

# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686



## Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

**City Council**

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

Mayor O'Neil called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in Valdez City Council Chambers.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**III. ROLL CALL**

Present: 7 - Mayor Jeremy O'Neil  
Council Member Ron Ruff  
Council Member Christopher Moulton  
Council Member Sharon Scheidt  
Council Member Darren Reese  
Council Member Dennis Fleming  
Council Member Alan Sorum

Also Present: 6 - City Manager Mark Detter  
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval  
Assistant City Manager Roxanne Murphy  
City Clerk Sheri Pierce  
Records Manager Shelley McMillen  
City Attorney Jake Staser

**IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**Dr. John Cullen, Valdez Medical Clinic

Dr. Cullen addressed COVID-19 and the nature of this new infectious disease. Dr. Cullen encouraged frequent hand washing and for those who are sick to remain at home. Mayor O'Neil added the city leadership, the medical community, and other local stakeholders were standing up a Unified Command System.

Council Member Moulton asked for clarification on why the government was so interested in quarantining those with a virus so similar to the flu. Dr. Cullen stated lack of proper equipment to care for those who develop the viral pneumonia associated with COVID-19 was best addressed by keeping the spread to a minimum.

Council Member Moulton followed up by asking what the City's role was in managing the spread of COVID-19. Dr. Cullen stated the State of Alaska could declare a state of emergency and could then direct people to stay home.

Mr. Detter stated the City would partner with the State of Alaska on maintaining community safety. Mayor O'Neil recommended preparing for the worst and hoping for the best.

Valdez Resident Josh Swierk

Mr. Swierk addressed a snow removal issue he was having with a city contractor. Public Works Director Rob Comstock stated he had been at the property the previous night and his crew was implementing a plan to prevent the issue from reoccurring.

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **Approval of Senior Citizen Hardship Property Tax Exemption for Barbara Ezell**
2. **Acceptance of Resignation from the City Library Board (Mary Jo Evans)**
3. **Approval to Go Into Executive Session - (1) Municipal Boundary Issues (2) Hilcorp Acquisition (3) City Clerk Annual Evaluation**

MOTION: Council Member Moulton moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Approval of Contract Amendment #1 with Dawson Construction, LLC for Valdez Fire Station #1 Replacement CM/GC Contract in the Amount of \$891,905.00**

MOTION: Council Member Moulton moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve contract Amendment #1 with Dawson Construction, LLC for the Valdez Fire Station 1 Replacement CM/GC contract in the amount of \$891,905.00.

Council Member Moulton asked for clarification on the amendment. He stated it appeared to be related to allowing the contractor to purchase steel for the project. Mr. Duval stated the item is an amendment to the scope of the original contract with Dawson Construction. Procurement of required steel involves a long lead time in order to remain on schedule. The work had been included in the contract, however the City had not encumbered funds to cover this particular cost.

Council Member Ruff asked if the purchased steel would be stored on site, which Mr. Duval confirmed.

Council Member Reese verified the cost associated with the amendment was part of the original fire station budget and not an increase.

Council discussed the full cost of construction and pending review of the final design package.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

**2. Authorization to Continue Physician's Assistance Program Payments to Dr. Angela Alfaro**

MOTION: Council Member Sorum moved, seconded by Council Member Reese, to approve continuation of Physician's Assistance Program payments to Dr. Angela Alfaro.

Council Member Moulton asked about the effect this program had on Dr. Alfaro opening her own clinic. Dr. Alfaro confirmed it would be detrimental to her new business to lose funding through this program.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

**3. Approval of City of Valdez Federal Legislative Priorities**

MAIN MOTION: Council Member Moulton moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to approve 2020 federal legislative priorities.

Mr. Detter gave a comprehensive review of the list of recommended federal legislative priorities. Council Member Sorum detailed his history with working to bring a railroad to Valdez. Mayor O'Neil presented his concerns on listing it as a legislative priority at this point. Council Member Moulton agreed.

MOTION TO AMEND: Council Member Sorum moved, seconded by Council Member Moulton, to amend 2020 federal legislative priorities by removing item #3 regarding the rail system.

VOTE ON THE MOTION TO AMEND:

Yays: 6 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, and Council Member Sorum

Nays: 1 - Council Member Fleming

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED.

