

NEW JERSEY MOTOR VEHICLE COMMISSION

Minutes by Board Secretary Chris Hillmann of actions taken at the Open Session of the Regular Board meeting of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) Board via TEAMS and conference call on Thursday, April 14, 2022

Present:

B. Sue Fulton, Chair and Chief Administrator
DOT Designee Joe Bertoni
Diane Legreide, Board Member
Steve Scaturro, Board Member
Walter Orcutt, Board Member
Eric Heitmann, AG Designee
Assistant Director, Hannah Good

Governor's Authorities Unit Associate Counsel Joy Johnson and Deputy Attorney General Jennifer Jerembeck participated.

Chair B. Sue Fulton convened the Open Session at 2:00 p.m. in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Agenda Approval. Board Member Diane Legreide moved to accept the proposed agenda, Director Eric Heitmann seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted.

Chair Remarks, 4/14/2022

We're pleased to welcome you to the April 14 Motor Vehicle Commission meeting. I'm going to very briefly go over some of the news since our last meeting.

MVC News

Thanks to Deputy Chief Angela LaBelle, we seamlessly implemented the Governor's mandate to test all employees not vaccinated against COVID-19 at least once a week. We are also proud to say that, at this time, over 80% of MVC employees are vaccinated.

And we continue to increase productivity.

As you know, we did a record number of customer transactions in 2021, crossing the 12 million transactions threshold for the first time.

And now, at the end of the first quarter of 2022 and almost another record month in March, we are on track to beat that record in 2022.

To expand on that... We have seen a dramatic increase in demand for MVC services, due to

- critical shortages of commercial drivers;
- closures of high schools with the corresponding change from bulk license processing to individual permitting and testing;

- expansion of availability of driver's licenses;
- more purchases of used cars from private dealers as new cars became less affordable; and
- a significant population increase, including transfers from other states.

At the same time, we have experienced critical staffing shortages. But our IT team and Agency Ops continue to rise to the challenge, getting the most out of online services while we continue to make our agencies more efficient. The split of Licensing and Vehicle Centers was particularly helpful as each location is now designed and staffed to do a lot of certain types of transactions as smoothly as possible.

Conclusion

I have one particular shout-out today.

On March 31, Richard Jones, a Hammonton Police Sergeant who retired just a few months ago, was taking the CDL road test at our Winslow Inspection Station when he suffered a fatal heart attack while behind the wheel.

Examiner Brian Truxton was in the cab; they were traveling South on Route 73 in a 70' tractor trailer truck when Examiner Truxton saw that Sgt. Jones was not responding, and that the vehicle was drifting over the double yellow lines into oncoming traffic. He shouted to Jones, who slumped over the steering wheel. Examiner Truxton was able to secure the steering wheel and steer the vehicle to the slow lane, then onto the shoulder. He operated the clutch with his left foot to gear the vehicle to a slower speed, and eventually drifted to a stop in front of the Winslow Police department. He put the vehicle in park and ran into the police station to get help.

Tragically, despite quick reaction from the police, Sergeant Jones passed away.

But we have to note that Brian Truxton doubtless saved lives with his quick and skilled response to the emergency, steering a tractor trailer out of oncoming traffic and safely to a stop from the passenger seat. Last week Governor Murphy called Brian to thank him for his heroic efforts, and we join the Governor in our gratitude to this MVC hero.

Once again, I will say that we have the best team in state government, anywhere, and I'm proud to serve with them.

So, with that, let's move to our action items.

Minutes: October 14, 2021. This item is to fulfill the requirements of The Motor Vehicle Security and Customer Service Act and of the Bylaws to approve the Minutes of each MVC Board Meeting, by approving the Minutes of the MVC Board Meeting of October 14, 2021.

Board Member Walter Orcutt moved the resolution, Board Member Diane Legreide seconded it.

2204-01 Proposed Board Meeting Dates for 2022

Designee Heitmann moved the resolution, Board Member Walter Orcutt seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

2204-02 Designation of Vice-Chair

Board Member Steve Scaturro moved the resolution and Board Member Diane Legreide seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

2204-03 Designation of Board Secretary

Board Member Diane Legreide moved the resolution and Designee Heitmann seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

2204-04 Proposed Amendment to N.J.A.C. 16:53 D-1.1, Zone Rate of Freedom (ZORF)

This is a proposed amendment. The Commission proposes to amend the provisions of N.J.A.C. 16:53D, Zone of Rate Freedom (ZORF). The ZORF is the maximum percentage adjustment (increase or decrease) that a private autobus carrier is permitted to make to its rate, fare, or charge for intrastate regular route service without first having to petition the Commission for approval, as set forth in N.J.A.C. 16:53D-1.1. The Commission is statutorily obligated to establish a ZORF percentage annually for regular route private autobus carriers. Accordingly, the proposed amendment is necessary to update the regulation to reflect the ZORF percentage adjustment allowed for the upcoming calendar year, 2023.

The effect of this rule for ZORF for 2023 is to fulfill the statutory requirement that MVC set a percentage limit or “zone” within which private bus companies are free to adjust their rates (or fares or charges) for in-state bus routes. The authority for private bus companies to make these adjustments is found at P.L. 1983, c.517. Of over 100 such companies, typically up to five exercise that freedom annually and notify MVC, which confirms any adjustment is within the ZORF. The attached proposal for 2023 has a 10% increase and 10% decrease zone.

Board Member Walter Orcutt moved the resolution and Board Member Diane Legreide seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

Public Comments: None at this time

Board Comments:

Diane Legreide-Enjoy this beautiful day

Steve Scaturro-Happy Holiday Weekend

Walter Orcutt-best wishes to MVC keep up the good work

Hannah Good-Many thanks to MVC staff

Eric Heitmann-Applaud MVC for all their online services given record of increased services

Joe Bertoni-Thank you and Happy Holidays

Adjournment:

Since there was no further business, a motion to adjourn was made Board member Legreide and seconded by Designee Heitmann and unanimously adopted at 2:24 p.m.