## Docket No. TE-180220-Vol. I

## In the Matter of Garza Wine Tours, LLC

## April 11, 2018

## .

## BEFORE THE WASHINGTON

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of Determining ) DOCKET NO. TE-180220 the Proper Carrier Classification ) VOLUME I of, and Complaint for Penalties ) Against:

GARZA WINE TOURS LLC

MOVER'S COURT
Pages 1-28
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE LAURA CHARTOFF

April 11, 2018<br>1:30 P.M.

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive SW Olympia, Washington 98504

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| 2 | ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: |  |  |  |
| 3 | LAURA CHARTOFF |  |  |  |
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| 14 | ALSO PRESENT: |  |  |  |
| 15 | GLORIA HERRERA <br> Spanish Interpreter |  |  |  |
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OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON; APRIL 11, 2018
1:30 P.M.
--○00--
(All proceedings were translated by the interpreter, and all answers given were through the interpreter, unless otherwise noted.)

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P R O C E E D I N G S
$$

JUDGE CHARTOFF: So let's be on the record. Good afternoon. My name is Laura Chartoff, and I am the administrative law judge with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. I am the presiding officer for today's hearing being conducted at the Commission's headquarters in Olympia.

Today is Wednesday, April 11th, 2018, and the time is approximately 1:30 p.m. Today's hearing involves a total of four charter party or excursion services carriers. So the first thing we will do is take a roll call to determine which companies are present. As you can see, there is a court reporter creating a record of today's proceedings. So when I call your name, please raise your hand to identify yourself and also give a verbal response to the roll
call like "here" or "present."
So the first docket is TE-180219, Tiger Express Shipping Corporation, doing business as Tiger Travel.

MS. NGUYEN: Present.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
The next case is TE-180220, Carmen
Ceron-Garza, Garza Wine Tours.
MS. GARZA: Present.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
The next docket is TE-180210, Christene Davis, Crescent Bar Charters.

MS. DAVIS: Present.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
And the fourth docket is TE-170879, Michael Brown, doing business as DLux Limos LLC.

MR. BROWN: Here, Your Honor.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: So each of you are here because the Commission filed a complaint alleging that each of your companies is performing or advertising to perform work as a charter party or excursion services carrier without the required permit. The purpose of today's proceeding is to formally explain what your choices are and then hear from each of you regarding which option you wish to pursue.

You can choose one of two options on behalf of your company. So the first option is to cease and desist providing, offering, or advertising unpermitted charter party or excursion services. If you choose this option, you will need to demonstrate what you have done to shut down your business either completely or partially to avoid further enforcement action by the Commission. The Commission is going to want to see sufficient proof that you are no longer performing unlawful services, for example, you will need to provide proof that you have taken down or changed your website or other online advertisements for your business.

The second option is to ask for a formal classification hearing to show why you don't need a permit. If you choose this option, you are contesting the allegations in the complaint and claim not to be conducting charter party or excursion services. For this option, we will schedule a formal hearing for a date in the near future with a deadline two to three weeks from now for both your company and the Commission Staff to declare all witnesses and file all exhibits.

Each of you has a right to be heard by the Commission, and I will call you up to do that individually. Commission Staff also has a right to be heard, and the Commission compliance investigator will

1 be seated at the table to my right.

Now that we've gone over the general options for each of your companies, let me explain the rest of today's procedures. In a few minutes, I'll call each of your companies forward to make your choice on how to proceed. At that time, $I$ will swear you in so that anything you tell the Court will be under oath and can be considered as sworn testimony. Once you are sworn in, I will ask if you understand your options for today's hearing and then ask you to state your preference. If there's anything else you want to explain to me, you can do so at that time.

In each of the complaints, Commission Staff has not only alleged that you are providing charter or excursion services without a permit, they are also seeking to have a penalty imposed. The law sets the maximum penalty for each violation at $\$ 5,000$. Staff will be making a penalty recommendation as part of any agreed order. Staff will be explaining that recommendation, but the Commission will be making the final decision about the amount of penalty to be imposed.

If you choose to testify about how you are getting out of the charter and excursion carrier business, $I$ will allow you to make a statement

## Page 8

1 explaining how you plan to do that. Depending on what
2 proof you can provide, you should be able to reach an
3 agreed order resolving this matter with Commission
4 Staff, and you can speak to Staff about that during the 5 recess. your case.

After I hear from each of your companies, we will take a break to provide Commission Staff time to meet with each of you and prepare a final disposition of

So I will start calling the companies now. First company is Tiger Express Shipping Corporation, d/b/a Tiger Travel and Zhongxiang Ye.

Oh, please sit right there and turn on the

So let's start with Staff. Can you please state your name and job title for the record?

