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INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF FLORAL PARK
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC HEARING
May 3, 2016
8:00 p.m.

VILLAGE HALL
One Floral Boulevard
Floral Park, New York 11001

PRESENT: THOMAS J. TWEEDY, Mayor
KEVIN M. FITZGERALD, Trustee
DOMINICK A. LONGOBARDI, Trustee
LYNN POMBONYO, Trustee
ARCHIE T. CHENG, Trustee

ALSO PRESENT:

JOHN E. RYAN, ESQ., Village Attorney
SUSAN E. WALSH, Village Clerk

AAA TAXI SERVICE, INC. FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

RONALD KOENIG
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

1 MAYOR TWEEDY: This is a public hearing as it
2 relates to provide residents of Floral Park the
3 opportunity to present written and oral comments
4 relating to setting the existing franchise agreement
5 with AAA Taxi.

6 I'd ask, at this time, to have the Village
7 Clerk kindly read the public notice.

8 THE CLERK: Thank you.

9 Notice of Public Hearing of the Village of
10 Floral Park.

11 Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to
12 Chapter 85 of the Code of the Incorporated Village of
13 Floral Park, the Board of Trustees of the Incorporated
14 Village of Floral Park, New York, will hold a public
15 hearing at the Village Hall, One Floral Boulevard,
16 Floral Park, New York, on Tuesday, May 3rd, 2016 at
17 8:00 p.m. in relation to extending the existing
18 franchise agreement with AAA Taxi Service, Inc. for a
19 term of three years and its related entity, Victory
20 Leasing Corp. for the solicitation of commercial
21 business for the transportation of passengers for taxi
22 service at the Floral Park Long Island Railroad Station
23 on Atlantic Avenue in Floral Park, New York.

24 A copy of the existing franchise agreement is
25 on file in the Office of the Village Clerk, One Floral

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1 Boulevard, Floral Park, New York 11001, and may be
2 examined by any persons interested therein during
3 business hours Monday through Friday, inclusive, except
4 legal holidays, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

5 Now take notice that all parties in interest
6 and citizens will be given the opportunity to be heard
7 at the aforesaid time and place.

8 By order of the Board of Trustees, Village of
9 Floral Park, New York, Susan E. Walsh, Village Clerk.

10 And it was dated April 20, 2016.

11 MAYOR TWEEDY: I know there are a couple
12 representatives from AAA Taxi and their attorney.

13 If you would be so kind to come forward.

14 MR. ANGELO: Good evening, Mr. Mayor, Members
15 of the Board of Trustees.

16 My name is Michael Angelo. I'm an attorney.
17 I represent the Vitello family and their companies, AAA
18 Taxi and Victory Leasing Corp.

19 We're here tonight to seek an extension of
20 their franchise agreement with the Village which
21 provides taxi service to village residents and at the
22 Long Island Railroad Train Station. I would ask, as we
23 did at our last hearing on this matter back in 2012,
24 while the notice seeks a three-year extension, we might
25 ask for a four-year extension should the Board choose to

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1 extend our franchise agreement.

2 Basically, the Vitellos, I'm sure most of you
3 know, have been providing taxi service in Floral Park
4 for nearly forty years. They've had a franchise
5 agreement with the Village since 1994. They are good
6 corporate citizens. They contribute to local causes.
7 Most recently, they contributed money to help the
8 library microfiche its newspaper collection to make it
9 much easier to research articles about village history.
10 They are good corporate citizens. I think most
11 importantly, they are now good village taxpayers, as the
12 family just bought a small building on Verbena Avenue
13 where they are running the operation from.

14 Richard Vitello and his sons, Michael Vitello
15 and Richard Vitello, have been running the company for
16 decades, as long as most of us have been here, and they
17 continue to do so. And they would hope that they
18 continue to provide timely, efficient, courteous and
19 cost-effective transportation for the residents of
20 Floral Park.

21 Beyond that, I don't have anything else to
22 say, unless you have any questions.

23 MAYOR TWEEDY: Thank you.

24 I would agree with you, the Vitellos and AAA
25 Taxi have been a good corporate sponsor, corporate

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1 clients of the Village for many, many years. We
2 received many letters of commendation and certainly many
3 efforts have been extended by the Vitellos as well as by
4 many of their drivers.

5 I think this might be a fair -- there are a
6 number of questions. Who would like to speak? Perhaps
7 you or any of the representatives are here to respond.

8 MR. ANGELO: Please.

9 MAYOR TWEEDY: First, I'd ask anyone from the
10 board, would you like to ask any questions?

11 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Yes.

12 Thank you for coming and thank you for your
13 service to the Village and your philanthropic services
14 to the Village. You do a good job.

15 The existing contract talks about the cars
16 would be newer than 2009. Is it reasonable to expect
17 that it would be moved up three years to be newer than
18 2012?

