

Regular City Council Meeting  
March 18, 2020 @ 7:00 pm  
Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B  
Minutes

**A. Call to order**

**Mayor Clay Koplín** called the Council Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on March 18, 2020, in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

**B. Invocation and pledge of allegiance**

**Mayor Koplín** led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. Roll call**

Present for roll call were **Mayor Clay Koplín** and Council member **Anne Schaefer**. Council members **Tom Bailer**, **Cathy Sherman**, **Jeff Guard**, **Melina Meyer** and **David Allison** were present via teleconference. Council member **David Glasen** was absent. Also present were City Manager **Helen Howarth** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

**D. Approval of Regular Agenda**

**M/Schaefer S/Guard** to approve the Regular Agenda.

**M/Schaefer S/Bailer** to amend the agenda by adding Resolution 03-20-13 as agenda item 15a.

Vote on the motion to amend: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Meyer-yes; Schaefer-yes; Glasen-absent; Sherman-yes; Allison-yes; Guard-yes and Bailer-yes. Motion was approved.

Vote on the main motion as amended: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Allison-yes; Meyer-yes; Sherman-yes; Guard-yes; Glasen-absent; Bailer-yes and Schaefer-yes. Motion was approved.

**E. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest and ex parte communications - none**

**F. Communications by and Petitions from Visitors**

1. Guest speaker - **Heather Brannon**, Emergency Management Coordinator gave Council an update on what the response to the coronavirus emergency has been to date.

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items

**Luke Borer** said that **Brannon** answered a lot of his questions but one concern he has is he appreciates the “Cordova prepared” page and the “neighborhood watch” page but there is no interaction page, he gets that we can send emails, but not everyone else in town gets the answers too, they don’t get to read those questions. So, when “we” have decided on things, if there was a communications page, maybe different decisions would be made according to the will of many people speaking. All offices are closed, yet the public is out there still open, i.e. no quarantine required of the people coming into town from the airport. He mentioned a local family coming back to town and they’ve reported that they will completely self-quarantine for 2 weeks, he thinks we need to push that, have everyone do that. He opined that the little group making the decisions is doing the best they can but there are a lot more opinions out there and these are the lives being risked, so these opinions should be involved more in the decision making. He also asked for the plan regarding summer: tourists, cannery workers, returning fisherman, cruise ships - please get us all the answers as soon as something is known, a lot of people’s livelihoods at stake.

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

**Greg Meyer**, CCMCA Board Chair was present via teleconference and reported: 1) he thanked **Heather** and said the health professionals in Cordova are working well together, CCMC, Ilanka, the City, **Heather** - he thanked them all. Prevention is everything, we are doing our best to keep the long-term care residents safe, essentially, we’re on lockdown, there is no ICU here, no ventilator. 2) pharmacy will bring prescriptions out to your car, please call ahead; 3) CEO is in a higher-risk group has been told to stay away from the hospital, **Barb Jewell** is on a 14-day quarantine, she is home looking for disaster funds that could help us; 4) still searching for a CEO/CFO - good news is **Dr. Sanders** has a full-time medical director, doctor, lined up for sometime in May or June; 5) financially, they are holding steady, cash flow, receivables and payables are tracking with the report he gave back in September.

Questions from Council: 1) **Schaefer** asked **Meyer** the status of the elevator and X-Ray. **Meyer** said X-Ray was getting fixed, might be by now he hasn’t heard. Elevator - we are holding off; he has requested a safety report from the safety officer. When he gets that and a possibly quote, he will get with the City Manager about that. **Mayor Koplín** said that the City Manager was nodding on the X-Ray portion of that questions, so it appears as though that has been fixed. 2) **Bailer** asked

**Meyer** if there will be budget issues if the Clinic winds up getting closed. **Meyer** said it would be a break even, the safety of the residents is more important right now – he has **Dr. Sanders** weighing in on what the risk is regarding staying open.

4. Student Council representative – was not present

#### **G. Approval of Consent Calendar**

5. Per Charter Section 2-8 and Cordova Municipal Code 3.12.022, recordation of excused absence of the following: Council member **Ken Jones** from the March 4, 2020 Regular Meeting

6. Resolution 03-20-11 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing amendment of the FY20 budget in the amount of \$5,636 for the 2019 NVE grant for a K-9 officer

7. Resolution 03-20-12 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing amendment of the FY20 budget in the amount of \$97,000 for the repair of the pool building and \$200,000 for repairs to the PWSSC dock and the loading dock

Vote on the approval of the consent calendar: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Allison-yes; Schaefer-yes; Guard-yes; Meyer-yes; Glasen-absent; Bailer-yes and Sherman-yes. Consent calendar was approved.