Council discussed retaining the AKLNG Project-FERC Environmental Impact Statement on the list. Mayor O'Neil voiced his support on it being retained.

Council discussed the history and purpose of members of Council and city administration going to Washington, D.C. to discuss Valdez Federal Legislative Priorities with key members of Congress and federal administration.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

#### **4. Discussion Item: Review of Health Insurance Renewal Figures**

Ms. Rhea Cragun, city human resources director, presented a first view comprehensive report regarding the renewal of city and school district employee health insurance programs. Changes to premiums and plan fund balance are the two variables that determine city/school health insurance program solvency.

Ms. Cragun and Ms. Colleen Savoy, health insurance broker for the city and school district plan, outlined how stop-loss coverage assists with payment of large health insurance claims over a certain dollar threshold. Ms. Savoy outlined strategy for choosing stop-loss deductible options, based upon historical trends and the balance between risk and cost.

Mayor O'Neil asked if the city employee relations team (ERT) would be given the opportunity to review or provide input in these types of changes. Ms. Cragun explained the ERT would be given the opportunity to review, especially if any changes directly impacted employee health insurance coverage or costs.

Mr. Cragun explained approval of the health insurance contract renewal would be presented during the next regular Council meeting.

## **VII. RESOLUTIONS**

### **1. #20-15 - Authorizing Deaccession of Valdez Museum Collection Items**

MOTION: Council Member Moulton moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Resolution #20-15.

Council Member Reese asked how long the items being discussed had been in the possession of the museum. Valdez Museum and Historical Archives (VMHA) Director Patty Relay stated they have been in the collection for over fifteen years. VMHA Curator Andrew Goldstein paraphrased state statutes for deaccessioning museum items, stating the items needed to remain in a museum's possession for a minimum of seven years. The items addressed on the list included in the agenda packet all met that minimum.

Council Member Reese asked for clarification on the procedure for deaccession of the items. Ms. Relay responded, saying the museum's Collections Committee

met with the curator and these items had been identified as duplicates. The list had then been presented to the VMHA Board of Directors and approved. The list was then submitted to the city clerk's for approval by Council. The next step following approval would require the list go through a public notice and comment period. Finally, an appeal period would occur before items are offered to museums around the state or disposed of through approved methods. Ms. Pierce offered to send out a copy of the museum's policy regarding disposal of items to those interested.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION:**

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Reese, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**VIII. REPORTS**

**1. Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update**

Council Member Scheidt asked for further information on how often updates would be presented to Council. Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Director Nick Farline said the plan was for the company to be in Valdez in April. He also planned to provide monthly updates.

**2. Monthly Treasury Report: January, 2020**

Council Member Reese expressed concern about the bank used. Finance Director Brian Carlson assured him there was a banking services request for proposals coming soon.

**IX. CITY MANAGER / CITY CLERK / CITY ATTORNEY / MAYOR REPORTS**

**1. City Manager Report**

Mr. Detter updated Council on the results of the Director's Retreat. Mr. Detter turned his time over to Chief of Police Bart Hinkle to update Council on the Wildlife Resistant Garbage Collection Program. Chief Hinkle stated the website for public information regarding the program would be published the following day. Door hangers and fliers would follow shortly.

**2. City Clerk Report**

Ms. Pierce reminded everyone that petitions for running for Council and School Board in the upcoming election were available at in the city clerk's office. The deadline for filing to run for office was March 16<sup>th</sup> at noon.

**3. City Attorney Report**

Mr. Staser deferred his report to executive session.

**4. City Mayor Report**

Mayor O'Neil expressed his pride in the Valdez Gilson Middle School Volleyball team wins over the prior weekend. He reiterated the importance of hand hygiene and staying home when sick. Gratitude for snow removal was also shared.

**X. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Council Member Ruff reminded everyone the Mayor's Cup was coming up. He recommended going out and supporting the racers.

Council Member Sorum touched on RCAC's recent discussions about the Hilcorp purchase.

Council Member Fleming thanked Mr. Rob Comstock, city public works director, and his crew for their work on snow removal.

Council Member Scheidt requested the housing work session on March 31<sup>st</sup> be pushed from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00p.m. Council provided consensus for the change.

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

City Council transitioned into executive session at 8:58 p.m.

**XII. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

City Council transitioned out of executive session at 9:59 p.m.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mayor O'Neil adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.