19 MR. ANGELO: If I'm not mistaken, the last
20 franchise agreement provided a certain time period for
21 the cars where the cars could not be any older than
22 seven years. And I believe, I'm assured, that there's
23 no car that is older than seven years since it's first
24 been on the road. So, we are in compliance with the
25 terms of the current franchise agreement.

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1 Currently, there are twenty-two taxis and five
2 vans that my clients operate. They are all within seven
3 or eight years old. I understand, also, that they just
4 completed, either yesterday or today, the quarterly
5 inspection by the police department. All the cars
6 passed with flying colors.

7 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Also, the colors will
8 remain the same as they are today?

9 MR. ANGELO: There is no plan on changing any
10 of the colors.

11 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: If I can ask our police
12 commissioner, for the record, you have not received any
13 complaints from any residents about AAA Taxi, correct?

14 THE POLICE COMMISSIONER: Not at all. Just
15 usually accolades.

16 MAYOR TWEEDY: Thank you.

17 Trustee Longobardi?

18 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Mr. Mayor, my colleagues
19 have similar questions as I do, so I will yield to them
20 at this time with the right to reserve.

21 MAYOR TWEEDY: Thank you.

22 Trustee Pombonyo?

23 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Thank you.

24 First of all, I would also like to thank you,
25 first of all, for your wonderful service. It's

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1 important to our residents. And the importance you play
2 in our community, both in the Chamber of Commerce and in
3 supporting our local community initiatives, that's very
4 important to us and we are very appreciative.

5 And, I've also heard that you have been
6 extremely cooperative with other businesses and with our
7 police department, if any concerns at all did arise.

8 I do have questions about two provisions of
9 the current contract and its extension going forward
10 that I would just like to ask about.

11 One is Provision Number 19 on Page 6 of the
12 current agreement, just regarding parking on Caroline
13 Place and Atlantic Avenue. Will you be continuing your,
14 I guess, reminders, guidance to your drivers, and
15 oversight to insure that they are parking only in the
16 places that are designated and they are not blocking
17 Atlantic Avenue or spaces by it?

18 MR. ANGELO: Ms. Pombonyo, whenever I speak to
19 my clients about this, that's the first thing I ask
20 them, if there are any issues with parking at the Long
21 Island Railroad Train Station. There are four spots
22 there. They occupy the spots as they are available.
23 They never park more cars than allowed there and they do
24 not park any cars in any of the commuter spots.

25 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Well, thank you for your

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vigilance in following up on that.

Following that, Provision 20 on Page 6, areas within 25 feet of the places where they are parked and the spots used by the cabs shall be kept broom clean. And that, you will continue to inspect those areas to make sure that they stay clean? That's very important to us.

MR. ANGELO: The last time we were here in 2012 seeking the extension of the existing franchise agreement, our clients were dispatching out of the Long Island Railroad Station itself. They moved their operation around the corner to Verbena Avenue, so they have no control over whatever goes on at the station at the taxi dispatch office. They clean up, the drivers. There is no garbage around their cars. But they don't have control over that particular area. I'm sure the streets are -- the sidewalks are swept in front of their office.

This is the operations manager for AAA Taxi.

(Whereupon, Denise Folan was duly sworn by the Court Reporter.)

MS. FOLAN: Denise Folan, F-O-L-A-N.

I just want to say that we do have a woman that goes over and sweeps up the area in the parking spots over there. She doesn't do the office, unless she

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1 does for, you know, Larry Blessinger over there. But
2 for us, she does the parking area.

3 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: I've heard, also, that you
4 have been very responsive when there were concerns
5 expressed about the drivers leaving litter around. We
6 really appreciate that follow-through.

7 And in the same provision, it calls for
8 bathroom facilities for the drivers. Could you just
9 tell us what those provisions are to assure that they
10 have bathroom facilities.

11 MS. FOLAN: We have two bathrooms in our
12 location at 16 Verbena.

13 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: So, the drivers would be
14 expected to know those are the facilities that they
15 should be using?

16 MS. FOLAN: Um-hum.

17 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Thank you very much.

18 TRUSTEE CHENG: If I can just follow up.

19 Going back to that provision in reference to
20 the bathrooms for the drivers, I know for a fact the
21 drivers come into many establishments within the
22 proximity of your office stating they are not allowed to
23 use the bathroom facilities there and that's why they
24 use the restaurants' facilities. I'm just saying what
25 I'm told by both the restaurant owners, the bar owners,

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1 and the drivers. I'm not trying to make an argument
2 here, but they specifically come in and say they cannot
3 use the bathrooms. It sounds mean, their own workers
4 can't use the bathrooms.