#### **H. Approval of Minutes**

**M/Schaefer S/Bailer** to approve the minutes.

8. Minutes of the 03-04-2020 Regular Council Meeting

9. Minutes of the 03-11-2020 Special Council Meeting

Clerk **Bourgeois** noted that Council member **Sherman** had shared with her a small correction, she had listed **Ken Jones** as both absent and present in the March 4 minutes. **Bourgeois** said she'd make that edit, but a formal amendment was not required.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Meyer-yes; Allison-yes; Glasen-absent; Schaefer-yes; Guard-yes; Bailer-yes and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

#### **I. Consideration of Bids - none**

#### **J. Reports of Officers**

10. Mayor's Report – **Mayor Koplín** reported: 1) he's been in close contact with **Lobbyist Bitney** who is keeping him abreast of goings on in Juneau; he, himself has been participating in the White House briefings – USDA is prioritizing food chain industries – of which Cordova plays a role as far as the fishing industry – there may be resources available to assist with the seasonal seafood workers; 2) his proclamation only lasts 7 days so tonight Council is being asked to extend the disaster declaration – in an effort to request resources when we need them; 3) Juneau is meeting and working on unemployment assistance, the federal government also working on large packages of assistance for citizens and businesses – primarily public health issues but also economic resources if we are to miss out on fishing and tourism in the coming months – we may need specific resolutions for these things, might need Council special meetings in these coming weeks.

11. Manager's Report - City Manager **Helen Howarth** reported: 1) city to date has closed the library, museum, pool, Bidarki – based on public concern. We are taking advantage of the time for employees to do deep cleaning and housekeeping type tasks. We are still open for the public to make appointments to see staff (finance, dmv, other City Hall offices), so they can be served properly and also so there aren't five people waiting for someone and not keeping to social distancing. We are available by email, by phone, bills and other items can be dropped off in the drop box, we are accessible. 2) **Ken Fay** will be the new Finance Director will begin April 1. CPA, lots of experience. She will let him get up to speed on City Investments and all financial matters before they are addressed by Council.

a. UBS – City Investments Report from March 3, 2020

12. City Clerk's Report – **Bourgeois** deferred to her written report in the packet.

#### **K. Correspondence**

13. 02-13-2020 Email and letter from Cordova Chamber of Commerce

14. 03-04-2020 Mayor letter supporting T. Carpenter for BOF appointment

#### **L. Ordinances and Resolutions**

15. Ordinance 1183 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 5.42 Alaska remote seller sales tax code including common definitions, and amending CMC 5.40.030(F) to repeal the exemption for interstate sales found in CMC 5.40.030(F)(4) - 1<sup>st</sup> reading

*M/Schaefer S/Bailer* to approve Ordinance 1183 an ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 5.42 Alaska remote seller sales tax code including common definitions, and amending CMC 5.40.030(F) to repeal the exemption for interstate sales found in CMC 5.40.030(F)(4).

*Schaefer* asked if this was required for us to be collecting sales tax from these online vendors. *Howarth* said yes, sort of, AML set up this entity for online sales tax collection and then remittal back to the Cities. This ordinance creates the language required to do this through the newly formed organization. We could be doing this on our own, if at any time it becomes smarter to do so, we can get out of this, at this time it seems the best way to get from the vast number of online retailers. *Schaefer* asked what the costs associated with this. *Howarth* said 18% is the high number at this point; since it is so new, they will have to see how it goes.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Glasen-absent; Sherman-yes; Meyer-yes; Schaefer-yes; Allison-yes; Bailer-yes and Guard-yes. Motion was approved.

**15a.** Resolution 03-20-13 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, approving the local disaster emergency proclamation made by the Mayor and City Manager on March 16, 2020 and authorizing necessary actions to reduce the impact and spread of the coronavirus known as Covid-19 throughout the City of Cordova

*M/Schaefer S/Bailer* to approve Resolution 03-20-13 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, approving the local disaster emergency proclamation made by the Mayor and City Manager on March 16, 2020 and authorizing necessary actions to reduce the impact and spread of the coronavirus known as Covid-19 throughout the City of Cordova

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Meyer-yes; Sherman-yes; Schaefer-yes; Guard-yes; Allison-yes; Glasen-absent and Bailer-yes. Motion was approved.

