip, it's \$50. The problem that has happened is that if I can find a seat on a plane to Baltimore for \$59. Now, if it's going to cost me a hundred both ways on the cab, soon the industry I think is going to hurt because people are going to do something else. They're going to get on the Silver Line, they're going to call a friend, they're going to do something else.

So I mentioned this to the drivers. I want them to get whatever fair increase but someone who's thinking about this overall industry has to focus in some sort of subcommittee on whether rates have become stratospheric. And this is dangerous stuff. If I just wanted to pander to the drivers,

I wouldn't bring this up because they know that it's high and they will say back to me, you know, seven of that goes to this place, and seven -- and I agree, and I sit back.

I used to go to the airport for \$20. Then I went for \$25. Then I went for \$30. I went for \$35. Since I've been at \$40, I really don't like it anymore. It's too much.

So I know you have a lot of issues and I know that there are many personalities involved. I believe maybe we could involve even more personalities and see if we can get on a better foot with respect to the interrelationships and the progress. There are members of the various hospitality industries, hotel, and other good citizens who would be happy to try to help us if help is desired.

I think I will land there. I will be speaking to the City Manager just to get his take on how things are. I do know the Council is interested in this, very much so. I expect probably Councilor Toomey and Councilor Decker

particularly are interested, but I think the mayor and others as well. It's difficult to hear that things aren't as perfect as we want them to be. I know this is not an easy industry to regulate. I do sense that. I don't think I'll go further.

I do have a list though of concerns that have been submitted to me that I will submit to you that I don't think are appropriate to this agenda. But I do think when I come to see you I'll bring it and we can cover it.

I don't know if you have any questions of me. I seem to have taken plenty of time.

MR. SCALI: Commissioners, do you have any questions?

MR. WILLIAMS: No.

MR. TURNER: No questions.

MR. SCALI: My only comment is that I think -- and you may be right about the meter rate issue. In the subcommittee we've talked for many many months about not raising the meter rate because they did not want to price themselves out of the business. When the gas rates were really

really high last year I suggested a surcharge for a gas rate, and they actually voted no. They talked about not doing that. The issue really has to do with they haven't had a meter rate increase since 2006, so we're talking about a three-year period of time where they've not had an increase.

MR. REEVES: I'm not speaking against the one that is proposed but I just know that at some point this can become -- I want the industry to survive and the consumer is in that, so how to come up with a best way is there.

I should also leave you with this one: I did have the occasion two Saturdays ago to go to the Sweet Soul Supper for the Margaret Fuller House; I was the MC and I was running late, 6:00. I could not get a cab company in Boston, Cambridge, or Somerville to answer the phone. I don't understand in 2009 that you can call all the cab companies and get no answer.

Finally, I did get a cell phone that said, "Leave your name and number, and we'll call you back." So if in industry regulation, if you

could visit that anomaly that would be very helpful. I know the drivers understand why I haven't been able to be smart enough to get it through my brain. I just assumed you could call a company on a Saturday evening and get somebody. So thank you for your time.

I do want just to underscore one major point. The drivers with whom I've been speaking really feel that they are businesspeople who understand their industry better than anybody else. So you just can't arrive from Tourism or arrive from any other place and tell them what it is they need to do. They have a very clear idea of what the business is. And from what I could hear, and as many times as I heard it, that is a focal point that could be being revisited, because they really don't feel they have a voting place at the table that represents them. They also believe they'll have some new people who would be more than happy to engage with the taxi committee.

They began to feel, and one particular guy said he was on the committee and he spoke last

night at the Council, he was there but he had no impact so he didn't come back. Everybody else from wherever they were from, they all agreed that what he as an actual driver said just didn't get included. So I'm just the messenger of that.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much Councilor.

Anybody else want to be heard?

Mr. Gervais, good evening.

MR. GERVAIS: Good evening. My name is Michael Gervais and I'm a taxi driver in the City of Cambridge. I'd say a thank you to Councilor Reeves. He's a very tough act to follow. The industry to very happy about the support they have from the Council. The Council has always been helpful.

I have just a few things to say about this proposal. The vintage year of vehicles, I don't know. I really think -- and the SUVs, it was just some time back that a driver proposed putting an SUV on and they said they really didn't want the SUVs as I recall, because they weren't really

friendly to people with disabilities because they would have to climb. I'm not here to educate people that are here but for the most part you would only get disability vans and all that.

The taxicab industry takes, and always has taken a huge majority of people with disabilities, bad legs, everything. For someone with say a bad leg or has trouble climbing in, or an elderly gentleman, it's very difficult to get into some of these SUVs and some of these kinds of vehicles, and get out of them especially in inclement weather. Those are things that have to be considered before going about doing that, and that's something that needs to be discussed.

A lot of discussion was meant towards these things but I think it's a good idea and good ideas are -- in that sense, any idea is a good idea. It needs to be discussed. We need to see if it's pragmatic, rational, and serviceable.

I've been around for a little while. Most of the people in the industry know who I am. I've seen a few commissioners. Mr. Scali has been

there through it all. He's been the war horse there going through and seeing them come and go. I've seen commissioners come and go.

Pre-1994, I have a pretty good idea. Because when we came I had the idea with an old gentleman name Mark Santoro that got me going into doing it so I got all fired up. We ended up getting the taxi school together. Like Councilman Reeves said, another godsend, a good gentleman named Michael Lee thought it was a good idea. The hotels thought it was a great idea. The Chamber of Commerce thought it was a good idea, the taxicabs did, the citizens of Cambridge did, the police did. They all realized that if we all get together, we all work on bringing this school together, it will be better for this world-class City of Cambridge, and we did it.

What happened is the school I believe, in my opinion, diluted -- didn't have a strong emphasis on geography. It was created more on maps, using coupons. The school was shortened a lot.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Gervais, I don't mean to -- if you can stick to the four topics that would be helpful. Only because other people want to talk; that's the only reason why.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you. My comments were leading to about the retraining of pre-1994 drivers. I believe these drivers, if they don't know about customer service by now they've been in the wrong industry. Also, these drivers here are the same ones that have been telling the recent drivers how to get from Harvard Square back down to Fulkerson Street, Checker Cab, because these drivers are lost and can't even find a way around.

Since last year they have a Cambridge Firemen's guide. You know about that, Mr. Turner. That's what they have. So what happens is you get in a cab, you find the house in Cambridge, and then when you go over there into Boston, this is a whole new country to them. They don't know where they're going. The customer is upset and everything else. We have people that are CEOs of companies that have to go to a hospital appointments and things like

that.

I had a driver come up to me just last week, and I told him the Council about it, he came up to me and he said, "I don't know where this address is. I can't understand this. What does this mean?" He had kind of broken English. What it said on there is "I need to get my respirator. I forgot to bring it with me. I'm at the Logan Embassy. I have about 14 minutes and I might have a convulsion."

I got the person in there. I got her over there and stuff like that because she had a special medication she needed to take. As soon as I got there I got the State policeman to make sure she was okay. But these are kinds of situations.

The school, about retraining drivers, I don't really think it's a good idea. The school has been discussed with the School Board for the Cambridge Taxi School instead of talking with the subcommittee in detail about it, which I believe is the proper forum.

Also, the taxi school, again, that's a

different issue so I won't waste time on just talking about the taxi school.

MR. SCALI: Yes, just the issue that are up for discussion.

MR. GERVAIS: When we started to talk about credit cards, one of the issues with the credit card machine in the back seat is the following: When that machine breaks down the driver is out of business. He can't work anymore, et cetera, et cetera.

What we have in Boston that we don't have in New York when the gentleman that the Commissioner invited down, they have 24-hour service. They're state-of-the-art. You go in there, out of there, bang, bang, bang. They have thousands of cabs they deal with. We have a few people and they're not open 24 hours. All of these types of things.

What's important too, is many of the drivers take checks, many of the drivers have accounts, many of the drivers do a lot of things. They take machines and they have their own machines

and things like that. It's the only industry in Cambridge that's trying to be mandated to take a slide credit card. Restaurants in Harvard Square, they're grandfathered, and they don't even have to have a bathroom, basic hygiene, but you want to mandate the way a person exchanges money. It's not a practical use.

