

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Final

Thursday, April 30, 2020

6:00 PM

Special Meeting

Council Chambers

City Council

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA - 6:00 PM**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Valdez City Council Chambers.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Jeremy O'Neil
Council Member Ron Ruff
Council Member Christopher Moulton
Council Member Sharon Scheidt (*by telephone*)
Council Member Darren Reese
Council Member Dennis Fleming (*by telephone*)
Council Member Alan Sorum (*by telephone*)

Also Present: 6 - City Manager Mark Detter
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval
City Clerk Sheri Pierce
Deputy City Clerk Allie Ferko (*by telephone*)
Records Manager Shelley McMillen
City Attorney Jake Staser (*by telephone*)

III. NEW BUSINESS**1. Proclamation - City of Valdez COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines**

MAIN MOTION: Council Member Moulton moved, seconded by Council Member Ruff, to approve the City of Valdez COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines Proclamation.

Council Member Sorum requested if the proclamation passed, the harbormaster provide a copy to each harbor account holder. He also requested city administration post an ad in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

Council Member Moulton agreed the proclamation needed to be advertised, but recommended a summary and not the entire document. He shared a number of suggestions for easily digestible information to send out.

Council Member Scheidt acknowledged the need to disseminate the proclamation through all available avenues. She asked if a health advisory may be a better avenue.

Council Member Reese expressed his concern over passing a proclamation which mirrors the state's mandates.

Council Member Scheidt asked what the reasoning was for having the specifics of face coverings included in the proclamation. Mr. Detter stated staff was trying to create a thorough document, covering all issues, frequently asked questions, and topics staff were regularly asked to explain to members of the public.

Council Member Sorum felt maintaining the details in the proclamation was important. Council Member Fleming agreed the proclamation was well written, though he would like to see a bullet point summary distributed. Council Member Ruff agreed the document overall was well done, but was concerned over redundancies. Mayor O'Neil proposed if Council had any issues, an amendment could be presented.

MOTION TO AMEND: Council Member Reese moved, seconded by Council Member Scheidt, to amend the City of Valdez COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines Proclamation by removing all sub-paragraphs (a -f) in Section 4.

Council Member Reese recommended a more direct approach. Council Member Sorum felt an amendment was not necessary. Council Member Fleming agreed the language was acceptable as written. Council Member Scheidt and Council Member Moulton agreed removing the information would only serve to shorten the document, not change the intent, and leaving the information in would be acceptable. Mayor O'Neil felt sub-paragraphs a-f had been included in an effort to provide as much information as possible.

Valdez Resident Joe Prax felt the amendment improved the document, as a simpler document was more likely to be read thoroughly.

Ms. Ferko explained the proclamation was crafted to provide a one stop shop for all mitigation efforts. People are overwhelmed by information right now and having to send them somewhere else to get instructions on how to wear a mask, or other items described, would be too much for some people. The intent was for this to be the source document for instructions on how we would like our residents and visitors to work through the pandemic while in the community. She went on to explain additional marketing tools already prepared to turn the document into easily digestible portions.

An unnamed Valdez resident testified his biggest concern was restricting the use of N95 or surgical grade masks via proclamation. He explained he understood Council's desire to not have residents hoard the N95 masks, but those who have the masks due to hobbies should be able to use them and not be targeted for it.

Mayor O'Neil explained the CDC and Department of Health recommended health care grade PPE be reserved for critical infrastructure. Council Member Moulton stated the section regarding N95 and surgical grade masks had been taken directly from the state's mandate.

VOTE ON THE MOTION TO AMEND:

Yays: 2 - Council Member Ruff and Council Member Reese

Nays: 5 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

MOTION TO AMEND FAILED.

Mr. Prax shared his concern over putting out a proclamation when the

information is already out there at the state level and there is a lot of confusion already. He explained, from a marketing perspective, how the proclamation would not work as intended.

Mayor O'Neil expressed his confidence in the ability to disseminate the proclamation information appropriately. He stated the Valdez Unified Command's public information team has done an outstanding job thus far in the pandemic in getting information and educational materials, often explaining confusing and complicated topics, out to the community and beyond.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION:

Yays: 5 - Mayor O'Neil, Council Member Moulton, Council Member Scheidt, Council Member Fleming and Council Member Sorum

Nays: 2 - Council Member Ruff and Council Member Reese

MOTION CARRIED.

2. Discussion Item: Local Economic Assistance

Finance Director Brian Carlson summarized the goal of the Local Economic Assistance program and explained the application process. He expected payments to be approximately \$1,800.

Council Member Sorum felt this was the quickest way to help people. He requested a self-certification statement on the document to acknowledge why the payment was being made. Council Member Moulton agreed. Mayor O'Neil stated the assistance would serve as relief to families and businesses, as well as a stimulus to the community. He felt a certification stating the applicant had been impacted by the pandemic would reduce the number of people applying for it.

Council Member Fleming stated the program had been brought before Council at a prior meeting during his absence. He asked if it had been vetted by a group and asked if a long term economic task force was being set up. Mayor O'Neil confirmed the assistance program had been presented at prior council meetings. He stated he had asked Mayor Pro Tempore Scheidt to lead the Mayor's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force and she had accepted. Council Member Scheidt outlined the internal group involved in putting out the current local economic assistance program.

Council Member Moulton agreed due to the intent of the program, a certification was unnecessary.

Mr. Detter asked if Council wanted a statement within the form stating the purpose of the program. Mayor O'Neil agreed language going towards the intent of the program should be included on the form. Mr. Detter confirmed staff would make adjustments accordingly and bring the final product to Council for approval.

Mr. Prax felt the purpose of the program was unclear, although staff was moving quickly as directed. He was unsure if the money was to be spent as relief or as stimulus.

Council Member Moulton stated it was intended as either relief or stimulus, to be used as the recipient felt necessary. Mayor O'Neil and Council Member Ruff agreed with this assessment.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor O'Neil adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

Jeremy O'Neil, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheri L. Pierce, MMC, City Clerk