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A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, was held in the Council Chamber in the City Hall, on Friday, October 10, 1958, at 3 o'clock p.m., due notice having been given the Council members by the Mayor in accordance with the provisions of Section 26 of the City Charter. Mayor Smith presided and Council members Albea, Baxter, Brown, Dellinger, Evans and Foard were present.

ABSENT: Councilman Wilkinson.

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INVOCATION.

The invocation was given by Councilman Claude L. Albea.

PURPOSE OF MEETING.

Mayor Smith announced that the purpose of the meeting is to receive a report from the Mayor with respect to the Bus strike and to consider emergency amendments to the Taxicab Ordinance.

MAYOR ADVISES HE HAS MET WITH BUS COMPANY OFFICIALS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BUS DRIVERS AND MEDIATORS, WITHOUT DEFINITE RESULTS, AND HE WISHES TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO RELAX TAXICAB ORDINANCE PROVISIONS TO PROVIDE ECONOMICAL TRANSPORTATION FOR CITIZENS.

Mayor Smith stated that too many people have the idea that the Mayor can settle the Bus strike, but unfortunately that is not the case. That the only part the City can have is to let them know we are vitally interested in getting the strike settled as soon as possible because of the great inconvenience it is causing the citizens of Charlotte. That the proper representatives of the bus company, strikers, etc agreed to get together with him in his office on yesterday to discuss the situation, and this was done until ten o'clock last night. He stated that he could not say that nothing was accomplished nor that a great deal was accomplished, but when they left the meeting we felt encouraged that a great deal of progress had been made, and that he has high hopes that the strike will be settled before too long. He advised that the participants had met this morning in the office of Mr. Heafner, Federal Mediator, and they will meet again today at 3:30 p.m.

Mayor Smith stated that he has called this meeting for the purpose of submitting a proposal to relax a part of the Taxicab Ordinance in order to give the people of Charlotte transportation in case the strike does continue. That any amendment to the taxicab ordinance will be strictly on a temporary basis and will cease to be in effect at such time as the bus strike is settled. He stated that both Mr. Shaw and Mr. Yancey were in the meeting in his office on yesterday, at all times.

Mr. John Shaw, City Attorney, stated the City in moving into the strike picture was to let both parties participating in the strike know that the public's interest was vital to the City as it affects the life of the community. That the City has no legal authority to settle or demand settlement of the strike, it can only use persuasion.

Councilman Baxter stated he realized that our whole democratic life is based on persuasion, and asked if the Mayor had any idea how much longer

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the citizens will be inconvenienced? Mayor Smith stated that Mr. Baxter's guess was as good as his - that he thought every moment last night that the strike would be settled, and he has done everything he knows to do.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TAXICAB ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN PHASES OF TAXICAB OPERATIONS DURING THE PRESENT STOPPAGE OF CITY COACH COMPANY BUSES BY LABOR DISPUTE.

Mayor Smith stated that in view of having done the best job he knows how to do to get the strike settled without immediate results, he is now looking for some way to get the people of Charlotte back on wheels, and would like the proposed Amendment to the Taxicab Ordinance read. The City Clerk read the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TAXICAB
ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE
WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN PHASES OF
TAXICAB OPERATIONS DURING THE PRESENT
STOPPAGE OF CITY COACH COMPANY BUSES
CAUSED BY LABOR DISPUTE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE:

Section 1. That, during the present transportation emergency in the City of Charlotte, created by the failure of Charlotte City Coach Lines, Inc. to operate because of a strike, and in the public interest, the Taxicab Ordinance of the City of Charlotte is hereby amended as follows:

(a) The several licensed taxicabs in the City of Charlotte may operate in either of two ways:

First: Such cabs may operate as what will be known during the emergency as "Metered Cabs", which such metered cabs shall charge fares not exceeding those provided in the present Taxicab Ordinance for meter operations; or

Second: "Single Fare Cabs" with respect to which the use of the taxi meter is prohibited, and the fare per passenger, except as herein provided in sub-paragraph (c) hereof, shall not exceed _____ per head. With respect to such "Single Fare Cabs", the franchise holder thereof, is permitted to lease such cabs to a driver licensed under the Taxicab Ordinance of the City of Charlotte.

