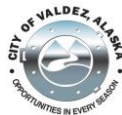


City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, August 3, 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 7:03 p.m. in the Valdez Civic Center Conference Room.

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 Susan Love
Council Member Dawson Moore
Council Member Jimmy Devens
Council Member Dennis Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Alan Sorum

Also Present: 5 - City Manager Mark Detter
Assistant City Manager Nathan Duval
City Clerk Sheri Pierce
Deputy City Clerk Allie Ferko
City Attorney Jake Staser

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2021**

The City Council regular meeting minutes of July 20, 2021 were approved as presented.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Dr. Angela Alfaro, physician from the Alfa Doc, provided a brief overview on the current status of COVID-19 in Valdez. She stated after the demobilization of the Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command in May, Sound Wellness Alliance Network (SWAN) would handle COVID-19 communications from the medical community. She reminded the community to remain vigilant in mitigation efforts during the Gold Rush Days Festival.

Ms. Rhonda Wegner Taylor, executive director of SWAN, shared how the organization would provide information to the public about COVID-19, including a weekly social media post and information in the KVAK newsletter.

Ms. Olivia Foster, representative of the 0-3 with Families Alliance, updated Council on the current child care crisis. She conveyed those needing child care felt there were no stable resources available. She expressed concern over the chronic lack of child care in the community and her willingness and desire to work towards solving the issue.

Ms. Kristina Roche, Valdez resident and Stepping Stones Learning Center's board vice president, shared Stepping Stones' struggle to survive, retain qualified employees, and provided dependable child care to the community. She expressed her willingness to help problem solve and do the work if Council could offer any guidance to the Center's board of directors.

Ms. Lisandra Diaz-Rivera, Stepping Stones executive director, explained the Center's current staffing challenges, operational challenges, and current temporary closure. She outlined her future strategies for hiring and maintaining workers and her need for input and assistance.

Mayor Scheidt thanked those who spoke on the child care crisis and stated there would be further conversations on the topic.

VI. RESOLUTIONS

1. #21-29 - Supporting Valdez Fisheries Development Association, Inc. Letter of Interest to U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers-Alaska District

MOTION: Council Member Devens moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Resolution # 21-29.

Mr. Mike Wells, VFDA executive director, provided a brief presentation on historical VFDA work in Robe Lake and the Robe Lake Salmon Habitat Restoration Project. Mr. Wells explained the VFDA is currently conducting a habitat analysis study for Robe Lake, which was funded by a grant from the city. He stated he intends to provide a report back to Council once the study is complete.

Mr. Wells briefly outlined the desire to establish a long-term, non-mechanical option for maintaining habitat in the lake. He stated the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) recently reached out to VFDA with renewed interest in the topic. The ACOE conducted a site visit to Valdez and will be completing the process for a federal interest determination. Mr. Wells explained this is the first step in assessing viability of the project at the federal level. If determined viable, the project next moves into the feasibility study phase, which requires a 50% non-federal match. Mr. Wells explained VFDA can reduce the non-federal match requirement by \$511,000 if they work on the project with a sponsor that is a federally recognized Native tribe. He briefly discussed the benefits and costs of City of Valdez co-sponsoring the project outlined in the agenda packet.

Mr. Wells stated he is looking for interest from the City Council in being a sponsor for the project, with the understanding there is a requirement for a non-federal match.

Council Member Love stated she supported the project and felt the city should be involved as a sponsor. However, she would prefer to understand the specific financial commitment involved in the project.

Mr. Wells explained there is a termination clause written into the agreement that would allow any party to remove themselves as a sponsor with 30-days' notice if they felt the project became too expensive or too risky.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

2. **#21-30 - Supporting Retention of Regional Stakeholder Committees for Stakeholder Engagement in the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan**

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Devens, to approve Resolution # 21-30.

Mr. Staser provided a brief overview of the process leading up to this resolution. He explained the concerns behind changing formation of a Regional Stakeholders Committee to an option instead of requirement in the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan. He stated the function and purpose of NIMS Multi-Agency Coordination Group is different than a Regional Stakeholders Committee.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

3. **#21-31 - Authorizing Submission of a Harbor Facilities Grant Application to the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in the Amount of \$5,000,000.00 for the Valdez Small Boat Harbor H-K Major Reconstruction Project**

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Fleming, to approve Resolution # 21-31.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

4. **#21-32 - Relinquishing Remainder Property Interest in Lot 11, Block 40, Harbor Subdivision**

MOTION: Council Member Love moved, seconded by Council Member Wegner, to approve Resolution # 21-32.

Mr. Staser explained within the will of Dr. Dale Houseman, the City of Valdez was left a remainder real property interest in Lot 11, Block 40, Harbor Subdivision. He stated a life estate was granted to another party giving them the property for use during their lifetime. Following their death, the title and property, or the "remainder property interest", would vest with the City of Valdez. The party named in the life estate is interested in selling the property, with a willing buyer in place.

Ms. Pierce explained this particular piece of property had been in the foreclosure process. The willing buyer, in advance of the purchase, had already paid all the back property taxes, interest, and penalties.

Mr. Staser stated staff did not have any additional information about why Dr. Houseman named the City of Valdez in his will, as there was no real amplifying information included in the document and no contact was made with city officials on the topic prior to his passing.

Ms. Pierce explained Council must take formal action by resolution to relinquish the remainder property interest in this real property.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Mayor Scheidt, Council Member Wegner, Council Member Love, Council Member Moore, Council Member Devens and Council Member Fleming

Excused: 1 - Mayor Pro Tem Sorum

MOTION CARRIED.

