

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Civic Center Conference Room

City Council

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Scheidt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Conference Room.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Council led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Sharon Scheidt
Council Member Todd Wegner
Council Member Susan Love
Council Member Dawson Moore
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Dennis Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Alan Sorum

Also Present: 6 - City Manager Mark Detter
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval
Assistant City Manager Roxanne Murphy
City Clerk Sheri Pierce
Deputy City Clerk Allie Ferko
City Attorney Jake Staser (*by teleconference*)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2021**

The City Council regular meeting minutes of June 1, 2021 were approved as presented.

V. PUBLIC APPEARANCES**1. Public Appearance: Dr. Angela Alfaro & Terri Lynch, RN - COVID-19 Community Update**

Mr. Detter stated although the Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command had demobilized, there was still a need for periodic community updates. He explained he requested Dr. Alfaro and Ms. Lynch provide comments on the current status of COVID-19 in the community.

Ms. Lynch provided an update on trends in current local and state COVID-19 cases. She outlined current vaccination efforts. Dr. Alfaro provided additional information and trends regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and local testing efforts.

Mayor Scheidt asked if someone with symptoms who was fully vaccinated should be tested. Dr. Alfaro confirmed testing should occur for those who are symptomatic, regardless of their vaccination status.

VI. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

No members of the public appeared to provide testimony from the floor.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Approval of Communications Site Agreement with New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T)**
2. **Proclamation: Juneteenth Day**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve the Consent Agenda.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Approval of Contract Award with Curtis Electric, LLC for the Small Boat Harbor Electrical Vault Repairs Project in the Amount of \$174,900.00**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve the contract with Curtis Electric, LLC for the Small Boat Harbor Electrical Vault Repairs Project in the amount of \$174,900.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. Approval of the City's Annual Property and Casualty Insurance Renewal for the Period Beginning July 1, 2021

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve the City's annual property and casualty insurance renewal for the period beginning July 1, 2021.

Mr. David Hale, President of Hale & Associates, the city's insurance broker, outlined the current insurance market and changes observed while preparing the city's renewal.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

IX. ORDINANCES

1. #21-07 - Amending the Zoning Map to Effect a Change to Lot 1, Block 2, Robe River Subdivision Number One, Plat 84-2; 106 River Drive, from Residential Mobile Home to General Commercial. Second Reading. Adoption.

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Ordinance #21-07. Second reading. Adoption.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. #21-08 - Amending the Zoning Map to Effect a Change to Tract P, Port Valdez Subdivision, Plat 77-1 from a Mix of Multi-Family Residential and General Commercial to all Multi-Family Residential. Second Reading. Adoption.

MOTION: Council Member Moore moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve Ordinance #21-08. Second reading. Adoption.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

X. RESOLUTIONS

- 1. #21-24 - Amending the 2021 Budget by Accepting the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry 2021 Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant in the Amount of \$4,499.99 and Authorizing the Expenditure**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Wegner, to approve Resolution #21-24.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming
Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum
MOTION CARRIED.

- 2. #21-25 - Adopting the City of Valdez Meals Hill Master Plan**

MOTION: Council Member Wegner moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve Resolution #21-25.

Ms. Holly Spoth-Torres, founder of Huddle AK LLC, and City Parks & Recreation Director Nick Farline reviewed the final Meals Hill Master Plan included in the agenda packet in detail.

Council Member Wegner asked how the implementation of the plan would move forward. Mr. Farline explained the style of project lends itself to a phased approach, as well as opportunities to enlist volunteers and seek grants to help with the envisioned work in the plan. He shared his enthusiasm in returning to Council with a strategic implementation plan for the project.

Council Member Fleming stated the conversation regarding approval of the proposed plan should include understanding the requirements of future maintenance for each component.

Council Member Love shared concerns with adding maintenance of another large recreation area to the extensive facility list already managed by Parks & Recreation and the related impacts on City parks maintenance staff. Mr. Farline explained the full master plan included the ideal Meals Hill recreation space based upon community wants and needs. Ms. Spoth-Torres reminded Council the plan would continue to be flexible and not all portions of the project would be completed at one time. Smaller portions of the project could be selected and completed as time, staff, and funding allowed.

Council Member Devens shared his enthusiasm for the plan, calling it a windfall of good fortune to have the opportunity to move forward with a park of this type.

Council Members Moore and Wegner asked if projects included in the plan would come back to Council for approval before implementation. Mr. Farline explained projects would come back to Council for approval and the plan for the area could be updated as needed. Ms. Spoth-Torres reminded Council the remaining portion of EVOS funding would need to be used to develop portions of the park by the established deadline. Projects completed with this funding source would be prioritized over others.

Mayor Scheidt shared her concerns over implementation of the plan. She stated she was surprised maintenance and management had not been included in the plan as presented. Ms. Spoth-Torres explained the purpose of the master plan was to provide a roadmap to initially prioritize projects and funding for the park. She stated the end goal is to turn the park into an asset for the community. She explained in order to properly and comprehensively assess maintenance and management costs, Mr. Farline needed the roadmap approved first.

Council Member Love stated, while the master plan is well put together, she felt Council needed to consider what downstream repercussions would come from development of the park. Council Member Devens agreed broadly, but felt this specific project would prove to be of value to the community. He stated he had no concerns over adding an additional full-time City employee to manage the project and maintenance of the park. He stated he felt it would be appropriate considering the benefits of the park for the community.

