

**Subject: Bylaw No. 18/018 - Vehicle For Hire Bylaw Amendment****APPROVALS:****Annette Antoniak**\_\_\_\_\_  
Director\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

1. THAT Bylaw No. 18/018, being an amendment to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw, second reading, be defeated;
2. THAT Administration be directed to disband the Taxi Advisory Committee and in its place, hold a minimum of two Taxi Stakeholder Open Houses per year.

**Summary:**

In 2012 Mayor and Council expressed a desire for Administration to fully engage stakeholders involved in the Vehicle for Hire industry. As a result, Bylaw Services formed the Taxi Advisory Committee. This is not a Council appointed Committee. The intent of the Committee was to act as an advisory resource to the Chief Tax Inspector on Vehicle for Hire matters within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

On January 12, 2016, the owner of Sun Taxi, Ron MacNeil, made a presentation to Council requesting an amendment to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw to provide authority for drivers to charge an additional \$3.00 surcharge for fares departing the airport. The request was specific to Sun Tax drivers because of the brokerage's contract with the Fort McMurray Airport Authority (FMAA); when picking up at the airport, Sun Taxi drivers are contractually required to pay the FAA a \$3 airport pickup fee. Mr. MacNeil proposed that this fee be passed on to the passenger because of the financial hardship it was causing his drivers. Council thanked Mr. MacNeil for his presentation and indicated that any recommended amendments to the Vehicle For Hire Bylaw should be discussed first at the level of the Taxi Advisory Committee.

The Taxi Advisory Committee met on February 15, 2017 and voted on the \$3.00 airport fee. The September 4, 2018 Council Report indicated that following a lengthy discussion, the result was in favor of supporting the changes to Schedule B of the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw to add the proposed \$3.00 surcharge. At the February 15, 2017 Taxi Advisory Committee Meeting, there were seven voting members in attendance, of which five voted and two abstained.

On September 4, 2018 Bylaw No. 18/018, being an amendment to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw received first reading. The proposed amendments to Bylaw No. 13/001 included:

- \$3.00 airport fee being added as a surcharge to be paid by passengers being picked up at the airport.
- Increasing the surcharge to \$200.00 where a cleanup of the vehicle is required due to the actions of the passenger(s).

On September 4, 2018, the Bylaw was brought forward to Council for second reading. After hearing from Administration and public delegations on the topic, Council passed the following motion:

THAT second reading of Bylaw No. 18/018 be deferred for a two-month period; and

THAT Administration bring forward recommendations with respect to the Taxi Advisory Committee.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

In June 2014, the FMAA held a competitive bid process for operation of the Taxi cab stand at the Fort McMurray Airport. This included exclusive rights to service passengers arriving at the airport. The commercial agreement includes such things as surcharges and fees that would be agreed upon prior to the contract being awarded. The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is not involved in those negotiations and is not a party to the agreement that was reached by the FAA and Sun Taxi.

Administration has reviewed the proposed amendment for the \$200 cleanup surcharge of the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw. At this time, it is unnecessary. The current Vehicle for Hire Bylaw No. 13/001, Section 7 (b) authorizes a driver to charge an additional surcharge of \$75.00 where, due to the action of a passenger, a cleanup of the Vehicle for Hire is required.

For both of these reasons, and based on Administration's benchmarking with other communities and its review of best practices relating to vehicle for hire bylaws, Administration is recommending that second reading of Bylaw 18/018 be defeated.

As directed by Council, Administration has considered the history of the Taxi Advisory Committee in addition to community representation on the Committee and current levels of participation. The Taxi Advisory Committee has typically had very low turnout and is composed primarily of residents that are a part of the vehicle for hire industry. In order to ensure that opinions of the broader community are taken into consideration on future matters that relate to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw, Administration proposes to hold stakeholder engagements as an alternative to the Taxi Advisory Committee.

**Strategic Priorities:**

Responsible Government

**Attachments:**

- 1 . Vehicle for Hire Presentation**
- 2. Bylaw No. 18/018**