And I want to make sure I come out and I say this on record, I like Richard Scali. I think Richard Scali is a great person, he's sensitive. He's a nice person. But what happens is there's one problem. I believe it's the big "but." When we propose these great ideas, we don't know how to fix these ideas. We're going to put this in here, we're going to change this, we're going to fix this, we're going to fix that. It's great, the ideas are great. I think the credit cards could be a possibility, could help the Chamber of Commerce, could help the City of Cambridge. But we have to get ourselves ready to do it so that when it breaks down the driver isn't going to be out of business.

The industry has changed immensely over the past 10 years. What is happening now is we've added two cabs and we had just lost a million dollars from the Harvard Business School. We're in a recession. That was a bad, bad, bad situation even though a lot of people feel it would be all right. Not only did we lose that money but the regular flow of the way things are coming in all the time.

We need to work on instead of a lot of, how can I say it, instead of working on about putting in designer furniture in a house, what we need to do is fix the structure and the basement that's flooding. The structure of the industry right now isn't the best. I think we need to get -- we have problems with fare refusals.

I want to make sure I let you know this too. Officer Arcos and Benny Szeito also know that we're not angels out here; we're not perfect. People do things that are wrong. The industry's got to police itself too. But we need information and to be part of our industry again. That's what

they did a long time ago when they were working on schools and working on things. Get the drivers involved. The drivers know this industry better than anyone else does. Invite the Commerce, invite these people. Let us come to working agreements so we can help each other.

I can quote Mr. Scali when he says, "You know, I don't want to get involved with the industry and the business end." What has happens is when the industry has changed and we have 17 medallions by one guy and he leases them out to one company, and then he co-leases them --

MS. LINT: Way off topic.

MR. GERVAIS: Ms. Lint, if you realize I'm coming forward to make my point about something. If I could be allowed a little --

MR. SCALI: Finish your point.

MR. GERVAIS: What's happened is we have a lot of other problems in the industry as far as overcharging of drivers. Then when it comes to the credit card machines, we have -- I'm concerned about people with disabilities because when we use

these credit card machines, just like that woman had brought up the point. Well, you use a \$2.75 coupon. We currently have a company that charges a \$20 minimum on credit cards. I don't know if you guys were aware of that. Probably not.

So if a person wants to go down to the store for \$5, she's paying \$20 on her credit card, plus her coupon, of course, but that's not fair. It's not right. If we can't police that and if we can't put a regulation in for that, what are we going to do when we have these credit cards.

Also, there's been a problem with the misuse of these credit cards and drivers trying to advocate, get their money back. When someone misuses a credit card they take it back out from your bank within two days. You go to find out all kinds of information and you can't find out personal information from the people; you deal with the bank. This is a long drawn out process. This isn't a big corporation; these are all small businessmen out here.

As far as the meter rates go, the taxi

subcommittee when we were going through some hard times and gas prices were up, many of the drivers suggested that we do a temporary increase, or a surcharge on the meter so we cover the gas charges. We're sensitive to what's going on here as far as prices go. It really wasn't heard. It wasn't heard that much.

I hope that what we're saying here is part of a solution. I know it's funny and all, but we spent a lot of time, the industry has. A lot of gentlemen take time off of work. They don't make any money when they have to come in. They lose money. They've got families. This is serious and I've spent a lot of time. I really hope this is going to be part of a solution and I'm hoping it will be open for a bigger discussion later on. Thank you very much.

MR. SCALI: Thank you Mr. Gervais.
Does anybody else want to be heard?

MR. CABONI: My name is James Caboni.
I have some serious problems with this whole situation. We're going to start with the credit

card situation first of all.

The Chairman has supplied some Chapter 28, Section A or something, some law where if he does implement this credit card nobody can charge any more than what the meter says when the credit card is swiped. Again, when it was brought to his attention at several meetings, by myself, that a company is charging \$20 minimum, and I feel that's against the law -- I'm not a lawyer -- he says he cannot do anything to people's business. They have surcharges. He's not involved in running their business. Now he wants to run my business by telling me I have to take a credit card. I have a problem with that.

As an individual owner, I have a family, I have children. I work 14 hours a day. I don't have time to deal with the banks. I do not want to deal with the banks. Other owners might feel they have the option of taking a credit card; that's up to them. I don't want to take the credit card. I think the majority of the cab drivers feel the same way I do.

I come to all these meetings. I listen to people from the Tourism Board. I listen to other people in the industry that are going to benefit from the credit card speak. When we speak, no one listens.

They say we mud sling, we argue, and this stuff like that there. They got all the words for what they want to say. The only problem is they're trying to run my business. I ain't trying to run their business. I don't tell them what to do. I don't tell anybody in the elderly situation how to run their business. They're trying to run our business. Without our input I feel that we're being mistreated and that's what's happening. Less drivers come to these meetings because they feel they're not heard. We're told at these subcommittee meetings, we're just told straight out that all this is, is conversation. I have the last word. I've heard that several times at the meetings.

As an owner of a cab that owns a business, I don't understand how these people have

voted on these committees. None of it is ever discussed. They have meetings behind closed doors. They have meetings in the school. They're running the school. They want to make changes in the school and never tell nobody.

All of a sudden, here we come. They turn around and send out pages to everybody once a month. They say discussions have been going on for a year. I've been at these meetings. Two people have come in for these credit card things, two, only two people.

One person from the Bank of America sat over here, right over here on the left, two gentlemen sat right over here on the left-hand side. We asked them questions. So unprepared it wasn't even funny. The only problem was, it wasn't their fault. It was the Commissioners fault. He didn't tell them what they needed to do. He promised them another time to come back. They never came back.

The second gentlemen came. He was all prepared. He came driving in from New York with

his car. Put the car out front, showed everybody the meter and stuff. Only could ask him so many questions. Okay, so many questions. He didn't have answers for a lot of the questions. He didn't know what to say. Everybody wanted to go up and look at how their going to swipe the card. Nothing about how they're going to fix it, nothing about if you have to sign a contract, nothing about the price. Well, it could be this, it could be that.

But when you propose to him that eventually everybody is going have a credit card in the City of Cambridge; if Ambassador puts credit cards in, they're going to have their own credit card. They're going to give credit cards to every student in the City. The Commissioner didn't hear. He just -- that was it. That was the only time we saw this gentleman. The next thing you know, here comes the paper. Sounds like it's a done deal. October-something we're going to implement credit cards. We're going to have a vote on it.

If that's the way this is running, there's something wrong, totally wrong. There's no

decisions made like that anywhere else but here. In any other department in this City that would never, never, never take place, only here. Thank you.

MR. SCALI: Did someone else have their hand up before? Okay.

Sir, we're going to talk on the topics that are presented; correct?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Why are you saying that to me?

MR. SCALI: Because I think you came in late so I wanted to make sure you understood that we're talking about the topics that are presented.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Well, I don't see I would warrant that special admonition. I'm well aware of what the topic is.

MR. SCALI: Just tell us your name.

MR. WILLIAMSON: My name is James Williamson.

MR. SCALI: Are you a cab driver?

MR. WILLIAMSON: I am not a cab

driver. I take cabs occasionally. I wish I could afford to take them more often.

My concern about the -- I'm especially concerned about the credit card system issue that I understand is one of the things before the Commission tonight.

There are two pieces to it that are a concern to me. One is, it seems to me that there is a fairness issue to the drivers, which I think has probably already been touched on by some of the other speakers, which is the credit card companies taking five percent of each transaction from the drivers that would otherwise ordinarily be going to the drivers for the fare. That seems to me to be an unfair situation.

If there are going to be technologies that allow people the convenience of using a credit card or a debit card, I think that might well be a good idea, but I don't see why it couldn't be done in a way that didn't result in a five percent transaction fee assessed to the driver. So that's my number one concern.

There have been reports of passengers sometimes tipping more when they're using this but I don't think that is necessarily a very persuasive argument for an across-the-board fee of five percent for every transaction on every driver.

