

**BOARD OF TAXICAB
COMMISSIONERS**

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**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA**



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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GENERAL MANAGER

ITEM #3

BOARD OF TAXICAB COMMISSIONERS

BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

Thursday, July 17, 2025

10:00 AM

CONVENED

The Board of Taxicab Commissioners convened a regular meeting on Thursday, July 17, 2025 at 10:03 AM in Los Angeles, CA.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Item No. 1 – Welcome

President Colaice called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present noting that those wishing to testify before the Board must fill out a speaker's form and give it to the Commission Executive Assistant. He informed the audience that if anyone is a registered lobbyist, City ordinance requires that it should be indicated on the speaker's form. She also reminded everyone to speak into the microphone and to silence cell phones.

Item No. 2 – Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Mary Rosas, Andre Colaice, and Nicole Chase; Deputy City Attorneys (DCA) Michael Nagle and Kevin Dufner

Absent: Commissioners Billie Green and Antonio Zepeda and Commercial Rideshare and Mobility Administrator Jarvis Murray

Item No. 3 – Minutes

Commissioner Chase moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosas to approve the Minutes of June 18, 2025. APPROVED. Commissioner Colaice abstained due to his absence at the meeting.

Item No. 4 – Communications

None

Item No. 5 – Commission Business

a. Election of President

Commissioner Rosas nominated current President Colaice to continue serving as President, seconded by Commissioner Chase. Unanimously APPROVED. Commissioner Colaice thanked his fellow Commissioners.

b. Election of Vice President

Commissioner Colaiace nominated Commissioner Chase, seconded by Commissioner Rosas. Unanimously APPROVED. Commissioner Chase graciously accepted and thanked her fellow Commissioners.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COMMENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ACTION ITEM**Item No. 6 – Recommendation to Permanently Revoke Taxicab Driver Morris Elijah Aaron’s Driver Permit for Violating Taxicab Rule Book Section 800, Rule 825**

Michael Suarez, Transportation Investigator, presented the report, shared video footages that supported the case before the Board, and provided an overview of the four videos that was shared.

Robert Borowski, Legal Counsel on behalf of Morris Aaron, was present and addressed the Board. He shared how Mr. Aaron fully admitted to what happened and is very remorseful; explained the extenuating circumstances that occurred at the incident; and shared the steps Mr. Aaron has taken to rectify his anger (completed anger management class and have five letters of recommendation and character references from his clients).

Morris Elijah Aaron was present and addressed the Board. He expressed how remorseful he is for what happened, reassured the Board it would never happen again, and apologized.

Questions, answers, and comments were provided.

- Commissioner Chase expressed her appreciation for Mr. Aaron acknowledging and taking responsibility for the action that happened. She shared her concerns about incidents like this taking place in front of children; commented on a driver’s role as the face of the City of Los Angeles; different challenges, situations, types of people, and appropriate demeanor and how not to allow personal issues get in the way of providing safe service to people in the City.
- Commissioner Rosas commented how Mr. Aaron made the family feel threatened and cannot be tolerated.
- Commissioner Colaiace shared his thoughts about the incident and agreed with Commissioner Chase’s previous statement about young children being present but he is a believer in second chances and felt that if this is solely one incident and had taken the steps to mitigate and ensure it does not happen again, he would be in favor of granting the appeal.
- Commissioner Rosas asked Investigator Suarez if there has been other similar situations where the appeal was granted, the taxicab driver was back on the streets, and there was no repercussions.
- Investigator Suarez stated that this was his first time in front of the Board and could not speak on it. He added that Mr. Aaron was not suspended on behalf of DOT but through the company United Cab who took the action.
- Commissioner Chase asked to clarify why LADOT recommended full revocation if the cab company did the suspension.