MR. RAUB: My name is Justin Raub. I'm a compliance investigator for consumer protection. My
name is Justin Raub. I'm a compliance -- or compliance investigator for consumer protection.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Can you spell your last name?

MR. RAUB: R-a-u-b.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
And you?
MS. NGUYEN: Good afternoon, my name is Trang Nguyen, $N-g-u-y-e-n . \quad I \quad a m$ making an appearance on behalf of Patrick Feldman, who is seeking a continuance of the hearing for this afternoon if that's possible. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Can you repeat your first name?

MS. NGUYEN: Yes, it's Trang, T-r-a-n-g. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And the firm you are with? MS. NGUYEN: I'm with Feldman \& Lee. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And how do you want to proceed this morning?

MS. NGUYEN: I don't know. I'm just here to seek a continuance. Honestly, this is my third week on the job. I got a call yesterday saying can you cover a hearing? Just go in there and ask for a continuance. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. Because your firm was just retained?

MS. NGUYEN: I have no idea. I mean, I

## Page 10

1 think I was told Patrick has a conflict and couldn't
2 attend the meeting today.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.
MS. NGUYEN: So my only job is to come down and get another date. I apologize.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Do you -- I think you -- we previously mentioned May 18th in the afternoon as a possible...

MS. NGUYEN: I believe Mr. Feldman will be out of the country from May 1 st to May 18th, and they are hopefully requesting for any date after May 28 th. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I have several dates in the first week of June.

MS. NGUYEN: Okay.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: June 1, June 4. Do you have access to his calendar?

MS. NGUYEN: I -- let's just go with the 4th. I think that will give him enough time to get up to speed again.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. 9:30 or 1:30?
MS. NGUYEN: Let's do 1:30, please.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I think -- okay. I agree to do a continuance to June 4th at 1:30, and I will get a notice out to you probably tomorrow.

MS. NGUYEN: All right. Thank you. And I

1 have the notice of appearance. Did the Court need this?

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Sure.
MS. NGUYEN: Okay.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
MS. NGUYEN: My apologies.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call next Carmen Ceron-Garza, Garza Wine Tours.

THE INTERPRETER: I am the interpreter for Ms. Garza today, Your Honor, here with her husband. MS. PAUL: We can get another chair. Are all three of you coming up?

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Let's be off the record for a minute.
(Pause in the proceedings.)
JUDGE CHARTOFF: We'll be back on the record.

Let's start with Staff. Please state your name and title.

MR. HOXIT: My name is Jason Hoxit. I'm a compliance investigator with the safety and consumer protection division. May last name is spelled H-o-x-i-t.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And can you please state your first and last name?

MS. GARZA: Good afternoon. My name is

## Page 12

1 Carmen Ceron-Garza.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your relationship to the company?

MS. GARZA: The company is under my name, was under my name.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you understand
your -- the options I presented earlier?
MS. GARZA: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you know which way you want to proceed?

MS. GARZA: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And how would you like to proceed?

MS. GARZA: We close the company, but I have to explain that Garza Tours didn't have any vehicles, and they were using the vehicles for A Plus Taxi. So then now A Plus Taxi is in the process of getting the license that we need. A Plus Taxi is my husband's company, and Garza Tours is under my name, but he was the one who was managing the company.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: I forgot to swear you in. So let me swear you in right now. Please stand. (Carmen Ceron-Garza and Armando Garza sworn.)

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.

I'm sorry, so you were saying that you closed the company, that your husband has a company, A Plus Taxi, and that he's going to get a permit for his business; is that right?

MS. GARZA: Yes, that's correct, and I have the documents that the lawyer prepared for you.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you. Let me swear you in.
(Jason Hoxit sworn.)
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
Okay. Have you had a chance to verify? MR. HOXIT: Yes, I verified that the Garza Wine Tours, LLC has been closed with the Department of Revenue, and Garza Wine Tours has been added to that d/b/a under A Plus Taxi, LLC, as well as the Garzawinetours.net for the company has been modified to not advertise for charter and excursion services.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. So we will
pursue a cease and desist order today?
MS. GARZA: I don't understand.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Oh, okay. So your options
today are to either do a cease and desist order with Staff or to challenge but...

MS. GARZA: I'm not going to challenge.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. So what I'd

## Page 14

1 like you to do is to stay for the recess, stay in the 2 room for the recess until we recess and then meet with 3 Staff, and you'll be able to -- oh, here, I will read my 4 script. That'll make it easier. So when we take a 5 recess, you will have the opportunity to speak with 6 Staff and see if you can agree on an order for entry. 7 And essentially that order will say that you agree you 8 were operating without a permit, that you advertised 9 without a permit, and that you agree to stop operating 10 until you get a permit should you decide to apply for 11 one. now Christene Davis, Crescent Bar Charters LLC.