The second aspect of this which is of concern to me as a potential cab user is getting into a cab, and I have had this experience in other cities, where you get in the cab in New York and other places and there's a screen in front of you, and you're getting noise, you're getting advertising, you're getting a lot of unwanted additional stuff that's linked to this new system.

I find that -- I'm used to being able to get into a cab and have a quiet ride if that's what I prefer, and these systems become technological platforms which then commercial interests, the credit card companies and their so-called partners will then try to exploit to the greatest extent possible to generate additional revenue by for example, selling advertising. That begins to be an additional aggravation to the

customer, potentially intensions with the driver, and the License Commission.

MR. SCALI: You are able to turn it though, according to the companies. The passenger is able to turn it off.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Some of them that may be. Again, it's one of those things where do you want to always have to be put in the position of having to turn something off. Maybe people should be given the option of if you really want this, you can choose to turn it on. Then of course, they don't like that.

Those are basically the two issues that I'd like to highlight. I have heard some of the drivers speak about this and met a few of them last night at the City Council meeting, and that's really -- my understanding is that this was a big issue in New York City when there was a cab strike in New York City, which is another thing to be concerned about. cab driver strike was one of the results of the way this was implemented in New York. So I think there are lots of reasons to be

very cautious before allowing such a plan to be implemented.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. WILLIAMSON: I hope that was on topic.

MR. SCALI: Very much. Thank you so much. Anybody else? Good evening.

MR. HERNANDEZ: My name is Nelson Hernandez, cab owner. I used to be on the subcommittee before. There's some topics here that I would like to talk about.

The meter rate increase, obviously I'm for because gas prices have gone up, insurance goes up, repairs go up. I understand that if we can put two vans out there obviously the economy must look like we can afford it but we need money some way or another to survive.

The second topic -- I'll come back to that. Amendment of vehicles five years old; cabs usually last three years regardless of what year you put on there. You can put a 2006, 2007, even a 2009. After three years of potholes, running

around, water, eventually they've got to go. So physically about three years is usually what a car lasts as a cab. In 16 years that I've been driving and changing cars, I've changed about five.

The SUVs, the SUVs are very hard to get in and out. The vans are kind of hard to get in and out, even handicapped ones, because I've had to take people myself that don't want to get into the vans because they can't get up in it.

Station wagons, which are little lower, yes. Those Toyotas and stuff, they can put them on, whatever. We already have the hybrids there but they lose also. Because they go to a hotel, they try to get luggage into those and they're lucky if they get two or three pieces in there. They lose a lot of jobs also.

MR. SCALI: There were some drivers who requested that they be able to have the option to be able to pick an SUV versus a sedan. That was the reason for the change in the rule.

MR. HERNANDEZ: What's considered an SUV? Because there's a whole bunch of different

kind of SUVs. You've got the Ford Escape, which is a hybrid also. That thing is tall. It's good for the -- I wouldn't mind having one because it would be going in and out of snow with no problem. But as an elderly person trying to get up in one it's not going to be easy. So that would mean I would have to get out, put a little step so they can -- which I don't have a problem helping elderly people.

MR. SCALI: So would say on a case-by-case basis it would be -- because right now, it's on a case-by-case basis by individual request. So you're saying keep the rule the same?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Keep the rule the same. Maybe the van, you know, the van is basically used as a wagon. So technically if they really want to put a van on there, they should put a wagon on there which is lower. That's my opinion.

This retraining one of all the drivers, I've got about 16 or 17 years of driving myself. You could look at my record; the officers

see me when I go inspect my vehicle. I have no complaints so why should I go back to school? Plus, it's going to cost me \$25, so where is the revenue going? Is it going back to us cab drivers? Are we going to get a fund or something that we can do a party? We put hybrids out there, we do this, we do that, we give, we give, we give, and I don't see nothing coming back.

MR. SCALI: Actually all that money does go back to the school and does go to--

MR. HERNANDEZ: But the school ain't doing anything right now. Because I'm going to tell you right now, I've got so many cab drivers coming up to me and asking me where to go, and they've got these GPSs. So if they can't work a GPS, they've got some serious problems.

Right now, customers on their phones they can actually do GPS and they know where they're going. I understand that I don't know where I'm going sometimes but it's very rare, especially if I'm in the City of Cambridge. I've given out jobs that I have to -- I dispatch once in

a while for Star Taxi and I get all kind of calls. I say to the diver, I've got to tell him -- I take by the hand and send them there. So that retraining for older drivers, if they haven't learned anything, they're not going to learn anything more. What are you going to really show them?

MR. SCALI: So they should be off the road probably then, if they haven't learned anything.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Like I said, now I am for -- if they got, you know -- you come in three or four times, yeah, you've got to go back to school because obviously you don't know what you're doing. That's a whole different issue. A person that doesn't have any complaints or anything, I don't see the point of that.

And the credit card issue now, I'm not for that. First of all, if I get a meter increase of -- what is it? What's the meter increase?

MR. SCALI: Ten percent.

MR. HERNANDEZ: And I lose six percent

on the credit card, so what do I gain, four percent? Just business sense it doesn't work. We really can't raise too much the meter because then we'll lose business. I'm not for the credit card. If people want to put them in on their own, maybe in the future. Because obviously the hotels, Tourism, Commerce, they all want them. Yeah, because it generates business for everybody maybe around there to be more easy for them but it's not good for us.

MR. SCALI: You don't think you'll get more business that way?

MR. HERNANDEZ: No. We're not going to get no more business. We have ATMs everywhere. We can stop, they can go to the ATM. It's almost the same thing. The only thing is that they don't have to get out. How many ATMs around Central Square from block to block? How many banks?

So it's more of a convenience factor that people can get but those things are making money. They say they're going to give is those for free to put in our cabs. You know how much money

they probably make on the advertising alone? Let's say they have four advertising. Our taxi tops, I think we get \$50 is we're lucky now because there's no advertising going on. We don't get none sometimes.

MR. SCALI: Do you realize that part of the advertisement goes to the driver.

MR. HERNANDEZ: The owner. It goes to the owner, it doesn't go to the driver, and it's very little. I don't need the little petty cash that they're going to give me for it for what they're making for it. They're going to tell me, oh, you have \$50. They got four different advertisements; they're getting like \$600 or \$700 for each one, so that's \$2,400. What's it's costing them? Nothing, so we're the losers. We're giving out, we're giving them, and we're not getting anything back. Basically that's it.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. HERNANDEZ: And I also commend the police for doing a good job.

MR. SCALI: Anybody else?

Good evening. Tell us who you are, please.

MS. MENAUGIS: I'm Kristin Menaugis, I'm with the Cambridge Office for Tourism. I'm going to speak on behalf of our office. I'm just going to read a little statement.

MR. SCALI: Sure.

MS. MENAUGIS: I'll just start by saying I've been attending the taxi subcommittee meetings since last July, so I have been a part of these discussions. And the Cambridge Office for Tourism supports each of the proposals that are being heard today. Then I'm just going to speak a little bit specifically regarding the credit card issue, and just give you sort of our perspective and why we support this from the tourism angle.

"We do feel that this would be a great service for all cab riders including tourists. Many people now use credit or debit cards for most of their purchases; they don't carry much cash, and they expect to be able to use credit or debit cards in more and more places." Now you can use them to

buy coffee and newspapers, and they expect that.

"Our office frequently hears from visitors who have questions about whether or not cabs accept credit cards, and they want to know how to find a cab that does accept them. Unfortunately we don't always have a great answer for how to know which cabs to approach on the street for that purpose.

We appreciate that some Cambridge cabs are already accepting credit cards but it is confusing for visitors that some do and some don't. They don't always realize that this is the case and they don't know how to determine which cabs will accept them. Our office really thinks that it's important for there to be consistency among all Cambridge cabs.

We think that Cambridge is a world-class city and that what we have to offer with our universities, our cultural venues, and our restaurants is certainly on par with cities like Boston and New York. We work really hard to attract visitors from all over the country and all

over the world, but we think that in order to be a world-class city we definitely need to provide world-class service in every industry.

With many other major cities implementing similar regulations for cabs, we think that Cambridge needs to keep up and provide cab service that is equal to or better than those other cities. We think that in order to do so all of our cabs should accept credit cards.

