

City's Limousine Problem May Be Settled on July 7

By GREG NOKES
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

The city of Medford's current taxi cab and limousine controversy which seems to grow more and more complex each day, all started last winter when the Yellow Cab company raised its rates during the nights of heavy fog.

Although the raising of rates by Yellow Cab has little, if anything, to do with what has since transpired, it was the first of the current series of problems which has plagued Medford's city council for the past six months.

Before the controversy will finally be resolved it appears that portions of the Medford city code will be rewritten and more stringent regulations on limousine service at the airport enforced.

When the Yellow Cab company raised its rates on a couple of foggy nights last winter, the city received a number of complaints from irate customers. The owner of the taxi company, Carl Kellenberger, was informed by the city that under terms of his taxi cab license he could not raise rates without approval of the city council.

Defended Actions

Kellenberger defended his actions that his drivers could not make any profit during foggy nights because the driving was so slow. He requested the city council to empower the mayor or city manager to give him special permission to temporarily raise his rates during periods of bad weather.

Both the mayor and city manager said they did not want to have the responsibility of determining when and if weather conditions justified a raise in rates, and the council postponed action on the request indefinitely.

Before this matter could be shovied aside, however, the council received two separate requests for taxi cab licenses.

One of the requests was from Clarence F. and Mary Jane Jones who requested that they be granted a license to operate a limousine service between downtown Medford and the airport. This company is called the Med-

ford Airport Limousine service.

The other request was from W. H. Hill who wanted a license to operate a second taxi cab company in the city to be known as the Courtesy Cab company.

Protested License

Yellow Cab company, which is approximately 30 years old in Medford and had been the only cab company here for a number of years, vigorously protested the granting of both licenses.

Representatives of the company contended that the city could not adequately support a second cab company, and presented figures which they said would prove it. They also said that Yellow Cab was adequately serving the airport with cabs, and if a limousine service was desired they already had one which they could use.

But the city council did not feel that it was its responsibility to determine whether or not enough business existed to justify additional cab companies, and based its action on other considerations.

Several city councilmen expressed their opinions that competition in Medford's taxi-cab business might be good for the people. On Feb. 4, licenses were approved for both companies.

License Granted

Owners of the limousine service had said they wanted only to operate between downtown hotels and motels and the airport, and the council granted them a license with the understanding that these routes would be the only ones used by the company.

However, the city has no such thing as a limousine license and the limousine service was granted a taxi cab license, coming under the city's regulations for taxi cabs. A taxi cab license contains no restrictions on routes to be used by a company, and there was nothing in the license to bind the limousine service to the routes which it had said it would use.

Shortly after the new company started operating, it departed from its originally in-

tended routes and started transporting passengers into residential districts.

Yellow Cab company then filed a complaint with the city that transporting passengers into residential districts was in violation of the council's intent at the time the license was granted.

Numerous Complaints

The city was also receiving numerous complaints from persons who said the two companies were going overboard in their competition for passengers at the airport.

One elderly lady told city officials that two drivers almost had a fight over her while trying to get her to ride in their respective limousines.

The city council then called representatives of both the cab companies before it, in an attempt to clarify the rights of the Medford Airport Limousine service and to straighten out the situation at the airport.

An attorney for the limousine service admitted to the council that the company was transporting passengers into residential districts, but said it was necessary in order to meet competition.

He explained that when the limousine service had applied for a license there was no other limousine serving the airport, just cabs. But, after the limousine service started operating, he said, then Yellow Cab company also started running its limousine to the airport.

No Restrictions

He pointed out that there were no restrictions on the Yellow Cab limousine so it was able to take passengers anywhere. In order to meet this competition, the limousine service had to adjust its routes accordingly.

The council took no action on the matter at that meeting and postponed it until the next meeting pending further study.

At its June 16 meeting the council again took up the matter of the limousine service routes.

Ben Day, an attorney for the service, requested that the council allow the service to operate anywhere within a three-mile radius of Medford with one terminus always at the airport. He also requested a rate hike for areas other than the downtown area.

Wanted Approval

Day pointed out to the council that even though it might not have any control over the service's routes, the service wanted approval of the council before departing any further from the originally intended routes.

Councilman R. L. Van Sickle apparently reflected the sentiments of most members of the council when he said that to deny the request would be the same as revoking the license. If the council denied the request, he said, it would be the same as trying to enforce controls over the service's routes which the council does not have under the taxi cab license.

Both the revised routes and rates received council approval.

al. But the council stipulated that they would be effective only until the entire matter of limousines is again considered July 7.

No representative from the Yellow Cab company was at the meeting to protest the action.

Proposed Addition

When the council meets again July 7 it will have before it a proposed addition to the city code which the city administration hopes will solve the entire issue. In effect it is the taxi cab ordinance simply rewritten to suit limousines.