(b) Each type of cab, either "Metered Cab" or "Single Fare Cab" shall be clearly marked so that the prospective customer of such cab may readily determine which type of transportation he is contracting for. Such marking to be by signs on the cab, or by painting the designation of the cab on the rear door glass of such cab. Such signs or lettering to be not less than four (4) inches high and to be plainly visible to prospective passengers.

(c) All passengers using either type of cab from the same pick-up point to the same let-out point, shall be transported at the "single fare" rate; otherwise, their fares shall be calculated in accordance with the method employed in the Taxicab Ordinance of the City of Charlotte.

(d) Cruising is permitted.

(e) Taxicabs may haul five (5) passengers, and, except in the "metered Cab", permission to pick up additional passengers, except in case of minor children, as provided in the Taxicab Ordinance, shall not be required.

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(f) Four taxicabs may park in spaces adjacent to the curb presently designated as "Bus Loading Zones" within one block of Independence Square, and in front of the Bus Terminal, and at the West Trade Street entrance to the Southern Railway Station, and may use other Bus Loading Zones in the City for the purpose of picking up and unloading passengers.

No driver of any taxicab shall leave such cab in such taxi stands except in an emergency, or for the purpose of loading or unloading his cab.

Section 2. That, during such emergency, the requirements of the Taxicab Ordinance limiting the number of Franchise Operators is temporarily suspended, and the Taxicab Inspector of the City of Charlotte is directed to issue temporary Taxicab Permits to any person whose proposed taxicab meets the requirements of the Taxicab Ordinance, exclusive of meters and radio equipment, required therein, and such Taxicab Inspector shall issue temporary permits for automobiles approved to operate as taxicabs during the present transportation emergency; provided, such taxicab shall be covered by proper insurance, as required by the Taxicab Ordinance.

Section 3. That the City waives franchise fees in connection with such temporary taxicab franchises.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall be effective only for the duration of the present City Coach Company Bus Strike.

Section 5. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its adoption.

Approved as to form:

John D. Shaw
City Attorney

Mayor Smith stated that Mr. Robert Lassiter, Attorney for the Coach Company wishes to speak, and that before the Council takes any action on the ordinance he would like them to permit the Taxicab Representatives and the City's Taxicab Inspector, who are present, to be heard.

Mr. Lassiter stated he has a letter to deliver to the City Council from the Coach Company in which they state their intention to apply for fifty permits for taxicab license to operate in Charlotte. He stated they have contemplated going into the taxicab business here for sometime, as Charlotte needs more cabs. He stated they are applying not for a temporary service but permanently to operate a Taxicab Company, fully equipped, fully insured. He advised that the Coach Company operates a similar taxicab service in Grand Rapids and provides excellent transportation for that city, and he would like the Council to investigate it. Mr. Lassiter stated further that the Coach Company is willing to operate on a temporary basis to help out in the emergency, but regardless of whether or not the temporary emergency operation is adopted by the Council, or of the outcome of the strike, they will apply for a franchise for the permanent operation of a 50 cab service.

Councilman Dellinger asked if the Coach Company being in the taxicab business here would jeopardize settlement of the present transportation crisis? Mr. Lassiter stated he did not think so, in fact, he thought it would help it.

Mr. Shaw, City Attorney, stated that if the Amendment to the Taxicab Ordinance is adopted on a temporary basis, that the Coach Company could go down to the Taxicab Inspector and get a temporary franchise to

operate cabs the same as any one; that while it is true that the City requires certain insurance coverage on all cabs, the quickest way to get into operation would be under the banner of one of the existing Cab Companies. He stated he understands that Yellow Cab Company and Baker Cab Company will not permit this, and would not change from their present metered fare system, as they state they are getting all the business they can handle.

Councilman Foard stated the Council is out of order in discussing the operation of taxicabs on a permanent basis, as the purpose of this meeting as stated in the notice is to consider temporary or emergency cab service.

Mr. Cliff Passons, representing Baker Cab Company, stated they are making every effort to serve the people and have asked them to double up and as a result they are hauling two and a half times as many as usual, and they do not believe that any temporary measure the City may take would let them haul more people. However, they do not object to the issuance of emergency certificates but strongly oppose the addition of more cab franchises on a permanent basis. He stated they believe if the people are notified through the newspapers and radio and T. V. stations that four persons can ride as cheaply as one, that the results in providing rides would be amazing.