Okay. And please state your name and title for the record.

MS. PAUL: I'm Susie Paul. My last name is P-a-u-l, and I'm a compliance investigator with consumer protection.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
And for the company?
MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with
Crescent Bar Charters.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.
MR. DAVIS: She's listed as the owner, but I'm her husband, Troy Davis, and I pretty much do the day-to-day work for the company.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And I would like all three of you to stand up.
(Christene Davis, Troy Davis, and Susie Paul sworn.)

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
Okay. So do you understand what I talked about earlier, the options?

MS. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you have a preference on how you would like to proceed?

MR. DAVIS: Yes, we would like to suspend our -- and then we've already reapplied for a new

## Page 16

1 permit. So we've suspended our advertising already and
2 hopefully complied. I hope Susie's verified that. I've
3 been communicating with her via email as much as
4 possible, so then we would like to reapply, which we've
5 already done.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you want -would you like to pursue the cease and desist order and negotiate with Staff on the penalty?

MR. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And did you hear the paragraph I went through where I talked about the recess?

MR. DAVIS: Yes, yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Would you like me to repeat
it?
MR. DAVIS: No, you don't need to.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Great. Okay. So yeah, stick around, return to your seat, and wait for -- to talk to Staff at the recess.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. Thank you.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
Okay. The last is Michael Brown, doing business as DLux Limos LLC.

Okay. So starting with Staff, please state your name and job title, spelling your last name for the

1 record.

MR. TURCOTT: Good afternoon, Your Honor.
It's Michael Turcott, $T-u-r-c-o-t-t, ~ c o m p l i a n c e ~$
investigator in consumer protection.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
And company?
MR. BROWN: DLux Limos.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last name, spelling your last name?

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Michael Brown, DLux Limos, $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{r}-\mathrm{o}-\mathrm{w}-\mathrm{n}$.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: And you're the owner?
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. So let me swear you in, both of you.
(Michael Brown and Michael Turcott sworn.)

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
So did you hear the options --
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: -- I said earlier?
Do you understand?
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Do you have a preference on how you want to proceed?

MR. BROWN: Cease and desist and speak with Staff.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Do you need -- do you have any -- I assume you're -- you have no objection to a cease and desist order?

MR. TURCOTT: No, Your Honor. No objections.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. So did you hear --
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: -- the directions?
Okay. Great. Do you have any questions?
MR. BROWN: No.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.
MR. BROWN: We're all set.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: So please return to your seat and wait to speak with Staff at the recess.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Your Honor.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: So at this point, we're going to take a recess, and as soon as you have a chance to review the cease and desist orders and language with Staff, there will be some negotiation about the penalty. It may be nominal depending on the history of your company or there may be a reason that Staff asked for a larger penalty; for example, if you have appeared here before or have previously held a household goods per --

1 previously held an excursion or charter party carrier 2 permit with the Commission.

## Page 20

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Is your microphone on?
MR. GARZA: I'm Armando Garza, Carmen's husband. The agreement that we came up with is that my wife has dissolved the company and in turn, I have submitted a request to have Garza Wine Tours put on as a trade name for A Plus Taxi, working as A Plus Taxi. And I think we've complied with everything that we have to as far as getting all the proper registrations and so forth and blah, blah, blah, concerning the vehicle that we want to use. And the only thing that I'm waiting on right now would be proper insurance coverage. So anyways, he's got the declarations for both my wife and I.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.
MR. GARZA: And I think maybe he can explain it better than $I$ can.

MR. HOXIT: Your Honor, Staff would like to enter in CCG-1 and AG-1 as exhibits. CCG-1 is a declaration of Carmen Ceron-Garza and AG-1 is a declaration of Armando Garza, Jr.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you. And there's no objection?

MR. HOXIT: No objections, Your Honor. JUDGE CHARTOFF: So I will admit these exhibits marked as AG-1 and CCG-1.
(Exhibits AG-1 and CCG-1 admitted.) JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.

So I'm just going to talk about the stipulated order to make sure you understand the order. So for the record, it says that Garza Wine Tours admits it conducted operations without the required certificate and that it also advertised to operate as a charter party or excursion service carrier without -- on at least one occasion. And a $\$ 5,000$ penalty is being imposed, 4,500 of the penalty is suspended for a period of two years and waived thereafter provided the business refrains permanently from operations as a charter party or excursion carrier in the state of Washington.

The remainder of the penalty is payable according to the schedule in Appendix A, which shows $\$ 150$ today and payments monthly thereafter, and that you agree to cease and desist operations as a charter party and excursion carrier.

