

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting
Council Chambers

City Council

WORK SESSION AGENDA - 6:00 pm Federal Lobbyist

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Dennis Fleming
Mayor Pro Tem Austin Love
Council Member Alan Sorum
Council Member Sharon Scheidt
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Olivia Foster
Council Member Joseph Lally

Also Present: 5 - City Clerk Sheri Pierce
City Manager John Douglas
Deputy City Clerk Elise Sorum-Birk
Assistant City Manager Bart Hinkle
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1. Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of December 3, 2024**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of December 17, 2024**

The previous meeting minutes were approved by consent.

V. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

- 1. Tommy Sheridan, University of Alaska Blue Economy Center - Mariculture and T3 Alliance Update**

VI. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Martha Barberio, Vice President of the Valdez Museum Board of Directors, introduced the new Executive Director, April Vasher-Dean.

VII. CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS: REPORTS & REFERRALS

- 1. Beautification Commission Report: 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Program Materials**
- 2. Referral: Beautification Commission Park Strip Maintenance Request Letter**

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approval of Federal Lobbying Professional Services Agreement with Capitol Hill Consulting Group in an Amount Not to Exceed \$100,000**
- 2. Approval of Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Renewal for Valdez Yellow Cab**
- 3. Approval of Contract with North Star Fire Protection, LLC for the 2025 Fire Prevention Systems Inspections in the Amount of \$44,258.00.**
- 4. Approval of City Manager Employment Agreement Amendment #1**

Item 4 pulled to new business

- 5. Approval To Go Into Executive Session Re: City Clerk Annual Evaluation**

MOTION: Council Member Scheidt moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve all remaining items on the consent agenda.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Approval of Settlement Agreement with Alderwood, LLC.**

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve the Settlement Agreement with Alderwood, LLC.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

- 2. Approval of Childcare Operating Grant Program in the Amount of \$200,000**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve Childcare Operating Grant Program in the amount of \$200,000.

Council Member Love requested clarification on the outside funding limit. Blue Shibler stated childcare programs who had funding from outside sources were already at an operating cost advantage.

Council Member Foster asked if the subsidies would directly impact the parents or if they would be kept on the business side. Shibler explained how they would benefit

those paying for services indirectly.

Council Member Love asked if the CSO funding would also be pursued. Economic Director Martha Barberio stated the operating grant would be in lieu of the CSO funding.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

3. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Alaska Assessment Assistance in an Amount Not to Exceed \$100,000

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve professional services agreement with Alaska Assessment Assistance in an Amount Not to Exceed \$100,000.

Council Member Love requested clarification on the scope of the contract. City Attorney Staser confirmed the scope would specifically address the taxation of oil spill response and oil transportation property.

Mayor Fleming asked where the funds would be pulled from. Finance Director Jordan Nelson stated the Finance fund would ultimately be paying.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

4. Purchase Approval: US&R Rescue Strut System from L.N. Curtis and Sons in the Amount of \$173,207.30

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to approve the purchase of a US&R Rescue Strut System from L.N Curtis and Sons, including delivery to Valdez, in the amount of \$173,207.30.

Council Member Sorum asked if this would be put on the maintenance list. Director Nelson provide confirmation that it would be.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

5. Approval of City Manager Employment Agreement Amendment #1

Moved from the Consent Agenda

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to

approve the City Manager Employment Agreement #1.

Council Member Love expressed his desire to further review and take into consideration the information received the day of the meeting.

MOTION: Council Member Love moved to postpone to the next regular meeting

Motion failed for lack of Second

Council Member Sorum encouraged Council to move forward with the approval.

Council Member Love noted in the Personnel Regulations there was no equivalent 5% annual increase for other positions. He expressed his desire to treat all executive level employees with equity.

Council Member Devens agreed on the importance of executive equity but did not believe the timing of the adjustment was appropriate and should have been addressed prior to making the offer.

Council Member Lally agreed with both Council Members Sorum and Devens.

Council Member Foster requested that, in the future, the Human Resources department should be brought in earlier to review the analysis prior to making an offer. She agreed equity at the executive level was key.

Council Member Scheidt stated she felt woefully underprepared the night the decision was made, but the offer had been made.

Council Member Devens stated there was a three-member committee which ran for six months to address concerns and noted that issues should have been addressed through the committee.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally

Nays: 1 - Love

MOTION CARRIED.

X. ORDINANCES

1. #25-01 - Amending Section 3.12.030 of the Valdez Municipal Code Titled Property Exempt for Taxation. First Reading. Public Hearing.

