

City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, July 20, 2021

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Civic Center Conference Room

City Council

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

Mayor Scheidt called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Valdez Civic Center.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

III. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Sharon Scheidt
Council Member Todd Wegner
Council Member Dawson Moore
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Dennis Fleming
Mayor Pro Tem Alan Sorum

Excused: 1 - Council Member Susan Love

Also Present: 5 - City Manager Mark Detter
Assistant City Manager Roxanne Murphy
City Clerk Sheri Pierce
Deputy City Clerk Allie Ferko
City Attorney Jake Staser (*by teleconference*)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021**

The City Council regular meeting minutes of July 6, 2021 were approved as presented.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Jeremy O'Neil, Administrator, Providence Valdez Medical Center

Mr. O'Neil shared the hospital's appreciation for community efforts in the wake of COVID-19 and presented the City of Valdez with a recognition plaque for their efforts in the response.

Ms. Megan Gunderson, Valdez Resident

Ms. Gunderson stated her family had chosen Valdez as their home because the community valued opportunity for all people and funded projects accordingly. She expressed her concern in the direction funding priorities had taken recently, stating though projects such as a new museum, an indoor recreation facility, and the Meals Hill project brought value and visitors to the community, they were not things that allowed for people to remain as residents.

Ms. Gunderson stressed the importance of addressing both the housing crisis and the child care crisis. She explained housing was currently impossible to find for most people. She added, for those lucky enough to find a place to live, child care was the next hurdle. She explained even those able to find child care still had to take time off work when the only child care center in town unexpectedly closed due to lack of staffing.

Ms. Gunderson stated the housing and child care situations in Valdez are basic infrastructure issues which need to be rapidly and creatively addressed before additional time, money, and energy is put into fun projects like a new museum or recreation center. She used the new fire station as an example of Council's ability to address a critical situation urgently. She asked Council to make urgent efforts towards housing and child care as their top priority.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

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

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

Excused: 1 - Council Member Love

MOTION CARRIED.

- 1. Approval to Go Into Executive Session Regarding Strategy for Future Management of Valdez Container Terminal**
- 2. Appointment to the City Ports & Harbors Commission (Full Term – Stu Hirsch)**
- 3. Approval of License Renewal #10173 - Herbal Outfitters, LLC, Retail Marijuana Store**

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Kinney Engineering, LLC for Pavement Management Phase II - Whalen Ave in the Amount of \$142,926**

MOTION: Mayor Pro Tem Sorum moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve the Professional Services Agreement with Kinney Engineering, LLC for Pavement Management Phase II - Whalen Ave in the amount of \$142,926.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

Excused: 1 - Council Member Love
MOTION CARRIED.

2. **Discussion Item: Off-Leash Areas**

Chief of Police Bart Hinkle reviewed potential options to adjust current off-leash laws, including maps of potential off-leash areas included in the agenda packet.

Mayor Scheidt asked for clarification on leashing requirements around the Gold Fields Softball Complex. Chief Hinkle explained the recommended reduction in off-leash space in the area was driven by the increased usage of the space for additional sports including the new archery and Frisbee golf courses.

Council Member Devens expressed his approval of the suggested changes.

Mayor Scheidt requested clarification of leashing requirements in the West Dike area. Chief Hinkle stated Parks and Recreation Director Nick Farline had also expressed concern over the use of motorized vehicles in the area and the potential for conflict with off-leash dogs. Ms. Pierce explained the majority of those walking their dogs in the area used the riverbed and not the trail itself.

Mayor Scheidt asked for the process to make changes to current municipal code related to off-leash areas. Chief Hinkle outlined the process which would include updating maps, map locations within the code, and also capturing the intent of the maps into suitable descriptive verbiage.

Council Member Fleming shared his desire to incorporate the Mineral Creek area in the off-leash area. Animal Control Officer Rebecca Chase addressed the needs of the area.

Council Member Moore stated he liked how the project had been approached using places people are already walking their dogs.

Council Member Devens suggested different rules for different seasons to mitigate seasonal motor vehicle usage. Mayor Scheidt asked if staff had any concerns over the areas highlighted in the map. Animal Control Officer Mike Clupper shared his concerns over the potential for a dog to turn the corner of a path and surprise a bear, as well as other seasonal motor vehicle issues. He explained many pet owners also overestimate their abilities for voice command obedience.

Mayor Scheidt asked how the public would be made aware of the changes. Chief Hinkle outlined the basic public awareness plan, including signage, maps, and infographics.