If the commission decides not to require all cabs to take credit cards, then we'd really like to see a better system that will identify which cabs do and don't take the cards. Maybe some sort of large obvious sticker on the window that could say, 'This cab only accepts cash for payment.' This way no one would end up stuck in a non-credit card cab with no cash."

I guess just to close I'd like to say that we are all connected in this. These proposed regulations affect the drivers directly, but they do affect us also indirectly through the tourists. We'd really like to find solutions that work for

all of us and we'd certainly be open to more discussion, because we know that implementing a system like this would bring up a lot of issues. Maybe there are a few more things that need to be ironed out, but we would like to find something that works for everyone.

That's it. Any questions?

MR. SCALI: Yes. Is it a membership that you have, or is it just that you're a department that represents tourism in the City? So there are people who call you for tourism information?

MS. MENAUGIS: Yes, right.

MR. SCALI: So this could be from all over the world?

MS. MENAUGIS: Right, exactly. And we're not a membership organization. We don't have any economic interest in -- you know, we don't have banks or any sort of institutions like that asking us to say this in their behalf. We're really speaking for the tourist. Our Board of Directors is made up of other officials from tourism related

businesses, a lot of restaurants and hotels in the area, and we're all in support of this.

MR. SCALI: And they vote on the information for you to present?

MS. MENAUGIS: Yes.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. GERVAIS: Could I ask her a question?

MR. SCALI: Not right now. We're taking comments from everybody right here.

Anybody else have their hand up? Sir, tell us your name.

MR. JOSELIN: My name is Jean Joselin. I been driving in Cambridge since 1978 so I don't think I need to be retrained. I know the City like the back of my hand.

MR. SCALI: Do you know all the new rules and regulations?

MR. JOSELIN: Yes. And I don't think it's much as long as you respect people, you do what you have to do, you know. So I think if you have been driving even for over a year or two, if

you don't know what you're doing by then, you don't deserve to be where you are.

Myself, I am not for a credit card installed in my cab because this looks like unfair to us. This look like they treat us like a baby. Do this, do that, do this. This is not that kind of business. My business, I bought the cab. I bought the cab, I paid for the cab. I pay for it the bank. My insurance is so high and everything, and I can't even -- sometime I want to get away of this business. I'm fed up. But I ain't going. I can't afford to pay any extra to any -- for the millionaires already there.

First of all, I take credit cards.

MR. SCALI: You do take them?

MR. JOSELIN: I do credit card in the machine and swipe in. So 75 percent of people now take credit card. You get Ambassador. If some people request when they have credit card, they request them. Many many other companies. You know, 75 percent of people taking credit card now.

So why we have to go to all this

trouble to install a machine which is going to interfere with my meter. That's how I make my living. If the machine breaks down on a weekend, on a Friday, whatever, nowhere to go to get it fixed so I'm losing money. How can I pay my bills? Who going to pay me for loss of wages?

MR. SCALI: Do you deal with a particular bank then on your own?

MR. JOSELIN: No, no, no. The guy I deal with at my company, I just give it to them.

MR. SCALI: Ambassador Brattle.

MR. JOSELIN: No. no, Icham.

MR. SCALI: You do it through Icham.

MR. JOSELIN: And if you're Ambassador Brattle, he's more than willing to take it. He's not going to give ourselves so much trouble to install. What interest? I don't think we get a better thing to really discuss about it. We're losing money.

Let me tell you something, I've been out for 4:00 in the morning, same thing happened yesterday. I don't have \$150 yet in my pocket. Is

that a business? And now you get the insurance \$7,000 a year, everything else. Try to figure out some other thing for us more profitable. Thank you.

MR. SCALI: A question for you: Does Icham process the credit cards for you? Does he charge you for that?

MR. JOSELIN: If I get the credit card today, I call him, "Okay, I need the money." He says, "Come on over."

MR. SCALI: Does he charge you a fee to do that?

MR. JOSELIN: Sometimes he's not charging me anything because I'm in his company. You know, forget about it. Even though he try, it's not a problem. My problem is this is just to install the machine in the cab, and you don't have no access with it. It's something in your back; you don't know what's going on. Anybody can swipe your card. You open the door and he's gone. You losing money. I need my money right away to take care of my business.

MR. SCALI: So Icham gives you your money right away?

MR. JOSELIN: Sure.

MR. SCALI: That day?

MR. JOSELIN: You don't believe that?

MR. SCALI: I don't know. I'm asking you.

MR. JOSELIN: Yes, the same day. Even Ambassador. I remember Joe when I used to be with him, you know, he forget a voucher. You go right away you get your voucher. How can I deal with the bank?

MR. SCALI: Doesn't he charge you 10 percent for vouchers and credit cards?

MR. JOSELIN: He does.

MR. SCALI: That's my question. Because part of this regulation is that they would no longer be able to do that. They would no longer be able to charge you the 10 percent. That would be illegal for them to do that.

MR. JOSELIN: What about the bank?

MR. SCALI: It certainly would limit

the amount by the regulation that they could charge you.

MR. JOSELIN: This is the whole thing. I'd rather deal with the devil I know than with the devil I don't know.

MS. LINT: Excuse me. If you're talking in the back, the stenographer can't record what this person is saying.

MR. JOSELIN: I rather dealing with the devil I know than the devil I don't know.

MR. SCALI: So you don't mind paying 10 percent to Icham?

MR. JOSELIN: I'd rather pay him that then I don't see the bank. I don't ever have no time. Sometime I have some business to take care of, you know. I have to go home, and I have to stay on the phone a half-hour. Finally I hang the phone and you have to go back again. The same thing if I have to deal with the bank. I go by minutes, you know what I mean? So I have no time to deal with the bank. I come here, I like person-to-person.

MR. SCALI: So you don't mind paying 10 percent for a processing of a credit card to someone else?

MR. JOSELIN: I'd rather pay them and I dealing with them. Any problem they're in front me. The bank, you know, I don't see the bank. I'd rather give them my percentage than the bank.

MR. SCALI: I have a number of drivers who call every day complaining that Ambassador Brattle charges them 10 percent to process a credit card. That's how this began.

MR. JOSELIN: My problem is this is a machine. Why not be in front of you?

MR. SCALI: We'll, that's possible.

MR. JOSELIN: I just don't want anybody to dictate me what to do. Because if I don't pay the bank a month or two, they'll take my medallion away. That's why I work around the clock 24 hours.

MR. SCALI: I just want to make sure you understand that part of this regulation would be that Ambassador Brattle, Icham, whoever else,

would not be able to charge you 10 percent any more because it would say that this is the charge. The maximum charge would be five or six percent. So to me that means you're making more money and Ambassador Brattle is making less money and Icham is making less money on those credit cards. I want to make sure you understand that. That's part of the proposal.

MR. JOSELIN: I'm against the car because it's not like --

MR. SCALI: I understand what you're saying.

MR. JOSELIN: It's like take my freedom away, tell me what to do. Dictate what I to do, you know what I mean? As long I do my thing right, it's all that matters.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. JOSELIN: I'll take care of it.
Thank you.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Blemur. Tell us your name for the record so the stenographer has your name.

MR. BLEMUR: Good evening. My name is Jacques Blemur.

Like I speak yesterday, I spoke yesterday about it. First of all, for the retraining of the drivers, I'm going to challenge every single one on the License Commission -- I've been doing that for 27 years -- to teach me better how to do this stuff. That's one thing.

The second part is for a driver to be retrained that driver has to do something wrong.

MR. SCALI: Why does he have to do something wrong?

MR. BLEMUR: The driver has to do something wrong. For example, I get my State license and for some reason I'm losing that, so if I'm to get that license back there's a new requirement I have to go through in order to get the license back. But if I maintain my license there's reason to take an exam whatsoever. All of a sudden every professional, you might have to go to a seminar. They don't ask you to go back to school to get your license once it has been given

to you. Besides that, and I would like to see everything from that school. Like I said, I want you to put my name on it.

MR. SCALI: I want you to teach. I told you that.

MR. BLEMUR: Yes. I want that too.

