

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, November 17, 2020

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

City Council

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tempore Scheidt called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Council led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Pro Tempore Sharon Scheidt – *Meeting Chair*
Mayor Jeremy O'Neil (*via GoToMeeting*)
Council Member Ron Ruff (*via GoToMeeting*)
Council Member Susan Love
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Dennis Fleming (*via GoToMeeting*)
Council Member Alan Sorum (*via GoToMeeting*)

Also Present: 6 - City Manager Mark Detter
Assistant City Manager Roxanne Murphy (*via GoToMeeting*)
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval
Deputy City Clerk Allie Ferko (*via GoToMeeting*)
Records Manager Shelley McMillen
City Attorney Jack Wakeland (*via GoToMeeting*)

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS**1. 2021 City Budget Public Hearing**

No members of the public appeared to provide testimony during the 2021 City Budget Public Hearing.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2020**

The City Council regular meeting minutes of October 20, 2020 were approved as presented.

VI. PUBLIC APPEARANCES**1. Public Appearance: Huddle Alaska - Holly Spoth-Torres and Dr. William Hunter Holland RE: Meals Hill Master Plan**

Mr. Nick Farline, city PRC&S director, introduced Ms. Spoth-Torres and Dr. Holland.

Dr. Holland shared a snapshot of the findings from the stakeholder survey and interview process. He detailed the five themes used to identify what was most

important to community stakeholders. He shared how stakeholders stated they wanted Meals Hill to be used, with the general consensus being the desire for community access. Council Member Scheidt asked how information was gathered from visitors. Dr. Holland stated the survey had been shared with over 50 visitor organization social media pages both in Alaska and globally, in addition to other outreach methods.

Ms. Spoth-Torres discussed the Meals Hill Planning Committee's approach to the project. She stated the next step would be to pull together two to three alternative concepts to present in February for the community to review. She felt if community consensus was achieved, portions of the project could begin in the summer of 2021.

VII. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

No members of the public chose to provide testimony.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approval of Liquor License Renewals: The Board Room; Growler Bay Brewing Co.; Valdez Brewing LLC**
- 2. Proclamation - 38th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony**

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

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Discussion Item: COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Detter briefed Council on state and city case counts. Public Health Nurse Terri Lynch offered specifics of current numbers throughout the state. She explained Alaska had the 14th highest case rate in the nation. Ms. Lynch stated there are currently 184 local close contacts in quarantine due to the exposure in the K-12 school system. She confirmed community transmission was occurring in Valdez, and stressed the importance of avoiding crowds and wearing a mask. She provided details on how to properly quarantine.

Dr. Angela Alfaro, physician consultant to the Valdez Unified Command, requested the community remain cautious with their actions to protect the medical community as well as other at risk individuals. She encouraged patience when it comes to testing, as the medical community needed to remain strategic

when determining who needed to be tested and when testing needed to occur based upon symptoms and time of exposure. Chief Bart Hinkle, operations section chief for the Valdez Unified Command, and Dr. Alfaro provided a briefing on the upcoming drive through targeted testing program for recent close contacts. Dr. Kathy Todd reminded the community you could not test out of quarantine, and the purpose of quarantine was to prevent the potential asymptomatic or presymptomatic spread of the virus by those who had been exposed.

Council Member Devens requested information on the demographic within the school exposure quarantine cohort. Ms. Lynch confirmed most were minors. Council Member Love asked if there had been a notable trend in where exposures were occurring. Ms. Lynch stated small, social gatherings had been the main source of exposure, but she was most concerned about cases where she was unable to trace where transmission had occurred. Council Member Devens noted minors were more likely to be asymptomatic but were contagious.

Mr. Detter expressed Unified Command's desire to extend the mask mandate, and stressed the importance of being diligent in wearing masks. He shared his approach with face coverings in city buildings and with city staff. Mayor O'Neil stated the effectiveness of masking had become increasingly more obvious. He stated Valdez had maintained at a level more beneficial to its citizens, including the ability to keep businesses open, in comparison to communities without mask mandates. He expressed concern over the burden borne by the medical community during the pandemic, as well as the burden on first responders. He encouraged citizens to keep their bubble small, wear a mask, wash hands, and think seriously on how they could make the community more safe. Council Member Devens suggested a future work session with Council and Unified Command to further discuss the need for additional mandates or other measures based upon the current situation surrounding the pandemic.

Valdez Citizen Jim Shirrell requested clarification on what phase the community was currently in and if Valdez had community spread. Mr. Detter responded with phase three, with the possibility of increasing to phase four depending on how the situation developed over the next couple of weeks. Ms. Lynch confirmed community transmission was occurring in Valdez.

2. Public Health Mandate #003 - Amendment No 3, Extending Wearing Cloth Face Coverings

MAIN MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love to approve Public Health Mandate 003 - Amendment No 3.

Council Member Love asked if the layout of the mandate had been discussed by Unified Command. Mr. Detter stated the exemptions had not been discussed by Unified Command recently. He explained businesses and other organizations have the right to decline services to patrons if they refuse to wear a mask, regardless of exemptions. This includes city buildings. Accommodations can be

given instead, such as curbside pick-up, delivery, or service over the telephone. Chief Hinkle reviewed the history of the mandate and let Council know other communities were starting to eliminate exemptions in their mask mandates. He stated enforcement was easier with fewer exemptions.