5 MR. ANGELO: Mr. Cheng, are we sure we are
6 talking about AAA drivers? Because there are three
7 companies.

8 TRUSTEE CHENG: Without a doubt.

9 MS. FOLAN: Yes, I see them come in. They
10 have to pass my office for one of the bathrooms. The
11 other one is upstairs. I can't say for sure, but I do
12 see drivers coming downstairs.

13 TRUSTEE CHENG: I see drivers going to
14 restaurants and bars in the neighborhood that --

15 MR. ANGELO: Well, there is obviously --

16 TRUSTEE CHENG: I'm not arguing.

17 MR. ANGELO: There's no reason they should.
18 Their employer has bathrooms to use for them. We will
19 make sure the drivers are aware to use the bathrooms at
20 16 Verbena.

21 TRUSTEE CHENG: Are there rate cards in the
22 taxicabs? I've never seen a rate card.

23 MR. VITELLO: We just received all the rate
24 cards.

25 (Whereupon, Richard Vitello was duly sworn by

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1 the Court Reporter.)

2 MR. VITELLO: Richard Vitello, V-I-T-E-L-L-O.

3 We do have the rate cards. We just recently
4 did all the inspections and our rate cards were just
5 handed out from the Floral Park PD. We just received
6 all of them.

7 TRUSTEE CHENG: When you say just received
8 them, the agreement has been in place since actually
9 1994, 1998.

10 MR. VITELLO: Every year we do the inspections
11 and every year we pay for the stickers and the rate
12 cards. We've just gotten them recently.

13 MR. ANGELO: So the rate --

14 MR. VITELLO: Rate cards are in the cars now.

15 TRUSTEE CHENG: They are supposed to be
16 mounted in the driver area and also in the passenger
17 area. I've been in the cabs many times and there's
18 never been a rate card.

19 MR. VITELLO: They should be in the visor.
20 They are very visible.

21 TRUSTEE CHENG: I'm not arguing. There's
22 never been one in the passenger area, and that's part of
23 the agreement also.

24 MR. VITELLO: That's not a problem.

25 MR. ANGELO: Mr. Cheng, we will make sure that

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1 occurs.

2 TRUSTEE CHENG: What is the current rate for
3 inside the Village?

4 MR. VITELLO: \$4.00.

5 TRUSTEE CHENG: In 2006, that went up from
6 \$3.50 to \$4.00 because of the increase in gasoline
7 costs. I think there's been a decrease in gasoline
8 costs. What is the tie-in -- I'm a new comer -- as to
9 what charge per gallon of gasoline that it went from
10 \$3.50 to \$4.00?

11 MR. ANGELO: Well, Mr. Cheng, while the price
12 of gasoline may have dropped slightly, it is a very
13 volatile number.

14 TRUSTEE CHENG: You're right. That's why
15 there should be a benchmark.

16 MR. ANGELO: But other costs have gone up.
17 Cost of insurance, cost of repairs have all gone up.
18 So, general expenses tend to rise. So while one expense
19 may drop, the other expense goes up.

20 TRUSTEE CHENG: The proviso on Page 10 of the
21 agreement states, on condition that in the event of an
22 energy cost decrease, the local fare would revert to
23 \$3.50. It doesn't say based on other costs, it talks
24 about the cost of fuel, on the bottom.

25 MR. ANGELO: I'm reading it.

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1 I'm not sure what this was benchmarked to,
2 what the price of gasoline was on May 2nd, 2006.

3 TRUSTEE CHENG: We will look into it, as a
4 board, what it was, not so much even in 2006, but
5 historically over the life of the various agreements
6 that have been extended.

7 Finally, you asked for a four-year extension.
8 When I read the minutes of the last extension, it was
9 based on the fact that the company was looking for
10 financing for the purpose new vehicles. Is that the
11 same reason?

12 MR. ANGELO: No. We are just seeking a
13 four-year extension.

14 TRUSTEE CHENG: Historically, it's been a
15 three.

16 MR. ANGELO: Except for the last extension.

17 TRUSTEE CHENG: Because you were doing
18 financing for the vehicles.

19 MR. ANGELO: Right.

20 I don't see anyone speaking in opposition. I
21 don't know why there would be objections. We are just
22 asking, if the Board is so inclined to grant the
23 extension, we ask that they consider doing a four-year
24 extension.

25 MR. RYAN: Because you would rather see us

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1 every four years rather than --

2 MR. ANGELO: I wouldn't mind seeing you every
3 year, but we are getting grayer; aren't we?

4 MR. RYAN: We are, indeed.

5 MAYOR TWEEDY: Trustee Longobardi?

6 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: I do have one.

7 Again, thank you very much for everything
8 you've done for our village as a good and great business
9 in our village, especially for the younger people, and
10 providing service to them for the things that they do.
11 I will leave it at that.