Mr. Austin Love, Valdez resident, shared his enthusiasm for the project and his gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the Meals Hill Planning Committee. He reminded Council the committee had served as an advisory group and had not voted to approve the plan, unanimously or otherwise. He explained he did not believe the road regrading and seaside boardwalk portions of the plan had been supported by the community. He stated the draft had contained some information on implementation, though he did not see it included in the final plan as presented.

Mr. Ken Lares, Valdez resident, shared his gratitude for those in the community who participated in the creation of the master plan. He shared his concern over the fiscal implications for development of the park. He suggested utilizing volunteer groups to assist with the project and making the Meals Hill project a project for the community by the community.

Ms. Sheri Pierce, Valdez resident, outlined her involvement in the creation of the Homestead Trail and how the maintenance of the trail had originally been a state of Alaska responsibility, but ended up with City Parks Maintenance. Ms. Pierce stated the list of parks currently maintained by Ms. Marcie Roberts and the Parks Maintenance team was phenomenal and they were stretched thin already.

Council Member Wegner stated having volunteers to help do the project work sounded fantastic and many community members have great intentions and motivation to help at the start of a project. However, trends experienced with past projects indicate interest wanes over time and then maintenance falls to City staff.

Mr. Farline stated it was important to note that when the City agreed to acquire the Meals Hill property, Council and staff knew the park would require maintenance and management. He stated the master plan gave a thoughtful representation of the desire of the community and he looked forward to further working the process.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming
Excused:1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum
MOTION CARRIED.

XI. REPORTS**1. Procurement Report: Professional Services Agreement with Conventions, Sports & Leisure International, LLC for Multi-Use Recreational Facility Feasibility Study**

Council Member Fleming asked why a new feasibility study was needed when a report on the topic had already been prepared in 2009. He stated the community already had three local gymnasiums - one at each school - and wondered why additional indoor recreation space was needed.

Mr. Farline explained the current consultant was given the 2009 report which had been focused on specialty indoor facilities. The current study was meant to address the need for a more generalized facility, such as a field house, which could be used for many different purposes under one roof and include additional community needs such as an indoor walking track which were not available in the current gym facilities in town.

Council Member Wegner stated he was the City's parks and recreation department director during the 2009 feasibility study. He explained the 2009 effort was primarily related to the feasibility of building different types of indoor ice skating rinks

Council Member Love expressed concerns with the need to audit the use of current recreational facilities before building anything new. She stated if a general indoor recreation facility was needed, there also might be an opportunity to reduce other recreation facilities which were not being used.

Council Member Fleming shared concerns about insurance costs of a new generalized indoor recreation facility. Mr. Detter explained many different aspects would be addressed in the feasibility study, including maintenance and insurance costs.

2. Report: Thompson Pass Planning Process - BLM Draft East Alaska Resource Management Plan Amendment, Draft EA and FONSI

Mayor Scheidt requested further clarifying information on how the City was participating in the process as a "cooperating agency". Community Development Senior Planner Paul Nylund explained how staff were participating in the process, including disseminating information and collecting public input. He stated City staff had also participated in a meeting with the BLM before the current draft plan had been released. Mr. Detter stated cooperating agencies were specifically solicited to provide input on the plan. Council Member Fleming expressed his gratitude over BLM willingness to include Valdez in the conversation.

3. Procurement Report: Professional Services Agreement with Wolf Architecture, Inc. for Departmental Storage Facility (FS1) Renovation**4. Procurement Report: Contract Award with BDS Architects for Library Restroom Renovation Design Project in the Amount of \$79,340**

XII. CITY MANAGER / CITY CLERK / CITY ATTORNEY / MAYOR REPORTS**1. City Manager Report**

Mr. Detter discussed city programs, issues, and projects, including the dedication ceremony for the new fire station and the comprehensive plan public hearing.

He invited lobbyist Mr. Kim Hutchinson to address Council. Mr. Hutchinson, who attended by teleconference, discussed where legislation was with the state budget. He explained the House vote for the state budget was 21-18. He expressed frustration with legislators representing Valdez. He stated the reverse sweep had not passed. He believed the Senate would not vote to support the reverse sweep either and a special session would move forward.

2. City Clerk Report

Ms. Pierce updated Council on commission vacancies, the Theatre Conference brunch hosted by the City, the upcoming Council meeting schedule, and the Council strategic planning retreat.

3. City Attorney Report

Mr. Staser reviewed current cases and topics his firm is working on behalf of the City, including Alaska Trappers litigation, PPM litigation, municipal code revisions, and the upcoming special meeting executive session.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Scheidt thanked those involved in the State Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management's Resiliency Conference held in the Valdez Civic Center the previous week. She thanked the Civic Center staff, the IT Department, and the Clerk's Office for their hard work in moving Council Chambers temporarily to the Civic Center.

XIII. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Members Devens and Love shared their appreciation for the Juneteenth Proclamation.

Council Member Moore provided updates regarding the upcoming Theatre Conference event.

Council Member Love thanked the Huddle and Parks & Recreation teams for their work on the Meals Hill Master Plan.

Council Member Fleming thanked everyone who works to keep the community clean. He stated he has received quite a bit of positive feedback from visitors on how clean Valdez looked this summer.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Scheidt adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.