

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting
Council Chambers

City Council

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tempore Love called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

- Present: 6 - Council Member Austin Love
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Olivia Foster
Council Member Joseph Lally
Council Member Joy Witte
Council Member Lester Greene
- Excused: 1 - Mayor Dennis Fleming
- Also Present: City Clerk Sheri Pierce
City Manager Nathan Duval
City Attorney Jake Staser
Records Manager Katie Carr

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting of March 17, 2026

The minutes were approved by consent.

V. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

1. Valdez Snowmachine Club Event Update - Ken Lares

VI. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Valdez Resident Dave Tousignant encouraged City Council to consider an increase to the senior citizen property tax exemption.

VII. CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS: REPORTS & REFERRALS

1. Recommendation to City Manager and City Council for Adoption of a City of Valdez Public Art Policy

City Manager Duval gave a brief introduction to the policy development process that had occurred.

Beautification Commission Chair Kathy Nielsen provided background on the need for the policy and desire for it to guide decision making around future public art projects. She spoke about the need for defined roles, maintenance and responsible use of public funds.

Council Member Witte asked about future expenditures required by the policy and how appropriate lifespan and maintenance needs for art would be determined.

Council Members Foster and Love thanked the commission and volunteer committee for their work.

2. Valdez Tourism Task Force Report and Recommendations to City Council

Tourism Task Force Chair Colleen Stephens thanked council members and staff for recognizing the need for the group. Stephens spoke about the purview and process of the task force. She highlighted the group's focus on the future of tourism marketing in Valdez and positive changes that could happen moving forward.

The following recommendations included in the report were highlighted:

- A desire to maintain visitor services for the coming summer including distribution of the guide and a continued use of the existing visitors' center building.
- A focus on the importance of digital assets and communications.
- A need to maintain and improve relationships between and among businesses, both locally and statewide.
- A vision for a transparent and accountable future organization that could responsibly use public funds to market Valdez as a destination.
- A desire that financial oversight be provided by the city and organizational guidance and vision be provided by local businesses.
- A need for fairness and clear parameters in a membership structure for a future organization.
- A desire for the task force to continue engaging in recommendations for governing documents of a future organization.

Council Member Witte recognized the work involved in the task force. She asked for and received clarification on financial estimates and the recommendation for using temporary city employees in 2026.

Council Members thanked the task force for their report and voiced support for the group's continued work.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Proclamation: The Month of the Military Child and Purple Up Day**
- 2. Proclamation: Sexual Assault Awareness Month**
- 3. Proclamation: Child Abuse Prevention Month**

4. **Appointment to Regional Citizens' Advisory Council Board of Directors – Applicant: Dorothy Moore**
5. **Appointment to the Beautification Commission, Applicant: Magdalena McCay**
6. **Approval of Liquor License Renewals: A Rouge’s Garden (License #16039); Valdez Brewing LLC (License #15248)**
7. **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 Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Witte, to approve all items on the consent agenda.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene

Absent: 1 - Fleming

Motion carried.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Acceptance of Late File Application for 2025 Senior Citizen’s Property Tax Exemption – Edward Pinsky**

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Greene, to accept the late file senior citizen's property tax exemption application for Edward Pinsky.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene

Absent: 1 - Fleming

Motion carried.

2. **Approval of a Ten-Foot-Wide Private Water Line Easement on the City of Valdez Owned Property Known as Parcel B, Northern Lights Subdivision to Valdez Holdings, LLC.**

MOTION: Council Member Witte moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve a ten-foot-wide private water line easement on the City of Valdez owned property known as Parcel B, Northern Lights Subdivision to Valdez Holdings, LLC.

Council Member Foster inquired about if the snow load on the snow lot would cause issues for the water line. City Manager Duval noted that the water line was intended to be seasonal.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene

Absent: 1 - Fleming

Motion carried.

3. Approval of Contract with RSR Contracting LLC for Lawn Care and Ground Maintenance Services

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve a contract with RSR Contracting LLC for lawn care and ground maintenance services in the annual amount of \$174,180.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene

Absent: 1 - Fleming

Motion carried.

4. Discussion Item: Agreement with Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau for the Purchase of Digital Assets

City Manager Duval referenced the dissolution of the Valdez Convention and Visitors' Bureau and presented a proposal to obtain the organization's digital assets in exchange for the city providing payment of outstanding debts.

Council discussion included:

- Whether all outstanding debts had been identified.
- Challenges with uncertainty about outstanding debts.
- Value of assets to be acquired.
- Concerns about possible copyright issues with digital images.
- Benefits of assets not being recreated by a future organization.
- Support by the task force for acquiring the website.
- Future process for reaching an agreement with the board of the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau.

X. ORDINANCES

1. #26-02 - Amending Title 2 by Creating Chapter 2.96 Titled Firefighter Collective Bargaining. First Reading. Public Hearing.