MR. SCALI: We want to sign you up.

MR. BLEMUR: For the record, I want my name to be on that.

MR. SCALI: I welcome you.

MR. BLEMUR: Let's make it clear for every single one of us who is here, we are small business. Small business mean we live on day by day. Every cab has two drivers. Usually the shifts starts from 4:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. As I'm getting older, I cannot driver 12 hours anymore. I'm getting older.

MR. SCALI: It's a long day.

MR. BLEMUR: So you think about it, sometimes probably have four jobs, five jobs for the whole day. Now you're telling me the drivers before we switched the shift has to fill the cab

for you to start. The gas, has to fill the cab. You get it full, you give it back full.

MR. SCALI: That's not one of our rules.

MR. BLEMUR: I know. I'm just explaining that we're small business. I guess people behind me they are in a hurry and I try to explain clear for everybody. so excuse my language. This is my third one.

MR. SCALI: You speak very well.

MR. BLEMUR: The point is we live in what we do. We're on the street every day. This is what we live under.

I did credit card and I'll always do credit card. It would like to do it in my choosing, but I will not want to be forced to do credit card. If I'm not mistaken, every single one behind me said the same thing. We don't want to be forced.

MR. SCALI: Do you have your own account with a bank?

MR. BLEMUR: No, I don't.

MR. SCALI: You do it through Icham or Ambassador Brattle.

MR. BLEMUR: Brattle Cab.

MR. SCALI: So you pay Joe Silva 10 percent.

MR. BLEMUR: That's what I'm saying. I resent that fact to pay the 10 percent.

MR. SCALI: So that part bothers you?

MR. BLEMUR: Of course it bothers me. And I'm not the only one. It bothers us, even if we have to deal with the bank.

I understand that -- the lady who just spoke about tourism, I understand that. If she has a good job, I wouldn't get it. Then we send a limo to get that. If you have a job going to Rhode Island, I will not get it because I only get it from the credit card. Every single one of us will be glad to have that kind of job. I'm talking about a guy who just got in the cab who is going two blocks who wants to swipe the card. This is what I'm talking about. If we get 10 swipes, how am I going to gas up the cab to give to the next

driver at night? This is what I'm talking about because we living day by day.

We're not a big store, a big corner store, people come in and then -- I mean, you go to Burger King, anything like that. It's a small business.

MR. SCALI: But when you're part of Ambassador Brattle you're required to take credit cards; right?

MR. BLEMUR: No. I'm not required. They no make, no, no.

MR. SCALI: They do require you to take credit cards?

MR. BLEMUR: No.

MR. SCALI: Ambassador Brattle doesn't require you to take a credit card?

MR. BLEMUR: No, no. They said that; I said no. Like I said, since I have to pay -- because it's about 480 a week. He's the most expensive one. So when I get a voucher or a credit card, so I do it so I can pay my dues every week. You get my point? So that's the reason why I do

it. If I get like \$90, that's enough for the week because I know I'll get the money.

MR. SCALI: So you don't mind paying him 10 percent?

MR. BLEMUR: No. It's not because I don't mind. Like I told you, I do mind.

MR. SCALI: You wouldn't rather deal with your own processing and pay less than 10 percent?

MR. BLEMUR: One thing you have to understand, it's not like paying Brattle 10 percent or getting the bank taking two percent. One thing you have to understand, if I'm not mistaken any time you deal with the bank, today, they charge you 2.5. The next step is like 2.7. The next step before two, three months will be 3.1. And then there's nothing you can do about it because it's a corporation, so before you can get to Mr. X to take care of you believe it or not, you're going to spend 24 hours on the phone number. Once they hang up on you, you cannot face the real people to straighten the account out. You know what I'm

talking about.

They start it low. First of all, they want to get their feet in and then the rest is history. You know that. So we don't have to get to that trap.

Beside that a flat tire cost us \$15 to take a nail from a tire. It's an industry where you have to deal with cash. To get a tow truck is \$55 if it's in Cambridge. Beside Cambridge is \$125. Everyone behind me knows what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the daily expenses which we live day by day. We don't have a big, big, big business. It's a small business.

So to tell me in other words to get a raise when gas prices start to go up now as you can see. Insurance goes up then it has to switch the credit card. Why does the License Commissioner has to show (inaudible) when for a fact it's for (inaudible). So you're telling me now you invite me to dinner. I'm not going to say no, I'm going to go to the corner store and buy myself some pizza.

This is what we're discussing about like. The business that it is so good, you been showing to us is so good for us, it's just that we don't know what to do with money. We don't want money. I don't know but that's the way I view it.

You have to take into consideration we are small business; we a living day by day business.

MR. SCALI: But you're also a service oriented business, so don't you want to provide other services to your customers?

MR. BLEMUR: Of course I do services, of course I have to know that. Better things you can do (inaudible). We're dealing each other and that's how it is. One hand wipe the other hand.

I want the panel which is listened to me and was recorded, which is good, since I was being recorded last night again. I mean, take what has been said tonight and then we don't want to see (inaudible) for that small 10 percent which isn't going to be given to us.

MR. SCALI: My feeling is that if this

doesn't go through, the credit card issue doesn't go through then I guess people who are calling and complaining about being charged 10 percent by Ambassador Brattle should no longer be called and complaining about that.

MR. BLEMUR: There something else going on too. People believe that's a done deal to get stuck of meters and credit card together.

One other thing again, let's face it, it's already happened to Boston cab. Someone swipe the card, he doesn't have money on the card. When he gets to the door he cut the wire and that's it. So the meter just went blank.

So you're telling me like the gentleman just said behind me, the previous speaker, something happened to him on Friday night. My driver called me and said, "Jacques, I can't work." So I am not going to get paid on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, after we don't know. I don't know who I'm going to talk to. Can I afford that? And at the end of the month, I have the insurance to pay, I have the mortgage on the medallion to

pay.

MR. SCALI: How do you feel about the meter rate increase?

MR. BLEMUR: It's just 10 percent. I mean, it's going to take it by itself, that's what I'm saying so it's the same thing. We don't ask for much. All we want you to see we try to make a living. Because when my kids call me and say, "Dad, I want a pizza." I don't have money today, I don't want to buy a pizza.

MR. SCALI: You don't feel we'll price you out of the market by adding 10 percent onto the meter fare? You don't feel you'll be too expensive then?

MR. BLEMUR: We take it reasonable. We already discussed that. You know that. I'm here almost every meeting and we discussed that. We don't have 25, 30 because if we be squeezed, all of us been squeezed. We understand that; that's the way it is. But by the same token, please, I'm begging you not to attach that meter to the credit card portion. From what I heard there are a lot of

people, there is a bus coming up behind that credit card. Thank you very much.

MR. SCALI: Sir? Mr. Canau-Georges?
How are you?

MR. GEORGES: My name is Canau-Georges. I'm a cab driver in the City of Cambridge.

MR. SCALI: A van driver.

MR. GEORGES: A handicap van driver. I been driving the handicap van since 1999 until now and I'm enjoy to do it. And I will continue to do it.

I would like to talk about two subjects. The first one is about the retraining drivers. I do believe retraining the old driver is not going to resolve any problem if there was a problem with them. What I can understand is a bad driver, no matter if you retrain 1,000 times, a bad driver will be always a bad driver. That's why we deal with the police official. They're there to take care of them when they do something wrong.

Show on the record also to see how

many companies you do have coming to the Hackney office to see which one involved with drivers. Is it the old driver or the drivers after 1994?

For the credit card issue, I think for the beginning it should be optional. Because I'm against it to install it in my car. At the same time, I love to do credit cards.

MR. SCALI: Do you take them now?

MR. GEORGES: I do. I have my machine. I use my own bank, and I've been doing it for almost a year.

MR. SCALI: Which bank do you use?
Can I ask?

MR. GEORGES: McIntyre. I have my machine and there's no problem with that. I enjoy to doing it.

MR. SCALI: Do you feel that the fees are too high? Do they charge you a particular fee on that?

MR. GEORGES: I pay \$10 a month for the wireless service and the American Express charge me 3.5 for every transaction, and the Visa,

Discover, and MasterCard charge me 2.5.

