

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, September 21, 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: 7 - Mayor Sharon Scheidt
Council Member Todd Wegner
Council Member Susan Love
Council Member Dawson Moore
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Dennis Fleming
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

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. City Council Special Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2021**

The City Council special meeting minutes of September 14, 2021 were approved as presented.

2. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of September 7, 2021

The City Council regular meeting minutes of September 7, 2021 were approved as presented.

3. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of August 17, 2021

The City Council regular meeting minutes of August 17, 2021 were approved as presented.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Dr. Angela Alfaro, physician with The Alfa Doc and chair of the Sound Wellness Alliance Network (SWAN) Board updated Council on current staffing changes at the hospital, including the fourth doctor position being filled and a shortage of nursing staff. She shared SWAN messaging, stating local health services would continue to be there for the community as much as they could. She requested the public only use the emergency room for true emergencies and not for primary care. She requested those

needing the emergency room please call ahead. She reminded those listening the pharmacy was also under pressure and asked for patience when filling prescriptions.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval to Go Into Executive Session Regarding Escaped Property

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

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Architects Alaska, Inc. for the Valdez Hospital Campus Master Plan Update in the Amount of \$250,000

MOTION: Council Member Moore moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming to approve professional services agreement with Architects Alaska, Inc. for the Valdez Hospital Campus Master Plan update in the amount of \$250,000

Capital Facilities Director Nate Duval outlined the process to bring together the components of the Master Plan and how thing would move forward.

Council Member Devens shared community concerns over special consideration being given to the hospital campus restructuring due to the possibility of a daycare solution coming out of the plan. He stated he felt Council had done its due diligence on all items regarding the proposed expansion and each component had significant potential for community good. Mr. Duval added all proposed developments were results of the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted every three years by Providence.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. Approval of Amendments to City Council Policies and Procedures (Regarding Citizen Advisory Groups)

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming to approve amendments to City Council Policies and Procedures (regarding citizen advisory groups)

Council Member Love asked if, under general guidelines H, a COVID-19 positive or close contact could attend Council meetings electronically without a declared state of emergency. Ms. Ferko stated the intent of that section, as originally passed by Council, had specified the need for a disaster declaration to allow Council member and Planning & Zoning commissioners to participate remotely during regular and special meetings.

Ms. Pierce reminded Council a quorum was required to be physically in the room for every meeting, even during a disaster declaration.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

VIII. ORDINANCES

1. #21-09 - Establishing the City Beautification Commission. Second Reading. Adoption.

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Sorum to approve Ordinance # 21-09 for second reading and adoption.

Ms. Patty Relay, member of the Beautification Task Force, shared her enthusiasm for the work done by the task force in the past and the future of the commission moving forward.

Mayor Scheidt thanked Ms. Ferko and the Beautification Task Force for their hard work putting together a well-planned and thoughtful recommendation to City Council regarding establishment of the commission.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. #21-10 - Amending Title 2, Chapter 2.60 of the Valdez Municipal Code, Titled Economic Diversification Commission. Second Reading. Adoption.

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming to approve Ordinance # 21-10 on first reading and public hearing.

Ms. Relay noted the lack of arts and culture in the categories included within the ordinance.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

IX. RESOLUTIONS

1. #21-38 - Supporting Adoption of the Alaska Redistricting Board Proposed House District 36 Boundaries as Depicted in the Draft Composite Redistricting Plan Version 1 and 2 Maps Published on September 9, 2021 (Item Postponed from the City Council Special Meeting on September 21, 2021)

MAIN MOTION: Item postponed from the City Council Special Meeting on September 14, 2021. Motion is already on the floor.

Mr. Staser provided a review of the updated proposed redistricting maps from the Alaska Redistricting Board.

Ms. Pierce requested Mr. Staser ask the Alaska Redistricting Board to add Valdez to their upcoming road show schedule.

Mayor Scheidt confirmed an executive session would be scheduled to discuss redistricting strategy. Mr. Staser agreed. He explained, in light of the new information published by the Alaska Redistricting Board, he recommended postponing the vote on the resolution until after a strategy was agreed upon in executive session.

MOTION TO POSTPONE: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Moore to postpone approval of Resolution # 21-38 until the regular City Council meeting on October 5, 2021.

VOTE ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE:

Yays: 7 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION TO POSTPONE CARRIED.

2. #21-39 - Supporting the Municipality of Anchorage Letter to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation Requesting Federal Funding for Critical Infrastructure Work for the Port of Alaska

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming to approve Resolution # 21-39.

Mayor Scheidt stated she had been approached by Anchorage Mayor Dave Bronson requesting Council's support on the federal funding request. Mr. Detter explained why the Municipality of Anchorage was requesting Valdez' support, citing the statewide importance of the Port of Alaska.

Ports and Harbor Director Jeremy Talbott shared his knowledge of critical infrastructure work the Port of Alaska needed. He stated it would be bittersweet to support the request, as it might make it more difficult for Valdez to apply for or receive funding. However, as most items such as groceries travel through the Port of Alaska, it was important to move forward with the resolution.

Council Member Devens voiced his support of the resolution.

Council Member Sorum stated historically the Port of Alaska had not shown a willingness to help support other Alaskan ports and presented themselves in a way that discounted the necessity of other ports. He explained they had received substantial funding in the past which had not been put to proper use, and he would not support the resolution.

Council Member Love shared her hesitation over supporting the resolution, stating she would prefer to see the majority of the funding go to another port. Mr. Talbott agreed, stating he would prefer to support another port, such as Seward, receiving the majority of the funding.