Mr. Shaw, City Attorney, called attention that these persons to whom temporary permits would be issued will no doubt be coming back later asking for permanent license and that should be considered. Mayor Smith stated that the City has an obligation to the people right now and his interest in relaxing the taxicab ordinance is to provide rides for these people who cannot pay the regular cab rates, on a strictly temporary basis. Mr. Shaw then asked the Taxicab Inspector if the meter and radio requirements are eliminated from the ordinance if there is anything else to keep an ordinary sedan from operating as a cab, to which Mr. Cleveland replied there was not.

Councilman Baxter stated the City has issued 178 certificates for the operation of cabs in Charlotte, many of which are not in use, and if they put all of them into use then the City would have fully licensed cabs running with trained operators.

Mr. Frank Snepp, Attorney representing Red Top and Victory Cab Companies stated they are most anxious to do everything possible. That Red Top holds 53 certificates but are only able to keep 16 cabs running since metered service was adopted. That Victory is undergoing the same experience. That people will not pay \$1.50 to ride across town. He stated these companies are willing to operate during the emergency at 50¢ in the city limits and 75¢ in the perimeter area that will be annexed. He stated further that there is no demand for them to operate more cabs when the Buses are running, as they cater to the poorer and colored people. That his companies would like to operate their cabs permanently on a flat fee basis, and let other companies operate as they wish.

Mayor Smith stated that he, the City Attorney and City Manager had a meeting with the Cab Companies, yesterday, except Red Top who could not be reached, and they were agreeable to the proposal.

Councilwoman Evans asked Mr. Snepp whether he felt if the lower rate is adopted it would take care of the present situation? Mr. Snepp replied that he did indeed, that Red Top holds 50 franchises and was operating them all until metered service went into effect, and are now operating 16, and Victory also holds 50 franchises with 46 in operation.

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Councilman Dellinger stated it appears that the amendment would result in penalizing one business because of another.

Councilman Brown stated he is in accord with what the Mayor is trying to do but he foresees more trouble resulting from the amended taxicab regulations than the good it will do. However, he is willing to be governed by the will of the majority of the Council.

Councilman Foard stated he was wondering what the repercussion is going to be if the City Coach Company applies for 50 license and all their Buses standing idle?

Councilman Baxter moved that no change be made in the Taxicab regulations and the amendments to the ordinance not be adopted. The motion was seconded by Councilman Foard.

Mayor Smith asked to make the following statement before the vote was taken, and he said that everything he has done was done at the request of the Council. That they asked him to find some solution to the situation. That he has done everything he knows to do and if the Council lets the matter stand as it is, then the responsibility is theirs, and if they want to reject the idea of helping by temporarily providing taxicab service at a better rate, then that is the Council's business. Councilman Baxter replied that the Council did not ask the Mayor to do anything but help settle the strike.

Councilman Baxter then changed his motion to defer action on the Taxicab Ordinance until next Wednesday and see if the strike is settled. The motion was seconded by Councilman Foard.

Councilman Dellinger stated he felt that something should be done while the Council is in session, but thinks they should come to some understanding with people who have a big investment in taxicabs and not just tell them they must operate under the amended ordinance and thereby penalize them.

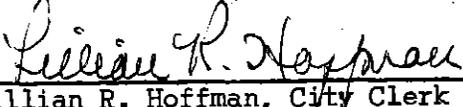
Councilwoman Evans said she was deeply concerned with the situation and appreciated the efforts of the Mayor, City Manager and City Attorney and thinks the point has been well taken, but it should not be so hurried, as the news might break any moment that the strike is settled, and she wondered if the matter could not be deferred until Monday and a meeting held then if necessary. Mayor Smith reminded them that the N.C. League of Municipalities Convention opens in Winston Salem Sunday and he and others of the Council will attend.

Councilman Brown then told the Mayor that he appreciates the interest he has shown but what he has done is intangible. That all that could be hoped for would be that someone would be put to work and if 60 cabs are put into operation to carry 100 passengers per day, that would offer relief to only about 5,000 and leave the other 47,000 where they are today, and in the meanwhile the taxicab operation is upset.

The vote was then taken on the motion of Councilman Baxter to defer consideration of the Amendment to the Taxicab Ordinance until next Wednesday, and the motion was unanimously adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

Upon motion of Councilman Brown, seconded by Councilman Dellinger, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.


Lillian R. Hoffman, City Clerk