MR. SCALI: So you do get 2.5?

MR. GEORGES: I do have 2.5. At the same time, I don't want to install any machine behind my back. I like to stay independent of any other bank.

Like Ambassador, I'm so surprised nobody in Ambassador Cab Company represent that company. At least somebody should be here tonight because they the one who first come in with the credit card system in Cambridge. So somebody should be here to talk about it tonight. It's a big meeting. They do charge 10 percent. I'm not with Ambassador now, but I've been with them for more than seven years. I never complained because it was my choice to be with them. I cannot teach them how to do their business.

MR. SCALI: Who are you with now?

MR. GEORGES: I'm UTS.

MR. SCALI: Do you process your own credit cards through UTS or just through you?

MR. GEORGES: This is my own account.

Whatever the transaction I do goes straight to my account.

The problem I have sometimes is some customers using the credit cards, when they receive their statement they claim they forgot if they took a taxi. They forget if they took a taxi anywhere in Massachusetts. So they take the money back from my account and reimburse that customer. So I have to go back to look for the receipt that the passenger signed. I have to fax it to my bank and inform them to collect the money back from whatever it is. But that's only the problems.

MR. SCALI: How often does that happen?

MR. GEORGES: Only two times since eight months. And then sometimes they lost their receipt they do sign because the machine give me two to print out; one for me and one for the passenger. Then when they lost it they forgot even at the taxi. Then sometimes they have it. They want to make sure -- they don't want to pay anything for any other reason. Because my address,

my phone number, all my details on that receipt.

MR. SCALI: They probably didn't remember who you were when they see the name on it.

MR. GEORGES: Right. They can call me on my cell phone. They say, "Who you are?" I say, "Three Sisters." They say, "Who's Three Sisters?" I say, "No, this is a cab company." "Oh, I'm sorry. I'm all set." Just to remind them they did take a cab in Cambridge.

I think for the beginning it should be optional and then by the future if anybody likes to get involved with it -- because if somebody ask me do you like it, how much money? Sometimes people in front of me don't take credit cards. Going to Logan Airport, I'm next to go. I wave my hand, I get good ride.

MR. SCALI: Because you take the credit card?

MR. GEORGES: Yes. That's why it should be optional because somebody like it, somebody doesn't. If you start it this way, put it optional, believe me in the next few years who

knows, maybe all of Cambridge would like to do it. But when you said you want to install it in all the cab, the drivers and the owner thinks like the City just wants to push them out.

MR. SCALI: I guess I want to make sure you understand because this didn't come out of thin air. San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Washington, D.C. all have this system that we talked about.

MR. GEORGES: I understand. There's a point very important about that. The City of Cambridge is a very small city. We cannot keep follow all the cities what Boston do, and we cannot -- Boston and South Boston is Boston; Dorchester, Mattapan, Roxbury, Brighton, Allston. We only have Cambridge.

MR. SCALI: So we're not as big as Washington, D.C. or New York City.

MR. GEORGES: If example, if you been waiting for two hours in the cab stand, somebody going to Central Square with a credit card, then he swipe it. It give you five bucks to go to Central

Square. Like you miss your spot. You're going to drive around to see if you can get any open spot to put yourself in. You don't know how many hours, you don't know how many minutes you going to be on that cab stand. In Boston, if that happen, you can just keep driving around and somebody flag you because they're all over the place in Boston.

MR. SCALI: So this is too large of a vision for a small city; is that what you're saying?

MR. GEORGES: Too, too small.

MR. SCALI: We're world-class but not that world-class.

MR. GERVAIS: Just a little bit. Keep everybody happy, leave it optional. Then believe me, people are going to grab hand and everybody live happy. Thank you so much.

MR. SCALI: Thank you Mr. Georges. Anybody else? Mr. Laramee, one of the founding members of the school.

MR. LARAMEE: Thank you everybody I've heard. This is Mr. Laramee.

MR. SCALI: Eugene.

MR. LARAMEE: Eugene Laramee.

MR. SCALI: What do you want us to know?

MR. LARAMEE: I like you to know how strong I am feeling about this credit card machine matter. I have something to say and I'd like to stand up and say it.

MR. SCALI: What's the point of standing up? Can I ask?

MR. LARAMEE: It's a big one.

MR. SCALI: A big speech.

MR. LARAMEE: You're going to like it. I'm going to quote somebody.

MR. SCALI: All right.

MR. LARAMEE: Like President Reagan has said to Mr. Gorbachev: Mr. Chairman, Police Commission, Mr. Robert Haas --

MR. SCALI: That's Deputy Chief Williams but he's here representing him.

MR. LARAMEE: So Daniel Turner and everyone else here around the table, can you please

forget about this whole thing about mandating the credit card machine, this particular credit card machine in these taxis. I order you to do that in the name of President Reagan.

MR. SCALI: I didn't know you had that much power, but that's okay. I didn't know you could bring President Reagan back to us.

MR. LARAMEE: How do you feel about the credit card machine?

MR. SCALI: You tell me. That's what you're here for.

MR. LARAMEE: I'd like to know how you feel.

MR. SCALI: That's what you're here for.

MR. LARAMEE: You haven't tell everybody how you feel yet, but that's okay.

This credit card machine, I think you have heard everybody talk about it, and I think they have been consistent on what they have been saying. I am pretty sure you understand what they're saying and you take everything into

consideration, not just consideration, with a bold mark you did that.

MR. SCALI: It's a balancing act, you know, between the business, the community, the residents. We have to balance the needs of the community and the consideration of the drivers and the owners and everybody else in the City as well. So it's not just one entity, we balance everyone's need.

MR. LARAMEE: It is true and I like that.

So when we try to come up with an idea like this, we try to go out and bring any other city and plant it here in the City of Cambridge. Sometimes I ask myself, what happened to the body of the hackney of the License Commission? To see that the credit machine like this can be put through just like that in these taxis.

It is true that we have the commerce industry and we also have the tourist industry that really would like to see that happen very easy. It's like their pleasure not to receive these

calls. That could be a fine thing for them to do, not to receive these calls.

At the same talking, it is good for them when they know there are people coming like that they can see the problem. These taxi companies as everybody else have said before, we are living on a day by day basis. When we have to receive this money 24 hours later, or 48.

MR. SCALI: It's 24. Well, I was told 24.

MR. LARAMEE: It's not right. And beside that, this doesn't come with any explanation. It just said that it's going to be good for the taxi driver and as well for the people who are riding in the cabs. We don't see where it fits. I'm talking about this credit card machine. I'm not talking about credit card, I'm talking about this credit card machine.

MR. SCALI: That particular design?

MR. LARAMEE: Yeah, this credit card machine.

MR. SCALI: So do you think credit

cards a good in some format?

MR. LARAMEE: Credit card is good, even though I don't have a machine myself. I never get interested in that. Who knows, maybe in the future.

MR. SCALI: So you think a better system, a different system would be better?

MR. LARAMEE: Maybe a different system would be better like the system that has been in use, could be better. This system, the way this has been presented is no good at all. No good in the way that it is simply this system that the cab company or the taxis have to use.

MR. SCALI: What if the idea was that we gave the option to the driver or to pick the system that they want to?

MR. LARAMEE: It is same that as long as it's the same design, you know.

MR. SCALI: What I'm saying is right now, the proposals is for a certain kind of design, but if we didn't do that but we changed it to something else that said you pick the system you

want, would that be something more favorable?

MR. LARAMEE: What would something else do?

MR. SCALI: You're saying that there are other systems that might be better or may be more --

MR. LARAMEE: Well, we have this system here. Some people come here that say they already have those system.

You are saying to me if I understand you well, like you can drop this particular machine and go about another one?

MR. SCALI: We can do anything we want. We can amend it, we can drop it, we can not consider it. We can let you pick it. I'm asking you what your opinion is. Do you think if we said okay, you as an owner or a driver, you pick the system you want as long as you take the credit card.

MR. LARAMEE: Are you saying anything you want?

MR. SCALI: As long as you take the

credit card, you pick the system you want.