VII. REPORTS

1. **Monthly Treasury Report: June, 2021**
2. **Report: Temporary Land Use Permit 21-11 for Valdez Motor Sports Club for a 21-acre Portion of USS 439 (Pipeyard)**

City Planning Director Kate Huber stated Valdez Motor Sports Club had reached out after the agenda packet was published to say they would not be holding an event during the upcoming weekend and would be resubmitted a modified application.

Council Member Fleming asked if it was the responsibility of the Club to restore the property to original condition following use. Ms. Huber stated under this type

of permit the Club was required to remove all materials from the property and restore it to the condition in which it was found at the end of the permit timeline.

Council Member Devens asked if similar permits had been granted for the club in the past. Ms. Huber stated they had, but not for the specific area and event specified in the report. This event would be contained to the Pipeyard and not use the surrounding trail system. She stated a more long term lease was being considered for future use of the area by the club.

3. **Report: Code Enforcement (Nuisance Abatement) Semi-Annual Report & Implementation and Strategy Guide**

Mr. Detter provided a brief overview of the report included in the agenda packet, recommending questions be directed to Chief of Police Bart Hinkle when he returned to the office.

Council Member Fleming praised Chief Hinkle and those involved in the program for a well-crafted program, guide, and report.

Council Member Moore requested information on the city procedure when a building was condemned. Mr. Detter stated he would speak with Chief Hinkle and report back on the process.

4. **Report: Founders Art Memorial Project Meals Hill**

Council Member Love asked if there had been an attachment for this agenda item. Parks and Recreation Director Nick Farline explained he had considered including the artist's biographies, but had opted not at this time.

Mr. Farline reminded Council there were no current financial commitments expected of the city for the memorial project at this point in the process. The Port Valdez Company was actively seeking grant money to fund the project.

5. **Federal Lobbying Priorities Report**

Mr. Detter reminded Council of the upcoming visit from the federal lobbyist. He provided a brief verbal review of the topics addressed in the written report in the agenda packet.

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

1. **City Manager Report**

Mr. Detter discussed city programs, issues, and projects, including a work session on public feedback on the draft Comprehensive Plan, a meeting with the Chugach Corporation on housing, and the Housing work session.

Mr. Detter reviewed the recent tsunami warning alert received in Valdez and gave an overview of the way emergency information is transmitted by the National Weather Service and the City. He explained the city manager would be publishing and distributing tsunami preparedness information to the community. This information included the maximum tsunami inundation zone, local shelter locations, and other important information.

Council Member Fleming agreed tsunami preparedness education was necessary.

Council Member Devens reminded those listening KCHU Public Radio 770AM was connected to the emergency warning system through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). KCHU would also issue an automated alert over their channels, triggered by a rapid rise in water.

Mayor Scheidt asked if there was a way to connect both local radio stations to receive City NIXLE alerts and other emergency communications. She agreed community training and education would be beneficial.

Council Member Devens stated identification of secondary methods of emergency communications would be beneficial in case the primary methods were not available due to power outages or other challenges.

Mayor Scheidt verified the City's Facebook feed displayed directly on the front page of the City website, so even non-Facebook users could view the content found there.

Council Member Wegner encouraged use of common sense by citizens in an emergency. He stated people should not wait for an alert from the City or other agency if the need to move to higher ground or take other action was readily apparent. He stated education would help encourage confidence in individual decision making during an emergency.

Fire Chief Tracy Raynor explained the tsunami preparedness educational materials mentioned by Mr. Detter were being finalized in the next couple of weeks. He explained the emergency management team was looking into a geo-fencing feature offered as part of the NIXLE platform. Geo-fencing would allow NIXLE emergency management messages be sent to phones and other electronic devices within a certain geographic region, even if they did not subscribe to NIXLE alerts.

Mayor Scheidt suggested door knockers with tsunami preparedness may be an additional option.

Mr. Detter updated Council on the second quarter bed tax and provided a comparison to the 2019 and 2020 figures. He briefly reviewed the work done by

staff to address childcare needs within the community. Mayor Scheidt requested Council brainstorm creative ideas to address the childcare issue.

Council Member Devens said he felt the local tourism marketing coordinated by the Economic Development Department had been successful.

2. City Clerk Report

Ms. Pierce updated Council on upcoming ordinances, including several which required input from the Valdez Police Department, which would be brought to Council in September. She informed Council she would be out of the office August 16th through August 25th. Ms. Ferko would be available in her absence.

Ms. Ferko provided an update on current City boards and commissions vacancies.

Mayor Scheidt requested an update on the Alaska Gasline Port Authority (AGPA). Ms. Pierce explained she spoke with the auditor earlier in the day and AGPA's audit was moving forward.

3. City Attorney Report

Mr. Staser reviewed current cases and topics his firm is working on behalf of the city, including the Houseman property, the regional C-Plan, escaped property, and Alaska Trappers Association.

4. City Mayor Report

Mayor Scheidt thanked Mr. Detter and Assistant City Manager Roxanne Murphy for addressing the recent postal service issue.

She thanked Council and City staff for tackling the work session schedule aggressively.

She shared her recent opportunity to attend the Coast Guard Change of Command Ceremony for the Cutter Chandeleur. She thanked Lieutenant Cassel for his service to the community and welcomed Lieutenant Wright.

She encouraged the community to support the Gold Rush events safely.

IX. COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Council Member Devens encouraged the community to practice emergency preparedness.

Council Member Moore shared his appreciation for both Mr. Detter's efforts on the community childcare issue and comments from the community on the topic. He stated childcare was a health and safety issue.

Council Member Love expressed her concerns that the childcare issue was impacting so many families.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Scheidt adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.