

City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686*



DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

City Council

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Dennis Fleming
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Joseph Lally
Council Member Olivia Foster
Council Member Lester Greene
Council Member Shannon Stites

Excused: 1 - Council Member Joy Witte
Also Present: City Manager Nathan Duval
Deputy City Clerk Elise Sorum-Birk
City Attorney Jack Wakeland
Records Manager Katie Carr

IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. National Safety Month 2026 - 30th Anniversary**
- 2. Approval To Go Into Executive Session Re: Discussion of Implications for City Revenues and Litigation Strategy Regarding Trans Alaska Pipeline System Ad Valorem Tax Issues**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites

Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Approval of Change Order with Knik Construction for Kelsey Dock Dolphin/Bollard Temp Install in the Amount of \$70,500**

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve the change order with Knik Construction for Kelsey Dock dolphin and bollard temporary installation in the amount of \$70,500.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites
Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

2. Approval of Purchase of CAT 265 Tracked Skid Steer and Corresponding Attachments from NC Machinery in the Amount of \$139,877

Council Member Foster complimented the machinery and its intended purpose for Meals Hill trail maintenance.

MOTION: Council Member Foster moved, seconded by Council Member Greene, to approve the purchase of CAT 265 tracked skid steer and corresponding attachments from NC Machinery in the amount of \$139,877.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites
Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

3. Approving Purchase and Sale Agreement Between the City of Valdez and the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau

Council Member Greene voiced that the agreement was a positive step forward.

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Stites, to approve the Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City of Valdez and the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites
Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

4. Approval of Physician Retention Agreement with Dr. John Cullen

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve physician retention agreement with Dr. John Cullen.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites
Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

VII. ORDINANCES**1. #26-03 - Amending Chapter 3.24 of the Valdez Municipal Code Titled Public Accommodation Tax (Amended). Second Reading. Adoption.**

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Greene, to approve Ordinance 26-03 in second reading.

Council Member Foster reiterated her view that while tourism marketing was important, she was opposed to the ordinance due to the adoption of the prior amendment excluding recreational vehicle parks. She cited concerns about equity and stated her disagreement with the reasoning given for excluding one sector over another.

Mayor Fleming voiced support for continuing to fund tourism marketing but expressed a desire to revisit whether the public accommodation tax was needed at all in light of the recent overall revenue increases.

Deputy City Clerk Sorum-Birk noted that the version of the ordinance under consideration did not change the applicability of the tax and was only intended to clarify administrative processes.

Council Member Foster voiced overall support for the existence of a public accommodation tax as a method to receive revenue from visitors, but that the tax should be applied fairly.

Council Member Devens agreed on the point of equitability and discussed the applicability of the existing code. He restated his opposition to expanding the tax to recreational vehicle parks due to current high gas prices, but openness to considering their inclusion if economic factors changed.

Council Member Lally expressed his view that the tax could disincentivize visitors and his openness to exploring ways to reduce or eliminate the public accommodation tax.

Council Member Foster highlighted the impact of high fuel prices on brick and mortar businesses and travelers not using recreational vehicles. She restated her opposition to the ordinance.

Council Member Devens noted that if the ordinance failed, it would leave existing code in place. He noted that conversations on elimination of the accommodation tax were not relevant since the ordinance being discussed was administrative in nature. He spoke to the value and simplicity of continuing to fund destination marketing the accommodation tax.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Greene and Stites

Nays: 1 - Foster

Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

2. #26-05 - Amending Chapter 2.52 of the Valdez Municipal Code Titled Planning and

Zoning Commission (Amended). Second Reading. Adoption.

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve Ordinance 26-05 in second reading.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites

Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

1. #26-31 - Urging the Governor of Alaska to Sign Senate Bill 174 Establishing an Alaska Invasive Species Council

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve Resolution 26-31.

Council Member Devens spoke in favor of the resolution noting the adverse impacts of invasive species and commending the work of the legislature in passing the bill.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites

Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

2. #26-32 - Amending the 2026 Budget by Accepting 2020 Copper River and Prince William Sound Salmon Disaster Relief from the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission Fishery Disaster Program in the Amount of \$60,411

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Stites, to approve Resolution 26-32.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 6 - Fleming, Devens, Lally, Foster, Greene and Stites

Absent: 1 - Witte

Motion carried.

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

1. City Manager Report

In addition to his written report, City Manager Duval highlighted the following:

- Chugachmiut Head Start commencing operations on June 10th.
- The 125th city anniversary celebration events and time capsule.
- Bart Hinkle stepping into the role of interim public works director.

2. City Clerk Report

Deputy Clerk Sorum-Birk shared about the upcoming legislative visit during the 125th celebration and the annual training for council, boards and commissions. She gauged whether council was interested in considering the resolution requested by the Alaska Permanent Fund Board of Trustees.

3. City Attorney Report

City Attorney Jack Wakeland noted that there weren't significant public updates in the last week and further discussion would take place in executive session.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Fleming shared about the plaque exchange aboard the M.S. Roald Amundsen, a cruise ship new to Port Valdez. He noted the positive comments he'd gotten from cruise passengers who fully enjoyed visiting Valdez and using the new trails.

X. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Stites shared some updates about Prince William Sound College including the upcoming leadership transition and hiring of a new community and technical education director.

Council Member Devens spoke about the Nayurluku Park trails sharing excitement about the use they were getting and complimenting parks maintenance staff for their upkeep efforts.

Council Member Greene thanked the Providence Valdez representatives for the work session and expressed gratitude for the healthcare services available in the community.

Council Member Foster thanked the city manager and finance staff for getting her up to speed on her new Permanent Fund Committee assignment and welcomed Bart Hinkle back. She noted the concern raised by a citizen on harbor fees and asked about the process for revisiting the topic. City Manager Duval suggested that Council refer the issue back to the Ports and Harbors Commission to seek additional public feedback. Council Member Greene voiced support for the path forward.

Council Member Lally thanked Providence for the work session and noted he was looking forward to the 125th anniversary celebration and strategic planning sessions.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Fleming excused himself from executive session due to a conflict and passed the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Greene.

XII. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Pro Tem Greene announced that the legal team was to proceed as directed in executive session.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Greene adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.