MR. LARAMEE: It cannot work like this. I don't agree with that, not at all.

MR. SCALI: I'm just asking you.

MR. LARAMEE: When you say you can do anything you want --

MR. SCALI: I'm talking about the system. We talked about the machine.

MR. LARAMEE: You're talking about the credit card to be in the car, in the taxi.

MR. SCALI: Yes.

MR. LARAMEE: What we are saying is that we don't want the credit card to be mandatory. That's what we're saying.

MR. SCALI: I was asking you whether it was the machine or whether it was the idea of a credit card altogether.

MR. LARAMEE: What about you can do anything you want? That's all I have.

MR. SCALI: I get what you're saying.

MR. LARAMEE: When we said here there is 10 percent increase in the meter, or 12 percent,

no. I don't know who did the statistic. It's wrong.

MR. SCALI: That's to high?

MR. LARAMEE: It's not right the way it is being portrayed. This 10 percent you say goes only on the first mile. It doesn't go on the fares, it goes on the first mile, if you read that well. I don't like it to be said like that at all. You can say you have added \$.55 for the first mile on the meter. That would be well put, as long as it's not like this. That's not right. Plus, it didn't have to be attached to the credit card machine.

MR. SCALI: I get that point.

MR. LARAMEE: Okay, thank you.

On the other hand, I don't want to speak about the school since I'm part of it right now. I don't have to go through that now.

MR. SCALI: Are you talking about --

MR. LARAMEE: I don't have to go through that.

MR. SCALI: It's not on the agenda. I

don't want to get diverted here.

MR. LARAMEE: About the cars that need to be on for taxi. I'm not sure -- I'm not sure I understand very well. Are you saying any car that is older than six years old should not be in?

MR. SCALI: Our rule right now is that no car older than seven years old can be on the road. Boston's rule is no car that's older than three years old can be on the road. Our proposal is to make our rules say that no car that's older than five years old can be on the road.

MR. LARAMEE: You mean for example, I am coming with a new car. I'm replacing the car that I have right now. I have to replace it. I am coming with another car. It cannot be --

MR. SCALI: More than five years old.

MR. LARAMEE: That's fine. I have no problem with that. You remember we went through that before?

MR. SCALI: Right.

MR. LARAMEE: That's okay. And I have to say thank you.

MR. SCALI: Thank you.

MR. LARAMEE: And also remember,
again, President Reagan.

MR. SCALI: I'm looking for him. He
must be here in spirit.

Thank you Mr. Laramee.

Anyone else? Ms. Jillson.

MS. JILLSON: Good evening.

MR. SACLI: good evening. Patiently
waiting in the back I see.

MS. JILLSON: Oh, I wanted to listen.
I learned a lot.

Good evening, my name is Denise
Jillson. I'm the Executive Director for the
Harvard Square Business Association. This was
really very interesting and I love the thoughtful
comments. I have a question. If a cab takes a
credit card, does that prevent them from taking
cash?

MR. SCALI: No, of course not. Cash
is always good.

MS. JILLSON: Cash is still king?

MR. SCALI: Of course.

MS. JILLSON: It seems to me that we are -- one, this is a regulated industry, a highly regulated industry, and this is one more regulation that you're asking people to comply with. The fact that they could continue to take cash if a credit card machine broke down means that they can continue to stay in business throughout the weekend until they had the opportunity to get to Monday to have the machine repaired.

MR. GERVAIS: No, you can't. With this new slide machine when that breaks down the meter doesn't work anymore.

MR. SCALI: She can't get you from back there. Any explanation you're giving isn't going to come clear.

If we do vote to put the machine in the back, the machine in the back has a screen where you punch in whether you're taking cash or credit, and it's connected to the meter in some way. So what they're saying is that machine then would somehow prevent the meter from working. So

therefore, they would have to settle up with the customer that they're with and go off the road, go find a repair very soon thereafter.

MS. JILLSON: Are there other machines that are available that are not hooked up to the meter?

MR. SCALI: There are, yes.

MS. JILLSON: I would certainly want the Commission to take that into consideration because it seems to me that this is a valid complaint and a very real concern; that if it broke on a weekend and you couldn't get it repaired that does put them out of business, and that should certainly be taken into account.

I think the problem that we have, particularly what we see in Harvard Square is that visitors come from all over the world. We receive about eight million visitors through the Square every year, and more and more people are just using a debit card or a credit card. It seems inevitable that sooner or later this is going to have to happen because fewer and fewer people are using

cash.

So the question I have is, is there a way to implement this over time as certain renewals come up; that maybe as those renewals come up that the compliance is that as that renewal comes up, you need to get the new machine? Based on some of the testimony here this evening, one gentleman said that up to 75 percent of his customers are looking to have a credit card transaction. I think that that's a very real number and I think that it's something that we need to really think about moving forward. This is a service industry. This is a consumer driven industry and the consumer in king all the time.

So it's always about options, and there seems to be a great deal of resistance, and I can certainly appreciate as they go forward that there are going to be real changes in the way that people have to do business. I think it's inevitable, but maybe the possibility of transitioning in as renewals come in, as people have new cars. You talked about after five years

the cars have to be off the road and a new car needs to be purchased.

I think there is a way to do it that will be less painful for the drivers but that we always have to consider who's taking these cabs and how we can service them. Thank you very much.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much Ms. Jillson.

Any questions, Commissioners?

MR. WILLIAMS: No.

MR. TURNER: No.

MR. SCALI: Anybody else? No hands.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I ask a question?

MR. SCALI: You already spoke. We can't get you from back there. Let this gentleman behind you speak first because he hasn't spoken yet.

MR. SHIRZAY: Good evening, Commissioner.

MR. SCALI: Good evening. Tell us your name.

MR. SHIRZAY: My first name is Dave.
I driving in Cambridge cab.

MR. SCALI: What is your last name?

MR. SHIRZAY: Shirzay, S-H-I-R-Z-A-Y.

MR. SCALI: Are you an owner?

MR. SHIRZAY: No, sir. I lease a
medallion.

Regarding about the credit card, I
would like to bring one issue what personally
happened to me twice, and actually I driving
Ambassador. The gentleman was just in here regard
the airport, I picked him up. Like everybody was
mention, credit card. I picked him up, no big
deal. Once I got the airport, he handed me a
credit card, swiped it, put everything, declined.
And it's a credit card, it's declined. The guy was
good just make his flight. He say I have to go,
hurry up, and he's try to forcing me. I said, sir,
it declining. What should we do?

Believe me or not, two times I was pay
from my own pocket, \$5.25 from the toll, plus I
gave the gentleman a ride to the airport and I

coming. I just want to bring this issue to you Commissioner, before they make mandatory. If it's optional, even I lose this spot, I pick up he or she, I take them to the ATM. I'm more than happy to put the time off my meter until he will get cash. If on the camera is being credit card is declined, I have much more option. I'm sorry, I'd love to take you there but you give me some kind of money because I have to pay my bills or pay lease, radio.

MR. SCALI: Did he tell you he wanted to give you a credit card before he got into the car?

MR. SHIRZAY: Yes, sir. And like I say, I was taking with my own charge. But again, mandatory and optional is a big difference. Right now, if I had like that situation and it was mandatory, I pickup every customer and the credit card is declining there, I couldn't do anything.

MR. SCALI: Do you use the option of swiping first to see if the credit card is good. There are some companies that allow you to see if

it first.

MR. SHIRZAY: I know, it says "preauthorization," but sometimes it doesn't work. A lot of people does not.

Like I say, if I can take him to the ATM, he or she can take out the ATM, or debit card, credit card, swipe there. She have no money it's all right. It's no big deal to take them there. But if she don't have money or anything, at least I'm not paying \$5.25, plus all the way to ride, and I'm in the middle of something.

I was just asking another thing, I'm begging, especially now these days, we don't have any business. Friday, Saturday night, Paradise, in front of Middle East, or Central Square, any part, Brookline cab, Somerville, Boston, they're picking up in front of us. I personally, if I going to go to him I going to disturbing on the peace, believe it or not, the police officer first thing, they're going to come and arrest me because I disturbing the peace.