Council Member Devens asked how staff would be affected by the need to make these changes. Ms. Pierce explained writing the ordinance to update municipal code would take the most time.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

1. **#21-28 - Amending the 2021 Budget by Accepting \$177,639.29 in Unbudgeted Revenues, and Appropriating the Same to Qualifying Expenditures Pursuant to the State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Grant Award.**

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Resolution #21-28.

Finance Director Brian Carlson explained a discrepancy with the cost code listed in the agenda statement in the meeting packet, stating he was off by one digit. He explained the resolution itself did not need to be amended.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens, Council Member Fleming and Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

Excused: 1 - Council Member Love
MOTION CARRIED.

IX. REPORTS

1. **Fire/EMS Department Comprehensive Operations Assessment - Citygate Associates, LLC**
2. **2nd Quarter Report on COVID-19 Economic Recovery Programs**

Economic Director Martha Barberio introduced Kailee Wallis with Thompson & Co.

Ms. Wallis provided recently updated numbers, increased from the time of the written report included in the agenda packet. She shared her enthusiasm for the survey associated with the voucher program, highlighting two-thirds of respondents are Alaskan and about a third of survey respondents planned to visit or were visiting Valdez for the first time.

Ms. Barberio stated her team had processed 1,280 vouchers and the Finance Department had processed \$63,212.11 in reimbursement to participating businesses.

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

1. City Manager Report

Mr. Detter outlined current projects, including scheduling upcoming work sessions, an upcoming VFDA salmon habitat study of Robe Lake, meeting with the federal lobbyist, land development and access study on the Rydor property, paving projects, utility work, the Council Chambers remodel, Mineral Creek Bridge, the high school and elementary school water line replacement project, the school generator replacement, the Pipeline and Landsharks buildings demolition project, ASLS 79-116, the design of the small boat harbor H-K dock replacement, the senior housing project, Whalen Street, and an upcoming meeting with Chugach Corporation in regards to a multi-use facility which would include apartments.

2. City Clerk Report

Ms. Pierce reviewed the proposed work session schedule, including the reasoning behind the timing of the housing and land planning work session. She explained the report Council received on updates to current litigation. She shared her experience on her recent trip for IIMC, and explained she had suggested the auction of an Alaska trip in lieu of the Hawaii trip raffle during the 2022 IIMC Conference and had begun reaching out to potential sponsors.

Mayor Scheidt expressed her pride in Ms. Pierce's efforts with the IIMC.

3. City Attorney Report

Mr. Staser outlined projects and provided updates on cases his firm is working on behalf of the City, including proposed revisions to the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan, escaped properties, Pacific Pile and Marine, and Alaska Trappers litigation.

Mr. Staser explained upcoming suggested changes to the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan, including alterations to the stakeholder process. Council Member Sorum explained the stakeholder process in regards to the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan and his desire to see the deadline for comments extended. Mr. Detter stated he had requested an extended deadline, but had not

yet received a response from the state. Council directed Mr. Staser to move forward with drafting a letter in response to the suggested changes.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Scheidt reminded those listening Council spent two days in retreat putting together strategic priorities for the next year and beyond. She thanked Council and staff who participated. She thanked Ms. Ferko for organizing the Council Outlook calendar. She updated Council on a meeting with staff and Sampson Tug & Barge in regard to the Valdez Container Terminal. She expressed her enthusiasm for the grand opening of Fire Station One.

XI. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Fleming expressed concern over the recent COVID-19 outbreak in Cordova and asked if staff had reached out to offer assistance. Mr. Detter stated he had not spoken with staff in Cordova directly, but had spoken with the Valdez Public Health Nurse. He stated he would reach out to the Cordova City Manager.

Council Member Moore shared his gratitude for those who use the public business from the floor portion of the meeting to express their concerns.

Council Member Sorum thanked those who expressed concern over the daycare crisis and the effect on the community. He thanked staff for projects, including Alpine Woods and the Steve Cotter causeway sign. He requested a progress update on the Coast Guard City sign.

Council Member Devens thanked those who spoken during public business from the floor, stating he shared their concerns on housing and daycare. He thanked Providence Hospital for recognizing City staff for their collaborative efforts with local partners in the COVID-19 response. He shared information on vaccination efforts within the state and statistics from the Department of Health and Social Services.

Council Member Wegner thanked Ms. Gunderson for her comments. He stressed the importance of keeping the housing crisis at the forefront and for Council's actions to align with the City mission statement. He shared concern over the impassable trails in the Shoup Bay area.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

City Council transitioned into executive session at 8:44 p.m.

XIII. RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

City Council transitioned out of executive session at 10:00 p.m.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Scheidt adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.