

The Drivers Cooperative

June 27, 2022

Dear TDC Board of Directors:

This letter is a call to action from staff members across Operations, Driver Engagement, and Platform to transfer managerial leadership from the two co-founders Erik Forman and Ken Lewis to the staff hired and qualified to execute on key responsibilities across the organization.

Based on our collective experience and observation, the co-founders have reached the upper limit of their ability to realize the vision of The Drivers Cooperative. The unilateral decision-making control held by Erik has resulted in day-to-day business dysfunction and an entire team scattered in different directions.

The Drivers Cooperative is at an existential risk of survival and what follows is a list of grievances that have contributed to the current state of the business:

*Jeopardizing Growth of Business*

- § Delaying the hiring of sufficient team members for operations and platform development by upwards of six months, resulting in delays and burnouts
- § Prolonging execution of contracts by letting them sit unreviewed by leadership and lawyers
- § Rushing into last-minute verbal contracts with no recourse when terms are changed
- § Pursuing a resource-consuming lawsuit against CTG despite advice against it
- § Determining regulatory compliance measures for public safety with no legal input
- § Pushing to fulfill overly broad ambitions outside the scope of core business
- § Using TDC stakeholder meetings for promoting his second business, People's Choice Communications
- § Repeatedly neglecting to execute on payments to drivers while refusing to empower others to take on this responsibility.

*Perpetuating Toxic Work Environment*

- § Behaving in misogynistic manners towards female staff members
- § Managing in a constant state of urgency to take action leading to burnout
- § Modeling of unhealthy work culture and expectations for staff to do the same
- § Refusing to take into account collective decisions of staff when such decisions do not align with his own agenda

- § Condescending language especially when expressing differences in perspective
- § Centralizing all decision-making through Erik under the guise of “driver involvement” and simultaneously insisting “TDC is not a democratic organization”
- § Refusing to discuss the above issues when brought up by staff in meetings and surveys
- § Retaliatory behavior (withholding and micromanaging) against those who disagree or speak up

The staff remains committed and has acted in good faith towards the proposed changes that the co-founders laid out in the beginning of this year. Staff recognizes the co-founders laid the groundwork to get the co-op off the ground and the staff wants them to honor their prior plan to take a step back. A defining part of that plan was for both co-founders to play a part-time role in the business going forward. Instead, top-down management control remains with Erik and Ken through their prolonged occupation as Managing Director of Driver Engagement: a poignant example of their lack of follow-through, accountability, and discipline to stay the course as planned. For the co-op to survive, the staff believes it must adapt and change.

The immediate changes we demand:

- 1) Recusal of Erik Forman and Ken Lewis from management
- 2) Recusal of Erik Forman as Board President
- 3) Appointment of Erik Forman and Ken Lewis to an advisory council

The above must be met by **Friday, July 15th**.

Additionally, we demand to take the following steps to restore TDC to its originally intended nature as a platform cooperative:

- § Organizational restructuring and amendment of bylaws with the goal of making the co-op less susceptible to operational bottlenecks and concentrations of power
- § Distribute decision making by creating committees of drivers and staff to work democratically on areas of the business
- § Establish a transparent staffing committee for making democratic decisions on hiring, onboarding, and firing
- § Develop a conflict of interest policy to ensure we have a procedure in place to address board and management-level disputes.

At the heart of the changes we want to manifest greater confidence and trust in the value and richness of experience that the team brings to the organization. The Drivers Cooperative must yield different results and the time is now. The following staff members sign this letter with the understanding that doing so exposes them to risk of retaliation. If any individual’s position at TDC is terminated in retaliation, each of us is prepared to exit our positions in turn.

Signed,

Kevin Chen - Platform

James Vaughan - Platform

Salwa Raza - Operations

Michael Jacobs - Platform

Lesly Calle - Driver Engagement

Steven Suway - Platform

Henry Teran - Operations

Shaun Beckles - Operations

William Hernandez - Data Coordinator