If I going across the bridge, believe

it or not, I personally have experience, like I'm coming out from United States freedom and definitely in a different world than anybody can track me down because they're waiting there. The patrol officer there, not just in the hackney, the patrol officer, the biker, anybody. Even on the Fenway game or the TD North Garden game, people is flooding for customers. I dare to myself to pick up anybody.

MR. SCALI: They're telling me you were getting a little off track.

MR. SHIRZAY: I'm sorry.

MR. SCALI: Just so you know, the officers are well aware of -- this is going to be off the topic too, but I want make sure I clarify it -- of out-of-town cabs picking up, and Officer Szeito and Officer Arcos are out there particularly now on Friday and Saturday evenings. I just happen to have the number here. They caught 37 Boston and Brookline taxis picking up over the past month. We're well aware that you're right about that.

MR. SHIRZAY: Thank you. Officer

Benny and Officer -- I know they're doing an excellent job. I know Mr. Benny, they always -- I come into him and they listen to us. They do a great job, no question on that. Thank you very much.

MR. SCALI: Does anybody else want to be heard? Still a lot of hands. A last comment Mr. Blemur. You have to come up only because this lady hear can't get your wonderful voice on tape.

MR. BLEMUR: I just have a question. My name is Jacques Blemur. Will we be taking a vote tonight?

MR. SCALI: No. That I know. We need much more time to consider everything and talk about the issues. We were originally scheduled to talk about it this Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m., but I am pretty sure that the police commissioner is going to want to be advised through Deputy Superintendent Williams, and I don't think there will be enough time to do that. So at the soonest I think we probably would talk about this probably on August 12, and even then, we may not vote at

that point.

MR. BLEMUR: I'm glad you mention it to the police commissioner.

We have issue even though we didn't discuss that. As a matter of fact, now I have a surcharge on my license.

MR. SCALI: This is off the subject matter. I really don't want to get into some other matter. This is just a meeting.

MR. BLEMUR: This is just simple. Since we don't have a chance -- I can't say that. That the first time I met the police commissioner. I don't have that chance. Although I've been in the City for 30 years, that's the first time I meet the police commissioner.

MR. SCALI: If I let you go off topic, I have to let everybody else go off topic.

MR. BLEMUR: No, no. You don't have to do that. I mean when I'm speaking I'm speaking for the good of the audience. What I'm talking about is the left turn from the trees, which is a concern.

MR. SCALI: I hear you and I sympathize with your opportunity to speak, but if I let you speak, I have to let everyone else speak on another topic, and that's not what we're here for. We will talk about this, I promise you.

MR. BLEMUR: I appreciate that. But if it's possible, if we can get a meeting with the police commissioner?

MR. SCALI: I'm sure whatever information you need we can get through to the commissioner.

MR. BLEMUR: We would like to have a meeting with the police commissioner.

MS. LINT: I was just going to say if there are any issues that are pressing, you need to call me or one of the officers and we will absolutely take it down and I will get it to the police commissioner.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. BLEMUR: Thank you.

MR. SCALI: About what's on topic.

MR. HERNANDEZ: It's on the topic.

Nelson Hernandez, again. I've got a quick question on these issues. Like we were talking about the credit card with the percentage, like putting a cap on a percentage; right?

MR. SCALI: Yes.

MR. HERNANDEZ: These issues should be all separate anyway. I don't see why we should tie in the meter rate with the credit cards.

MR. SCALI: They're proposed together but they don't have to be taken together.

MR. HERNANDEZ: The meeting that I was at was saying we want to tie in basically the meter increase with the credit card. That was the only meeting that I had gone to in a very long time.

MR. SCALI: That certainly could be done, but it doesn't have to be.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I don't see why they can't be all separate issues. Like the same thing with the credit card. Even though it doesn't have to be mandatory, but there should be maybe a cap on what they can charge us for the interest rate. It's a separate issue as you said.

You were asking the drivers there right now, do they want to pay the 10 percent? Nobody wants to pay 10 percent. We have to pay the 10 percent so we can use the credit card, which is optional.

But like I said, if these all could be separate issues, another time we should sit down again. I would come back to the meetings if our voices are heard.

MR. SCALI: I would be happy if you did.

MR. HERNANDEZ: You know I was one of the first ones there when we started.

MR. SCALI: I would hope you will.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I will see what I can do. Thank you.

MS. LINT: I have things to read into the record as well.

MR. SCALI: Go ahead, Mrs. Lint.

MS. LINT: I received a call from Senator Galuccio today, who thought that it might be a good idea to put a pilot program in order,

because he thinks ultimately that the credit cards in all the cabs could be more good than bad, but it should be done possibly in a different way.

I have a message from Sara Gallop, who is coordinator of the Kendall Square Association Marketing and Promotion Working Group, who said that the Kendall Square Association Board voted unanimously yesterday in favor of the implementation of mandatory credit card use in Cambridge taxi cabs. The members cited the benefits to tourist, business people, and residents alike. Several members have used credit cards in cabs in American and international cities and commented on the ease of the practice, as well as the flexibility that it affords.

MR. SCALI: That's the Kendall Square Business.

MS. LINT: Kendall Square Business Association.

I also heard from Michael Gulisarian who said that his property supports all efforts to require taxis to accept credit cards. He's

concerned about the rate increase because they're concerned about pricing that taxis out of the transportation market. That was all he had to say.

I have a letter from Councilor Toomey who wanted to address the recent controversy surrounding this. He said, "Although it would provide an alternative means of payment by the customer, which may be at times more convenient, the mandate for all cabs to be required to do this may be placing an unintentional burden on the drivers." It is his feeling after hearing much testimony that "individual drivers should be able to make their own decision on whether or not they feel installing the machine would be beneficial for them." He would be in favor of a voluntary program.

MR. SCALI: Is that all we have for comments?

MS. LINT: That's all I have.

MR. SCALI: Last comment, Mr. Gervais. On topic; right?

MR. GERVAIS: I hope so. I don't know.

Michael Gervais, cab driver at large. I would just like to thank people such as the Tourism Bureau and the people from the Commerce for coming.

MR. SCALI: The Chamber of Commerce is here, too.

MR. GERVAIS: Right, that's what I meant. We spoke the other day. We hope they work closely with us. For all the people that call who either want and/or don't want, if they could come to public hearing.

And a final note on this retraining of drivers which seems to have a seed in the Cambridge Taxi School, there should be public hearings about that, and through subcommittee, so they can get input from these people who have been driving 30 years or so, plus the police department, plus the people from Commerce, because they are the people who indirectly service the people, just like we do, in many other ways. So we can discuss any possible training.

I think as we're already starting to see now, we have to have whatever system it is that

drivers choose as an option. The License Commission has to step forward to make sure and oversee these drivers, not only regulate the drivers but perhaps protect the drivers in a way. But being caught with a vendor who wants to give them contracts and then we can't control the amount of interest and/or expenses like re-putting machines in or something like that.

This meter -- the last thing I'm going to say on this -- the meter has to be separate from these credit card machines, even when they're optional because we're providing a service. We should be able to provide a service to people with cash, and if they want to take credit cards, do it, but it has to be separate. Because if that credit card machine breaks down and you can't use the meter, people are out of business.

MR. SCALI: Thank you very much.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

MR. SCALI: Comments from the Commissioners at all? Questions?

MR. WILLIAMS: No.

MR. TURNER: No.

MR. SCALI: Motion to take the matter under advisement.

MR. TURNER: Moved.

MR. WILLIAMS: Second.

MR. SCALI: All in favor?

MR. TURNER: Aye.

MR. WILLIAMS: Aye.

MR. SCALI: Thank you all very much. I appreciate your time and effort and your input. We will as I said probably discuss this again on August 12 at 11:00 a.m. for further decision.

(Whereupon, the proceeding was concluded at 8:01 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BRISTOL COUNTY, SS

I, Anne Ouellette, a Professional Court Reporter, the undersigned Notary Public certify that:

I am not related to any of the parties in this matter by blood or marriage and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of these matters.

I further certify that the proceedings hereinbefore set forth is a true and accurate transcription of my record to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 8th day of August, 2009.

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