Council Member Fleming asked why the effective date of Amendment No 3 was to January 6 instead of the normal month time period. Mr. Detter stated numbers did not appear to be changing in a way which would allow for the mandate to end in December. Council Member Fleming stated he supported the mandate, but expressed the desire to review the mask mandate every month. Mr. Detter explained he would continue to provide a COVID update at every meeting, but Unified Command did not feel it was beneficial to review the mandate until after the holidays as the local situation would be unlikely to change before that time.

Council Member Devens requested input from the local healthcare providers on the need to amend the exemptions in the mandate. Dr. Alfaro did not see a need to amend the exemptions. She stated the exemptions were appropriate and relevant. Council Member Love requested an increase in community education on the mask mandate. Dr. Todd suggested trying different types of masks to find the most comfortable option, as well as having others shop for those who were unable to wear a mask. She encouraged businesses to decline services to those not wearing masks.

MOTION TO AMEND: Council Member Fleming moved to amend Public Health Mandate 003 - Amendment No 3 to change the effective date to December 16, 2020.

MOTION TO AMEND FAILED DUE TO LACK OF A SECOND.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

3. Approval of State of Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities Land Lease ADA-72348 Supplement No. 1 for the Valdez Airport

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities land lease ADA-72348 supplement no 1 for the Valdez Airport.

Ports & Harbor Director Jeremy Talbott stated it corrected the State's increase which had been added five years prior, and reflected the next five years.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

X. RESOLUTIONS**1. #20-60 - Supporting the Valdez Senior Center Transportation Grant Application**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Resolution #20 - 60.

Valdez Senior Center (VSC) Director Deborah Plant summarized the VSC's gains in 2020 with the transportation grant. Council Member Devens asked how many rides on average the VSC provided to residents. Ms. Plant stated they had provided 5,531 rides in 2019, but those numbers had decreased in 2020 due to COVID-19. Mayor O'Neil thanked the VSC for being the lead agency for the Valdez transportation grant.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. #20-61 - Amending the FY20 City Budget by Accepting a Grant from the Prince William Sound Economic Development District in the Amount of \$25,095.76 and Authorizing the Expenditure

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve Resolution #20-61.

Mr. Detter provided background on the origin and purpose of the grant, including assisting local businesses with AK Cares Grant applications and other grant applications.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

3. #20-62 - Amending the 2020 City Budget by Accepting \$6,701.60 in Unbudgeted Revenues and Transferring \$6,701.60 to Police Scholarship Reserve Fund

MOTION: Council Member Ruff moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve Resolution #20-62.

Mr. Carlson explained the origin of the scholarship reserve fund and the purpose of the resolution. Council Member Devens expressed his appreciation for the fund.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

4. #20-63 - Establishing a Lease Rate for Communications Site Use at the Valdez Container Terminal

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve Resolution #20-63.

Mr. Talbott explained the effort put into establishing fair market value. He stated the resolution would help offset some expenses incurred by maintaining the towers. Council Member Love complimented Ms. Jenessa Ables, city port operations manager, on her work to put together the comprehensive packet. Council Member Devens stated the rates appeared significantly closer to market value than they had been in the past.

Council Member Fleming requested clarification on how the final fee had been established. Mr. Talbott stated there were four different companies operating from the tower and confirmed each carrier would be paying \$20,000. Council Member Scheidt asked what triggered the review of the contract. Mr. Talbott said a review of all Ports & Harbor contracts was in the works to verify information and Council should expect similar contracts to be presented to them in the future. Council Member Scheidt asked the companies were aware of the increase. Mr. Talbott confirmed they were.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

5. #20-64 - Adopting Mayor's COVID 19 Economic Recovery Task Force Recommendations

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Love, to approve Resolution #20-64.

Mr. Detter briefed Council on information included in Attachment A of the

resolution. Council Member Scheidt thanked those involved in the task force for their effort.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 7 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Ruff, Council Member Love, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

XI. REPORTS

- 1. Report: Comprehensive Plan Update**
- 2. Monthly Treasury Reports**
- 3. Procurement Report: Contract with Professional Technical Services, Inc. in the Amount of \$99,266.00 for the City of Valdez Standard Specifications Update**

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

1. City Manager Report

Mr. Detter stated he would be working on project reports and would present them to Council at the next meeting.

2. City Clerk Report

Ms. Ferko briefed Council on commission vacancies. She stated 2021 Energy Assistance applications were currently being accepted with the deadline being December 31st. She also reminded the deadline to apply for special tax exemption programs was January 15, 2021.

3. City Attorney Report

Mr. Wakeland outlined projects and provided updates on cases his firm is working on behalf of the City, including escaped property.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Pro Tem Scheidt shared her excitement with RAVN Air's return to Valdez. She commended the City Parks & Recreation Department for their approach to the Tree Lighting Ceremony. She wished everyone a happy holiday.

XIII. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Love, Council Member Fleming, Council Member Ruff, and Mayor O'Neil thanked the Economic Recovery Task Force members for their efforts.

Multiple Council Members wished the citizens of Valdez a happy and safe holiday.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tempore Scheidt adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

DRAFT