12 I do have a question, and it involves where
13 you are storing your cars right now. I believe you have
14 a storage facility, cars are stored in the lot zoned by
15 the former Koenig's property. Given the possibility
16 that there may be some type of change in the way
17 Koenig's is operated within the timeframe of what this
18 agreement may be, do you have plans for where you are
19 going to put these cars should the owners want to use
20 that lot for other reasons?

21 MR. VITELLO: Until further notice, that's
22 where we are allowed right now from the owner of that
23 lot.

24 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: With your space being
25 limited to what it is in Floral Park, do you have an

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1 idea?

2 MR. VITELLO: Right now we are still searching
3 around. We have some prospects in sight right now.

4 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: I think that's something
5 that you have to look at and look at it really hard.

6 MR. VITELLO: Yes.

7 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. ANGELO: Many of the drivers take their
9 cars home at night just to alleviate some of that
10 problem.

11 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Again, having cars parked
12 all over the village is not something we want to see.

13 MR. ANGELO: We've been through it before, so
14 we don't want to go back there.

15 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Thank you.

16 MAYOR TWEEDY: And my only follow up would be,
17 if the rest of the Board are concerned about the
18 cleanliness around the space, but certainly the cars
19 themselves, which has not presented a problem, but if
20 you were to enter into a longer agreement, that would be
21 even that more important that you would be vigilant to
22 those as you are today to the maintenance of your
23 facility as well as your, I mean your vehicles, as well
24 as your facility.

25 And again, I echo everyone on this board who

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1 has said you've been longtime corporate clients of the
2 Village and we do appreciate all you have done through
3 the Chamber of Commerce and through many other ventures
4 that you worked with the Village. You've been a great
5 sponsor of Little League as well as your contributions
6 to the 911 Monument.

7 With that, do you have any closing
8 statements -- I'm sorry.

9 Any additional questions from the Board?

10 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: I just have one more
11 question.

12 With regards to some of the stipulations in
13 the contract, how are the new drivers notified what they
14 should or should not be doing with regards to bathroom
15 facilities and certain parking regulations?

16 MR. ANGELO: I think that's part of the
17 training process when a new driver is hired.

18 MR. VITELLO: They are interviewed and there's
19 a lot of steps we go through, then they are told exactly
20 what they should do or they shouldn't. And that's
21 mandatory.

22 MR. ANGELO: What would happen if you found a
23 driver who was violating the rules, your internal rules?

24 MR. VITELLO: I would have to let them go.

25 MR. ANGELO: We want to keep clean cars, a

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1 clean environment, and just not have any problems.

2 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Thank you.

3 MR. ANGELO: Problems only cost money.

4 MAYOR TWEEDY: Thank you.

5 Any further questions?

6 Do you have any closing statement?

7 MR. ANGELO: No, your Honor -- Mr. Mayor.

8 I would just ask that the Board consider our
9 request for an extension, three years as a minimum, four
10 years if you are so inclined. And our clients intend to
11 be here in three or four years seeking a further
12 extension.

13 Thank you for your time.

14 MAYOR TWEEDY: Thank you.

15 While I don't see anyone in the audience, is
16 there anyone who would like to make a statement either
17 for or against the application?

18 Being none, I will entertain a motion to close
19 the public hearing and reserve decision.

20 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: So moved.

21 TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Second.

22 MAYOR TWEEDY: Would you kindly pole the
23 Board, Ms. Walsh.

24 THE CLERK: Trustee Fitzgerald?

25 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Aye.

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THE CLERK: Trustee Longobardi?

TRUSTEE LONGOBARDI: Aye.

THE CLERK: Trustee Pombonyo?

TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Aye.

THE CLERK: Trustee Cheng?

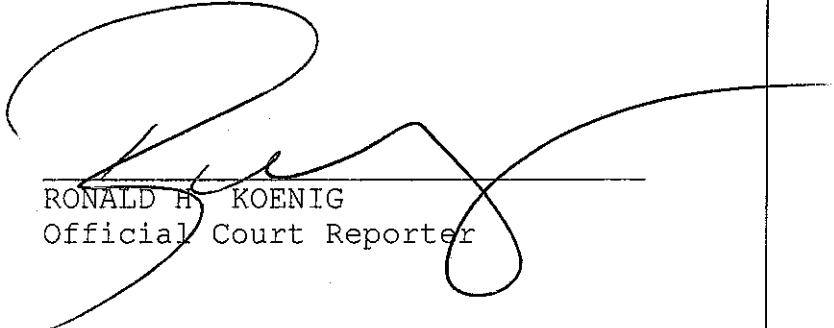
TRUSTEE CHENG: Aye.

THE CLERK: And Mayor Tweedy?

MAYOR TWEEDY: Aye.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much.

CERTIFIED THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND
ACCURATE TRANSCRIPT OF THE ORIGINAL STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES
IN THIS CASE.



RONALD H. KOENIG
Official Court Reporter