

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Draft Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

City Council

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fleming called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Dennis Fleming
Council Member Austin Love
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Olivia Foster
Council Member Joseph Lally
Council Member Joy Witte
(One Vacancy)

Also Present: City Clerk Sheri Pierce
City Manager Nathan Duval
Administrative Assistant Katie Carr

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting of July 15, 2025
2. Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting of July 1, 2025

Minutes were approved by consent.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

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

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED

1. Proclamation: Safe and Sound Week 2025

Mayor Fleming read the Safe and Sound Week Proclamation and applauded the impact from Safe and Sound Week for keeping employees safe and healthy.

2. **Approval of Executive Session to Discuss the Personal Qualifications and Characteristics of Individuals who have submitted Letters of Interest in Filling the City Council Vacancy**

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with Valdez Avalanche Center**

Council Member Devens inquired about whether all the information needed to move forward had been received. Council Member Love responded that the weather observations, clarification from City Manager Duval, and history of the program was all the information requested.

MOTION: Council Member Lally moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Valdez Avalanche Center.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Appointment of Vacant City Council Seat**

Mayor Fleming asked if there was any objection to moving the item to follow Executive Session.

Mayor Fleming stated that, since Executive Session was held later in meeting, he wanted to offer time for anyone who submitted a letter of interest to address City Council.

Applicants Michael Jay Stevens and Jason Tippetts addressed the council on their qualifications and interest in serving.

2. **Appointments to Beautification Commission - Applicants: Magdalena McCay, Libby Connor, Paula McCann and T.C. Greene**

City Clerk Sheri Pierce distributed ballots.

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Witte, to appoint Paula McCann for a two-year term, and to appoint T.C. Greene for a three-year term on the Beautification Commission.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED

3. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with DOWL, LLC for Rural Roads Repairs Design Phase 1 in the Amount of \$170,357.00

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Foster, to approve the professional services agreement with DOWL, LLC for Rural Roads Repairs Design Phase One in the amount of \$170,357.00.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of Contract with Orion Construction, Inc for the Valdez City Schools District Offices Tenant Improvements in the Guaranteed Maximum Price Amount of \$2,357,316.31

MOTION: Council Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to approve contract with Orion Construction, Inc for the Valdez City School District Offices Tenant Improvements in an amount not to exceed \$2,357,316.31.

Council Member Love inquired if there was any feedback from the School Board on the contract.

Scott Benda, Acting Capitol Facilities Director, relayed information about a meeting discussing the conversion of temporary rooms in the kindergarten area. City Manager Duval confirmed that the final layout accommodated the board's needs.

Love asked why Orion was selected. Duval spoke about the contract's budget and why Orion was best suited for the project. Benda added that Orion was familiar with the building, having already reroofed and re-sided the elementary school and redone the exterior doors.

Mayor Fleming stated a desire for the project to be completed in a timely way. He asked for and received information on the project's cost per square foot.

Benda added that Orion would be operating while school was in session and working around those hours. He also informed the council about the new driveway entrance for better flow of traffic.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED

IX. ORDINANCES

- 1. #25-10 - Authorizing an Amendment to the Zoning Map to Effect a Change to Lot 2, Tract 3, USS 3538, Plat 2003-7 to Neighborhood Mixed Use. Second Reading. Adoption.**

Council Member Love thanked the applicant and the Community Development Department for working together and creating positive outcome.

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Witte, to adopt Ordinance #25-10.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED

X. RESOLUTIONS**XI. REPORTS**

- 1. Report: Issuance of Temporary Land Use Permit 25-05 to the Fireweed 400, Inc. for An Approximately 5.6-Acre Portion of 3100 Richardson Highway, Tract D 79-116 owned by the City of Valdez**
- 2. Report: Issuance of Temporary Land Use Permit #25-08 for Central Environmental, Inc. for a 2-acre portion of USS 439 (Pipeyard) Owned by the City of Valdez for a Six-Month Term**

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

City Manager Duval shared that the city had received a \$5.5 million community discretionary grant from Senator Murkowski for the emergency radio project. He also informed Council that a work session for the Public Works and Economic Development Departments was proposed for Tuesday August 26th and updated the council on Reeve Air flight schedules.

Council Member Love inquired about the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Professional Housing grant and about whether Reeve Air would meet the community demand. Duval responded that a \$700,000 grant was available for professional housing and that a letter of intent had been submitted. He also addressed the expected flight frequency for the new air carrier.

2. City Clerk Report

City Clerk Sheri Pierce passed out a letter from former Governor Bill Walker regarding renaming the Valdez Container Terminal. She suggested it be put on next council

meeting agenda and discussed at the Ports and Harbor Work Session. Pierce also provided an update on scheduling.

3. City Attorney Report

City Attorney Jake Staser updated the council on the following:

- Upcoming oral arguments on escaped property litigation.
- Scheduled VMC 3.30 Board of Equalization hearing.
- The Valdez Marine Terminal Contingency Plan Renewal process.
- Plans for Trans Alaska Pipeline System settlement negotiations.

Council Member Love inquired about the Department of Environment Conservation hearing and timeline for receiving additional information. Staser answered that information was not yet available, but the schedule would be updated as soon as possible.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Fleming reported that it had been a beautiful Sunday for the Gold Rush Days Parade and was happy to see all the citizens out enjoying their time. He congratulated the Valdez Gold Rush Committee for putting on the event.

XIII. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Witte thanked everyone who applied for the vacant seat.

Council Member Devens also thanked the applicants and everyone that participated in the Gold Rush Days.

Council Member Love expressed gratitude to the city manager and senators for the radio upgrade project funding. He expressed enthusiasm for progress on child care issues.

Council Member Lally thanked Finance Director Nelson for the budget parameters presentation. He also thanked everyone who participated and volunteered at Gold Rush Days and gave kudos on the radio funding and Reeve Air proposal.

Council Member Foster extended gratitude to Senator Lisa Murkowski for the radio program and childcare center appropriations. She commented that it was great to see the city staff enjoying Rush and with the community.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting recessed into Executive Session.

XV. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Appointment of Vacant City Council Seat (continued)

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Lally, to appoint Lester Green to fill a vacancy on the Valdez City Council for a term ending on May 19, 2026.

Love thanked all the candidates for their applications and expressed appreciation for people being willing to serve on City Council.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Yays: 6 – Fleming, Love, Devens, Foster, Lally and Witte

Vacant: 1

MOTION CARRIED.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fleming adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.