

# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686



## Meeting Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, June 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.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: 7 - Mayor Jeremy O'Neil  
Council Member Ron Ruff (*by telephone*)  
Council Member Susan Love  
Council Member Sharon Scheidt  
Council Member Jimmy Devens  
Council Member Dennis Fleming (*by telephone*)  
Council Member Alan Sorum (*by telephone*)

Also Present: 6 - City Manager Mark Detter (*by telephone*)  
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. Discussion Item: Weekly COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Duval briefed Council on state and city case counts. He provided details on what occurs in the background when a local case is identified, including background tracing. He encouraged the community to remain diligent in mitigation efforts. Public Health Nurse Terri Lynch explained the process of contact investigations. She stated the main goal was to limit additional exposure to the community.

Council Member Scheidt asked if specific requirements of a case needed to be met to release a public statement in regards to a specific location and time where someone may have been exposed. Ms. Lynch stated, in all local cases to this point, the individuals had maintained a small bubble and had followed mitigation guidelines, so close contacts had been identified rapidly. In cases where close contacts are unknown, other measures must be taken such as an announcement about an exposure location.

Council Member Love asked if the recent local cases had been travel related or community spread. Ms. Lynch stated investigations had been complete for the three current cases within Valdez. She stated there was no community spread at this time and explained community spread was defined as multiple unrelated cases with no clear source of transmission.

Mayor O'Neil asked the community to keep their circles small, and follow the mitigation guidelines set in place to slow or prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Council Member Scheidt updated Council on progress made by the Mayor's

Economic Relief Task Force. Long term business recovery, emergency marketing, travel incentive, COVID mitigation efforts, a hardship fee waiver, and a property tax fee waiver were included in the task force's targeted agenda. She stated the Task Force was formatting a survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on local businesses.

Council Member Devens asked for the end date for the Economic Relief Task Force. Council Member Scheidt stated the goal was to have a final recommendation to Council by November 1, 2020.

Council Member Fleming asked if the Task Force had considered possible aid for high school students whose jobs, such as life guards and summer camp staff, would be affected by COVID-19. Council Member Scheidt stated it had not been addressed.

Mr. Duval updated Council on the current plan for the K-12 school system to open in August, as well as efforts made by Superintendent Shawn Arnold to keep the schedule on track.

Mr. Duval explained the current local COVID-19 testing program had been successful so far, with plans to streamline and update processes as needed.

Council Member Fleming asked if plans to open the pool for limited use had been addressed, especially in regard to the local swim team. Mr. Duval stated there were still minor pieces to put in place, but the plan was on track for opening around July 6, 2020.

Council Member Devens reassured the community Council was taking COVID-19 very seriously and was working on addressing concerns received from those reaching out to Council.

Mayor O'Neil addressed the importance of masking and the result of communities mandating the use of facial coverings. He encouraged people to visit Valdez, but to do so in a safe manner which protects the community. He asked Council to consider requiring masking in the community.

Council Member Devens stated he and Council Member Sorum had requested a mask mandate be added to the upcoming regular meeting agenda. Ms. Pierce confirmed she received a request to add approval of a mask mandate for the July 7<sup>th</sup> regular Council meeting. Council Member Sorum encouraged a discussion during regular session. Ms. Pierce confirmed an action item was being requested, as opposed to a discussion item. Council scheduled a work session to discuss the mask mandate for July 2, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

**2. Approval To Go Into Executive Session Regarding Pending Litigation and Matters of Attorney Client Privilege**

MOTION: Council Member Ruff moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve going into executive session regarding pending litigation and matters of attorney-client privilege.

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.

**IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

City Council transitioned into executive session at 6:48 p.m.

**V. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

City Council transitioned out of executive session at 7:48 p.m.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mayor O'Neil adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.