I just need to go over a couple more things. The order to cease and desist is permanent, meaning it does not expire. So even after the two-year period of the suspended penalty, if Staff discovers you are still operating, Staff can go straight to superior court and seek enforcement of this order, which will include significant additional penalties. So there is a strong

## Page 22

1 incentive for you to comply with the law. And with
2 regard to the payment schedule, if you miss a payment,
3 the entire amount, including the $\$ 4,500$, will become due
4 and payable immediately. So if for some reason you're
5 going to be late making a payment, you will need to
6 contact Staff and make arrangements. Failing to contact
7 Staff will ensure that the entire penalty is imposed.
8 Do you understand that?
9

10
11
12 MR. GARZA: Yes. MS. GARZA: Yes. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Do you understand legally what you can and can't do?

MS. GARZA: Yes.
MR. GARZA: Yes, a little bit more than what I did before, yes.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And remember that Commission Staff is always available to assist you if you have any questions. The Commission's goal is compliance. Are there any additional questions?

MR. HOXIT: Not from Staff. MR. GARZA: No. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Then I will sign the order. Okay. And Staff will make a copy for you and then you are free to go.

MS. GARZA: Thank you so much.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
MR. GARZA: Thank you.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: So I will next call
Christene Davis, Crescent Bar Charters.
Okay. So, Ms. Davis, did you have a chance to walk through the order?

MS. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And did you understand all the pages?

MS. DAVIS: I do.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And I see you and Staff have both signed the order.

MS. DAVIS: Mm-hmm.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And it looks like you have admitted that you conducted operations in the state after the cancellation or revocation of the required certificate?

MS. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And the company offered to provide charter party or excursion services on at least one occasion and also advertised to operate as a charter party or excursion service in the state of Washington.

MS. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And -- let's see, and Crescent Bar will immediately cease and desist

Page 24
1 operations as a charter party excursion service carrier?

MS. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And assessed a penalty of $\$ 5,000$. $\$ 1,500$ is suspended for a period of two years. MS. DAVIS: Yes. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And the remainder of the penalty is due and payable...

MS. DAVIS: We paid it. We paid our due. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Oh, okay. There's a -- the order says according to the schedule in Appendix A. So I'm going to just cross that out.

MS. PAUL: Okay. Yes, there was no payment plan. They made the payment today.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. And did you hear -- I'll just repeat this quickly. The order to cease and desist is permanent, meaning it does not expire. So even after the two years of the suspended penalty, when that has run, if Staff discovers you are still operating, Staff can go straight to superior court to seek enforcement of the order which will include significant additional penalties.

MR. DAVIS: That's unless we obtain a new permit, correct?

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Yes.
MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Yes. Oh, so you paid the penalty in full. Oh, wait. Right. So you paid the penalty in full so no payment plan. Okay. And do you understand legally what you can and can't do?

MR. DAVIS: Yes.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and sign this. Okay. We will get you a copy and you're free to go.

MS. DAVIS: Thank you.
MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Your Honor.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And Michael Brown?
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. So you had a chance to walk through the order?

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you understand all
five pages?
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And I see that you and Staff have signed it.

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you have admitted that DLux Limos has conducted operations in the state of Washington without the required certificate.

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.

## Page 26

JUDGE CHARTOFF: And offered to provide charter party or excursion service carrier services on at least one occasion and also advertised to operate charter party or excursion services on at least one occasion?

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you have been assessed a penalty of $\$ 5,000$. 3,500 of the penalty is suspended?

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And the remainder of the penalty --

MR. BROWN: Paid in full.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Oh, that has been paid in full, okay.

Is that correct?
MR. TURCOTT: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.
MR. TURCOTT: Yes, Your Honor.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Again, I'm just crossing out subject of schedule on Appendix A. Since it's a typo, I think it's -- we don't need to resign. And do you understand the order to cease and desist is permanent?

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Until further

1 licenses are in place?

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Right, unless you have a license in place.

MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you understand
legally what you can and can't do?
MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Any additional
questions? Okay. I will sign it. We'll get you a copy and you will be free to go.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Your Honor. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you. Okay. And we are adjourned.
(Adjourned at 3:24 p.m.)

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Page 28
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C E R T I F I C A T E
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## STATE OF WASHINGTON

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        COUNTY OF THURSTON
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        COUNTY OF THURSTON
    I, Tayler Garlinghouse, a Certified Shorthand
        Reporter in and for the State of Washington, do hereby
        certify that the foregoing transcript is true and
        accurate to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.
    ```


\section*{Tayler Garlinghouse, CCR 3358 \\ Jaylen grarlinghouse}```

