Rogue Taxicabs Upsets City Council

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{audio}/images/stories/mp3/080701.rogue_taxies.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

Rogue taxicabs continue to be a problem in the city of Kodiak. They are run by people who provide rides to and from work or the grocery stores for their neighbors, for a fee smaller than what a licensed taxi would charge. They mainly serve cannery workers and others in the city’s service industries.

Several city councilmembers said they have been approached by legitimate cab drivers angry over the issue. The conversation at the last city council meeting came about during approval of the voluntary suspension of three taxi permits.

Councilman Jack Maker said passengers who use the rogue cabs do so at their own risk:

-- (Rogue 1 41 sec “… warn the public about utilizing these operations.”)

Councilwoman Josie Rosales echoed Maker’s concerns, but said her advice has fallen on deaf ears:

-- (Rogue
2 32
sec “…
I don’t know, they still don’t listen.”)

Councilman
Tom Walters said it might take a sting operation by the police to bring down
the rogue cab operations:

-- (Rogue
3 21
sec “…something
like that if everyone was concerned.”)

Councilman
Gabriel (GABE-real) Saravia (S’raw-VEE-ah) said he has heard that the rogue
drivers have expanded their service, driving people to and from the airport and
other locations. He said that unless a passenger stepped forward, it would be
hard to gather the needed evidence:

-- (Rogue
4 29
sec “…
to enforce the rules that we have.”)

The city, which regulates taxicabs, allows a driver to take their cars out of service for up to six months in a calendar year without losing their permit. Every month there are one or two of the voluntary suspensions. Many drivers blame the increased cost of gas and insurance for the requests, and the increased competition from the rogue drivers is not helping matters.

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