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to approve Ordinance 25-01 on first reading for public hearing.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally

MOTION CARRIED.

2. #25-02 - Amending Title 3 Property Taxes, Chapter 3.12, Section 12.040 Titled Additional Exemptions. First Reading. Public Hearing.

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to approve Ordinance 25-02 on first reading for public hearing.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

XI. RESOLUTIONS

1. #25-02 - Adopting Updates to City of Valdez Employee Personnel Regulations, and a New Effective Date Assigned.

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to approve Resolution 25-02.

Council Member Devens asked why incident and illness reporting shifted from 24 hours to eight hours. Human Resources Director Rhea Cragun explained it had been adjusted so HR had time to report it within the AML's 24-hour timeframe.

Council Member Love asked if any items needed to be approved at the current meeting, or if approval could wait until the next regular meeting. HR Director Cragun explained the first item was time sensitive.

Council Member Lally, in response to public comments received electronically, requested clarification on where the section addressing flexible or alternative schedule allowed for city personnel to live or work outside of city limits. HR Director Cragun stated that it did not include the section on telework. Telework was addressed in its own separate policy, which included a very limited basis, where teleworking outside City limits was allowed with a 30-day limit, that could be renewed and that the updates did not have an impact on the telework policy.

Council Member Scheidt requested more information on the intent of the resolution. HR Director Cragun explained the need to offer options for work-life balance while still making sure the City's needs were met.

Council Member Foster requested attention be paid to the effect on the public with any changes to schedules.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

2. #25-03 - Amending the 2025 City Budget by Accepting a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant in the Amount of \$280,000 from the US Department of Transportation to Assist in the Creation of a Pavement Management Plan

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Love, to approve Resolution 25-03.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

3. #25-04 - Amending the 2025 City Budget by Appropriating \$100,000 to the Finance Department for Assessing Services Contract to be Transferred from Repayment Reserve

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Love, to approve Resolution 25-04.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

4. #25-05 - Adopting an Alternative Allocation Method for the FY25 Shared Fisheries Business Tax Program and Certifying that this Allocation Method Fairly Represents the Distribution of Significant Effects of Fisheries Business Activity in FMA 15: Prince William Sound Area

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Love, to approve Resolution 25-05.

Council Member Love asked if Cordova and Whittier were also passing resolutions. Clerk Pierce explained Cordova had already passed one, and reviewed the process.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yays: 7 - Fleming, Love, Sorum, Scheidt, Devens, Foster and Lally
MOTION CARRIED.

XII. REPORTS

1. Procurement Report: Professional Services Agreement with R & M Consultants Inc. for Title 16 Revision Project in the Amount of \$89,755

XIII. CITY MANAGER / CITY CLERK / CITY ATTORNEY / MAYOR REPORTS

1. City Manager Report

City Manager Douglas reviewed his report, highlighting federal and state lobbying priorities, childcare, and housing.

2. City Clerk Report

City Clerk Pierce reviewed the upcoming Council calendar and encouraged those interested in running for office to pick up a petition beginning February 14th.

3. City Attorney Report

City Attorney Staser provided an update on the cases his office was working on behalf of the city, including Alderwood and escaped property.

Council Member Foster asked if there was a way for the oil companies to pay the same amount of taxes that they were currently paying, while easing the burden on the rest of the community by lowering the mill rate. Attorney Staser noted the same mill rate was legally required to apply across the board to all taxpayers, but that there were alternatives for residential relief which he and the Finance Department were prepared to have additional conversations with Council on.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Fleming thanked the streets crew for clearing the roads.

XIV. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Foster gave a shoutout to the PRCS trail grooming crew.

Council Member Scheidt congratulated Jordan Nelson on his promotion to Assistant City Manager.

Council Member Sorum shared his appreciation for the hospital's visiting staff.

Council Member Lally congratulated April Vasher-Dean on her new position as Executive Director of the Valdez Museum and Historical Archive, and thanked Faith Revel for stepping into the position as interim for a year and a half. He requested additional information on the repair of the dolphin, noting the negative effect on the cruise ships coming in to not have it repaired in a timely manner.

City Manager Douglas agreed to have Capital Facilities Director Nate Duval speak to it at the next regular meeting, and shared his confidence it would be repaired and available to the incoming cruise ships.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

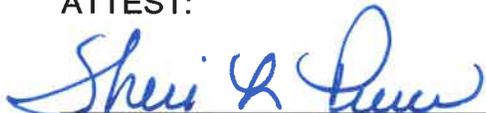
XVI. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA


Dennis Fleming, Mayor

ATTEST:


Sheri L. Pierce, MMC, City Clerk

