
CITY OF BETHEL

Press Release

In light of the recent news from the Office of Special Prosecutions & Appeals (OSPA) regarding the charges against several cab drivers and one Cab Company, the City of Bethel has been asked about what it intends to do.

Put simply, per the Bethel Municipal Code, section 5.20.110 – the City of Bethel intends to abide by the principle derived from 6th Amendment to the Bill of Rights: “Innocent until proven guilty.”

Bethel Municipal Code, section 5.20.110 authorizes the suspension and/or revocation of a taxicab/chauffeur license under three (3) conditions:

1. If the driver is **convicted** in a court of law of certain offenses. The sale or importation of alcohol is one of the enumerated offenses.
2. If there is sufficient evidence of the driver’s inability to safely operate the motor vehicle; or
3. If the driver refuses or fails a random drug or alcohol test.

At this time the City is aware that several licensed cab drivers have been charged with the crime of selling alcohol without a license. However, as of today’s date, none of these drivers or companies has been found guilty in a court of law. Because of this, the City is taking no action on any license and will not do so until or unless there is a conviction or one of the other 2 conditions becomes applicable.

The City reminds anyone interested in this issue that this law was written in 2008 (9 years before the incident in the papers today) so this law is not a response or method of protecting a particular person or group of persons. Instead the law, having been written when no particular issue was in controversy, represents a calm and reasoned approach to a difficult situation.

While the public safety commission may be looking at this ordinance soon, at this time the ordinance is not up for review before the City Council.