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Greene, to introduce Ordinance 26-02 in first hearing for public hearing.

Firefighter Bryan Vincent thanked the council for bringing forward the ordinance, spoke to the process of developing the ordinance and expressed support for amending the city code to allow for unionization of the fire department.

Council Member Greene spoke to the presentation on the issue earlier in the year, noted the unanimous vote of the department and voiced support for the ordinance.

Council Members Devens and Love also voiced support.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

XI. RESOLUTIONS

1. #26-19 - Amending the 2026 City Budget by Appropriating an Additional \$250,000 to the Economic Development Department for Tourism Expenditures to be Transferred from Council Contingency Reserve

MOTION: Council Member Witte moved, seconded by Council Member Greene, to approve Resolution 26-19.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

2. #26-20 - Extending the Sunset of the Valdez Tourism Task Force and Assigning Additional Scope of Work

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Witte, to approve Resolution 26-20.

Council Member Lally spoke in support of the extension and noted there was more work to do.

Council Member Devens viewed the extension as an appropriate step.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

3. #26-21 - Authorizing a Lease with Colville, Inc. for an Approximately 1.9-acre Portion of Parcel A ATS 564 (1940 Mineral Creek Loop Road)

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve Resolution 26-21.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

4. #26-22 - Amending the 2026 Budget by Appropriating \$2.8M of Excess Funds Carried Forward from 2025 to the Projects Planning Reserve in the Amount of \$2.8M and Re-Allocating \$7,504.25 from Previously Appropriated and Approved Capital and Major Maintenance Projects

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve Resolution 26-22.

Council Member Foster commended the progress on the various projects.

Mayor Pro Tempore Love asked City Manager Duval to provide an overview of the projects list. City Manager Duval shared that funds from completed projects were being reallocated to ongoing or upcoming projects and explained project priorities.

Love asked for and received additional clarification on why the legal and emergency management budgets had not been fully expended in the prior year.

VOTE ON MOTION:
Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

5. #26-23 - Amending the 2026 City Budget by Accepting an Additional \$155,197.19 in New Ambulance Service Revenue

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve Resolution 26-23.

Mayor Pro Tempore Love commented on the benefits of additional ambulance revenue.

City Manager Duval explained that the additional revenues were related to Medicaid reimbursement.

VOTE ON MOTION:
Yays: 6 - Love, Devens, Foster, Lally, Witte and Greene
Absent: 1 - Fleming
Motion carried.

XII. REPORTS

1. Quarterly Financial Summary Reports, December 31, 2025

Mayor Pro Tempore Love asked about recreation revenue decreases and the Robe Lake Habitat Restoration project. City Manager Duval noted that the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers has placed the Robe Lake project on hold.

Love asked additional questions about the health insurance fund and possible increases in 2026. Finance Director Jordan Nelson noted that it was too early in the year to know what to expect but that there were ways for staff to monitor activity throughout the year.

2. Monthly Treasury Report, January 2026

3. Monthly Treasury Report, February 2026

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

1. City Manager Report

In addition to the written report City Manager Duval:

- Congratulated the Gilson Middle School Science Olympiad team and Valdez High School students who participated in Skills USA.
- Gave a recap of the Apples and Donuts volleyball game.
- Spoke about the upcoming Council Strategic Planning Session and desire to have a discussion on directors' reports.
- Noted the recent Head Start open house.

2. City Clerk Report

City Clerk Sheri Pierce shared information on Absentee Voting for the Municipal Election and talked about the upcoming 6th grade class visit and mock meeting with the Mayor. She also touched base about Council email usage and access.

3. City Attorney Report

City Attorney Staser shared updates on the following legal matters:

- BP/Hilcorp sale transaction confidentiality matter.
- Seeking of attorneys' fees in the Redistricting case as a prevailing constitutional claimant.
- Outcomes of administrative review and status of appeals related to the Valdez Marine Terminal Contingency Plan.
- Pending Alaska Supreme Court review escaped property appeals.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Pro Tempore Love shared about his recent visit to the remodeled school district offices at the elementary school.

XIV. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Foster asked City Clerk Pierce about the senior citizen tax exemption issue brought up under public business from the floor and if an increase was possible.

City Clerk Pierce noted that other communities had increased this exemption and that she was researching the process. Mayor Pro Tempore Love requested that she bring back a report on the process.

Council Member Devens expressed openness to exploring an increase to the senior citizens' exemption if it was allowable under state law and reminded the public of Valdez's upcoming 125th anniversary of incorporation.

Council Member Greene thanked the Snowmachine Club for their presentation and reminded everyone about the Advocates for Victims of Violence Snow Town Ice Classic fundraiser.

Council Member Lally thanked museum board members for the work session and the fire department for their patience with the collective bargaining issue. He encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming municipal election.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XVI. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

XVII. ADJOURNMENT