Council Member Devens stated his understanding was the resolution was stating we understood the Port of Alaska needed significant repairs and the port was important to the entire state. Although he agreed there had been mismanagement of funding by the Port of Alaska in the past, he felt the state would see a faster and equally fulfilling benefit from supporting the Municipality of Anchorage.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 5 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, and Council Member Fleming

Nays: 2 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum and Council Member Love

MOTION CARRIED.

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

Mr. Detter updated Council on current projects, including paving projects, Council Chambers remodel, Landsharks and Pipeline Club abatement and demolition, the Mineral Creek Bridge repairs, the high school and elementary school generator replacement, 10 Mile Flood Control, H-K Small Boat Harbor launch ramp grant status, bidding on the Robe River Fire water booster pump replacement, Hospital Masterplan update contract, Glacier Stream east access study, and potential housing projects.

Mr. Detter provided an update on his recent meeting with the Mayor and Providence Hospital regarding the hospital's COVID-19 vaccination mandate for its employees. He addressed the upcoming federal COVID-19 vaccination mandate. He discussed the City's approach to the mandate, including his intention to comply with direction from the federal government. Mr. Staser outlined legal implications of the federal mandate.

Council Member Fleming asked when the City would need to start implementing the federal vaccination mandate program. Mr. Staser explained there would be a period of time set forth once OSHA issued guidance. Council Member Devens asked if the City was required to comply immediately with OSHA guidance and not wait for impending legislative injunctions. Mr. Staser said it was possible to wait, but would likely result in fines.

Mr. Detter stated the Economic Diversification Commission meeting on September 15th had a full commission present. He said the commission received the same housing presentation he and Planning Director Kate Huber provided to Council, including the housing development incentive plan. He stated the response had been positive. He informed Council the commission's November meeting would include a goal setting session with Ms. Ferko and City Economic Development Director Martha Barberio.

Mr. Detter explained the Mayor's Flood Task Force had also met September 15th and five of the seven members so far had agreed to continue serving on the task force moving forward. He stated he was awaiting responses from the other two members. He said the task force wanted to continue to monitor the current flood mitigation project, look at a more long term solution, and look at a maintenance plan prior to sun-setting the task force.

Mr. Detter addressed the sewer force main project bond election schedule. He stated, from a finance perspective, the bond was as favorable as a low interest government loan. He shared staff recommended including the bond vote on the ballot during the upcoming regular election instead of holding a special election.

Mr. Detter provided an update on ARPA Funds and the Senior Housing Project. He explained ARPA Funds had been used on engineering on the sewer force

main in the past, but affordable housing was a category available for the funding as well. He said he believed the funds could be used for senior housing, but shared concerns about applying for the funds strictly under the affordable housing category. He explained the benefits of applying using the infrastructure category.

Mr. Detter outlined the upcoming budget work sessions, saying the departments have been working in conjunction with administration to prioritize and bring forward a budget within the parameters set by Council.

Mr. Detter informed Council he would be at a conference the first week of October, but would still attend the regular Council Meeting on October 5th remotely.

2. City Clerk Report

Ms. Pierce updated Council on the progress of upcoming ordinances, including the poultry ordinance, a process for permitting marijuana consumption for events on City property, 911 surcharge changes, and the off-leash ordinance.

Ms. Ferko provided an update on upcoming boards and commissions vacancies, including the Economic Diversification Commission, the Parks & Recreation Commission, and Providence Hospital.

Ms. Pierce stated Ms. Ferko was working on Alaska Municipal League logistical arrangements for Council. She would provide reservation information and paperwork to Council once everything was complete.

3. City Attorney Report

Mr. Staser outlined projects and provided updates on cases his firm is working on behalf of the City, including Alaska Trappers, Pacific Pile & Marine, and escaped property.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Scheidt outlined her meeting with Mr. Detter and Providence on the hospital's mandatory employee vaccination situation. She reminded Council she had worked with staff to prepare a COVID-19 mitigation proclamation to discuss at the upcoming special meeting. She thanked Council for making time to meet with Copper Valley Electric Corporation.

XI. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Love asked if there was support from Council to add a conversation about a new mask mandate and emergency declaration to the upcoming Council special meeting. Council Member Sorum supported adding the conversation to the September 23rd meeting.

Ms. Pierce outlined concerns for adding the mask mandate and emergency declaration as an action item with only a few days' notice. She explained, while it was allowable under state statute to call a special meeting with at least 24-hours' notice, she did not feel that was enough notice on such a high interest item to allow for proper public engagement and participation.

Mayor Scheidt asked if a discussion on the topic was allowable under the proclamation action item. Ms. Pierce confirmed that would be an appropriate time to discuss the topic without taking action.

Council Member Love agreed providing more public notice would be appropriate considering the topic and proposed scheduling another special meeting on September 28th where action could be taken. Council Member Moore thanked Council Member Love for bring up the mandate as he had intended to bring it up as well.

Council Member Sorum shared his recent positive experience with COVID-19 mitigations in Germany. He voiced his support of the needs of the local medical community.

Council Member Devens encouraged Council to continue to work towards a solution to address the local increase in case counts and support the local medical community.

Council Member Wegner stated he would listen to the community and consider all viewpoints, but he did not support a new mask mandate.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council transitioned into executive session at 9:19 p.m.

XIII. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council transitioned out of executive session at 9:52 p.m.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Scheidt adjourned the meeting at 9:52 p.m.