If adopted, the addition to the code would define limousines as, "a motor vehicle for hire, used to transport passengers over public ways by way of specified routes to and from the Medford Municipal airport."

The definition of a taxi cab has been and will continue to be, "a motor vehicle for hire, used for transportation of passengers within the city, and not operated exclusively over a fixed route."

Another Provision

Another provision in the proposed addition to the code is that limousine operators must file a schedule of routes, as well as rates, with the city and then stick to these routes unless a change is authorized by the council.

The most important new regulation—and it is not really new—will be the enforcement of a provision whereby operators of limousine companies must obtain a permit from the airport manager before they can serve the airport. This is in addition to its regular operating license from the city council.

This regulation is found under the portion of the city code regarding the municipal airport. It reads: "No person shall use the airport as a base of commercial aviation, or the carrying of passengers, without a permit from the airport manager, and the payment of the fees and charges prescribed for these privileges."

Previous Application

This provision has previously applied only to aircraft and similar uses, but City Attorney Joel Reeder is of the opinion that it is sufficiently broad enough to cover ground commercial traffic as well. It will be enforced as of July 1, and should not require any council action.

Operators of taxi cab companies and the limousine service are now paying \$250 a year for an operator's license and \$75 a year for each vehicle licensed with the city.

The city administration is recommending that the same \$250 operator's fee and \$75 vehicle fee be charged limousine operators under the new addition to the city code. This would mean that the Yellow Cab company would have to purchase a \$250 limousine operator's license in addition to its \$250 taxi cab operator's license.

Operates Cab

Because there has been no provision for limousines, Yellow Cab company's limousine

Annual Trappers' Rendezvous Set In Area July 22

The fourth annual Trappers' rendezvous, sponsored by the Oregon Historical Society, will be held in Jackson county July 22 to 25, the Society has announced.

Members of the Southern Oregon Historical Society and the Siskiyou Pioneer Sites Foundation also will participate in the annual event.

The group will assemble at Hawthorne park, Medford, Friday evening, July 22. A miner's breakfast in Jacksonville has been scheduled Saturday at 7 a.m.

Tours in Jacksonville, including the Beekman bank, have been arranged for the rendezvous as well as seeing fort sites, cemeteries, historic buildings, a gold mine, and other attractions of southern Oregon. Jack Sutton, Grants Pass, will serve as guide for the session.

Guests of Honor

Medford Mayor John Snider will be guest of honor at a Society picnic at McKee bridge on the Applegate at noon. Swimming is slated for various places along the way before dinner Saturday evening at Southern Oregon college, Ashland. Dr. Arthur Taylor, Oregon historian and SOC faculty member, is in charge. Cards and square dancing has been planned.

At 7 a.m. Sunday guided tours have been arranged for Crater lake, Oregon caves, or the Lava beds. Further sight-seeing is available for those extending their trip until Monday, according to the Society.

Members of the OHS, their guests and affiliated society members have been invited to attend the rendezvous.

Reservations for the event should be made by July 15, the Society added. A registration fee of \$1 is to cover all incidental expenses, including refreshments, tours, and entertainment.

had been operating under a taxi cab license and an additional fee has not been necessary.

The fee to be charged for a permit to serve the airport will probably be a nominal one. Its purpose would be control, not revenue.

Both taxi cab operator and vehicle licenses expire June 30, so that both the Yellow Cab company's limousine and the Medford Airport Limousine service, would come under the new limousine provision in the city code.

The city administration hopes that the new provision to the city code, if it passes the council next month, will end the limousine problems.

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Local Student Named To College Honor Roll
Portland—Melva Gebhard, 1519 North Riverside ave., Medford, has been named to the spring honor roll of 83 students at Lewis and Clark college. Requirements are a minimum study load of 15 hours and a grade average of 3.50 or better.

Melva, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Gebhard, is a senior majoring in history.

Two new drivers of sports cars suffered chest pains because their muscles were not accustomed to shifting gears and steering without power assistance.

Dr. Strauss said that foot room limitations may compel drivers to sit in positions that will cause hip and back pains.

Ft. Lewis Man Said In Good Condition

Lester Delbert Schall, 22, a Ft. Lewis, Wash., soldier who was injured in an accident while fleeing from Central Point police Thursday morning, is reported in good condition at Sacred Heart hospital.

Schall, who has admitted to and is charged with burglarizing the Courtesy Chevrolet company and taking a car, also admitted stealing a second car in Medford. He is 10 days AWOL from Ft. Lewis, according to Medford police.

Schall told police he took a car from the Parsons Motor company, 315 East Fifth st., Wednesday morning, and drove it as far as Canyonville where it broke down. He said he then abandoned

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