- Investigator Suarez discussed how Mr. Aaron was afforded his due process rights; LADOT's hearing process and the verdict which was brought forth to the company; and the reason why Mr. Aaron is not working at this time.
- Commissioner Chase expressed her concerns that the Department had a hearing and shared the outcome of the hearing with the cab company but the Department chose to take no action.
- Investigator Suarez reiterated that Mr. Aaron was already taken out of service by the company by the time the hearing had taken place due to the incident.
- Commissioner Chase asked to clarify if the City does not give a consequence but allows the company to give a consequence before it goes to the Board.
- Sr. Investigator Richard stated that the City does give a consequence but in this case, the company UITC made a decision to suspend and withdraw their signature from the driver prior to the hearing. The Department's decision was to request revocation and allow the driver to work until the Board meeting. He added that if the Department felt Mr. Aaron was a danger to the public, the Department would take him out of service but the cab company had already taken him out so the Department did not have to take that action.
- Commissioner Chase asked if the City is liable if a driver is placed back to service and repeats the offense.
- Mr. Borowski added that the company is going to reinstate Mr. Aaron but just wanted the hearing to take its course.
- DCA Dufner stated that it is generally their office's inclination to not provide liability advisement in an open session and if Commissioners are inclined to request legal advice on those issues, they could do so outside an open session.
- Commissioner Colaiace talked about real liability, a second offense, for the taxi company if Mr. Aaron does it again and asked to confirm that the company will reinstate Mr. Aaron.
- Mr. Borowski confirmed that it is his understanding the company will reinstate Mr. Aaron after speaking to his supervisor, and that they did not want him driving until this is settled.
- Commissioner Chase asked if there is documentation that the company will reinstate Mr. Aaron.
- Mr. Borowski stated that there is no documentation.
- Sr. Investigator Richard shared that he spoke with the United supervisor, Mr. Mersha, several times and had not expressed bringing Mr. Aaron back, and if that was true, Sr. Investigator Richard would like to see it in writing. He added that Mr. Aaron was also permitted with Yellow Cab and was released but do not know why.
- Commissioner Colaiace stated that he will make a motion to grant the appeal but will depend on the will of the other Commissioners.
- Commissioner Rosas would like to second Commissioner Colaiace's motion.
- Commissioner Colaiace clarified that the Board is granting Mr. Aaron's appeal and that he would be free to apply to drive for another company.
- Sr. Investigator Richard asked to clarify if the Board grants the appeal, there would be no suspension and Mr. Aaron will go back to work the next day.
- Commissioner Colaiace asked if he was already suspended.
- Sr. Investigator Richard stated "not by us".
- Commissioner Chase proposed another motion: invoking a suspension pending the documentation from United Cab and getting legal advice on behalf of the City of LA.
- Commissioner Colaiace asked Deputy City Attorney if this item could be continued for 60 days while: a) receipt of written confirmation that a taxi company is willing to rehire Mr. Aaron; and b) get legal advice about liability towards the City in an executive session at the next meeting.
- DCA Dufner asked the Commission to clarify if there is a 60-day suspension and some additional conditional suspension on employment outcomes.
- Commissioner Colaiace proposed to continue this item and not make a decision while the Board gets the additional information.

- DCA Dufner confirmed that the Board could continue this proceeding, requesting additional information, and hear the appeal with the additional information at a later date.

Commissioner Colaiace moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosas to continue this item for 60 days while the Board get additional information: a) confirmation as stated by Mr. Aaron's attorney that there is a company or companies that is willing to rehire him; and b) get additional guidance in closed session at the next Commission meeting as requested by Commissioner Chase in terms of liability issues.

- DCA Dufner clarified that legal guidance does not have to take place in a closed session, Commissioners are welcome to reach out to them for legal advice, and reminded the Commission to be cautious of the Brown Act Rule when sending them communication, any questions about legal issues should be sent individually from the Board members.
- Sr. Investigator Richard shared that since United already withdrew from sponsoring Mr. Aaron, he would have to reapply, and asked to clarify if the Board's instruction is for the Department to approve his new application when he reapplies.
- Commissioner Colaiace clarified that a letter of intent that they would be willing to rehire Mr. Aaron is acceptable.
- Sr. Investigator Richard restated the Board's instructions as: they will get a letter of intent from a company and will wait until the item is back to the Board, and then he will be able to go back into service.
- Commissioner Colaiace reiterated that the Board will re-hear the item in 60 days with the additional information, Mr. Aaron is suspended until then, and restated his motion.

Commissioner Colaiace moved to continue this proceeding for 60 days until the September Board of Commissioners meeting and during that time, the Board would ask that at the September meeting Mr. Aaron and his representative present the Board with proof that he is hireable and particularly UIC will hire him back, seconded by Commissioner Chase. Unanimously Approved.

Commissioner Chase added that she would like the letter of intent from any company but specifically from the company Mr. Aaron had an altercation with.

ADJOURNMENT – PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.7

With no further business before the Board of Taxicab Commissioners, Commissioner Rosas moved, seconded by Commissioner Chase to adjourn the meeting. Unanimously APPROVED.

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 AM.