#### **M. Unfinished Business - none**

#### **N. New & Miscellaneous Business**

**16.** Council concurrence of Mayor's appointment to fill City dedicated seat on PWSRCAC Board

*M/Schaefer S/Bailer* to concur with Mayor Koplin's appointment of **Robert Beedle** to fill the City seat on the PWSRCAC.

*Schaefer* commented, thanks for stepping up again.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Sherman-yes; Bailer-yes; Glasen-absent; Allison-yes; Meyer-yes; Guard-yes and Schaefer-yes. Motion was approved.

**17.** Council approval of engagement letter/scope of work with Robert Allen of Cape Decision Consulting for the sale of CCMC.

*M/Schaefer S/Bailer* to approve the engagement letter and scope of work with Robert Allen for consulting services for the sale of CCMC.

City Manager *Helen Howarth* said that *Greg Meyer* has been working a long time with NVE toward the sale of CCMC; he's been doing a great job has an excellent relationship formed. *Howarth* said she her role has changed into the arena of providing guidance and research and investigation into whether the City is best poised and in the best position to make the sale to the benefit of our community. In that research of other recent hospital sales, she noticed many possible issues could arise if not addressed early on - i.e. the costs associated with the actual sale. She reached out to *Rob Allen* - someone with lot of experience in this type of transaction.

*Mr. Allen* explained that he learned a lot during the sale of the Sitka Community Hospital and SEARHC that could be extremely valuable to Cordova. He is glad there is an interested buyer, and negotiating is occurring, he does not at all intend to slow that process down. He said the decision to sell the City hospital is irreversible, he'd want to ensure the City got the best deal possible.

*Council member Meyer* commented that we will need a CEO and even one as we transition, his experience doing that could be extremely helpful. *Schaefer* said the sale of the hospital to NVE or someone else down the road will be a huge and complex transaction for the City so she agrees that we need professionals with expertise involved. While this seems costly up front, it could save us a lot of money down the line and she is supportive of this. *Bailer* asked the manager what it is Council could do to support her because she felt the need to get more hep in the matter. *Howarth* said she wants the City to go into this with eyes wide open, ensuring that the transaction is a win - win. She wants the citizens to get the best health care but also not be left with a huge liability. *Meyer* asked about the financial part of this, how this would affect the budget. *Howarth* said there has been nothing budgeted for the costs of the sale. *Bailer* commented that we have the CCMCA Board, the City Manager, the CCMCA Board Chair *Greg Meyer*, he is uncertain how this gets structured, who is the point-person, who has authority on this stuff. *Rob Allen* opined that it needs to be a team approach; this large of an undertaking could take over all of the City Manager's time whereas she still has other work to do; in Sitka the City Attorney, a staff attorney, was consumed with this. *Sherman* stated that she agrees about not wanting to consume the City Manager's

time and it behooves us to be proactive and bring someone in who can provide this guidance to our team so that we are not sorry in the long run. **Bailer** said he feels like his question was answered, he doesn't want to step on anyone's toes, he wants roles clearly defined, he is leaning toward supporting this. **Mayor Koplín** made a couple of comments with no objection from Council. He said as far as knowledge of the structure, the City's attorney would be helpful in that regard with roles of Manager, CCMCA Board, City Council – they'd be able to advise in that arena. The outside consultant would be a resource to the process: goals, objectives, apprehensions, risks – clarity on threats, opportunities, challenges – both a resource to the manager and the process. **Guard** asked how far down the road that \$50 thousand would get us. **Howarth** said the scope of work is included; we won't get the deal done with \$50 thousand of **Rob's** time; his team's time. We will understand the risks, the process, we'll feel confident on what the end game might look like, we'll be in a stronger position of awareness and knowledge of the transaction. **Meyer** agrees we need to be organized and have a good chain of command that is understood by all involved, coordinate all conversations – she is a little worried about the budget – but she is in support at this time, his expertise will be helpful to join the conversation.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Glasen-absent; Bailer-yes; Meyer-yes; Schaefer-yes; Allison-yes; Sherman-yes and Guard-yes. Motion was approved.

#### 18. Council election of Vice-Mayor

**M/Schaefer S/Guard** to nominate **Melina Meyer** to serve as Vice Mayor until the first meeting after the certification of the 2021 Regular City Election.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Allison-yes; Guard-yes; Glasen-absent; Bailer-yes; Meyer-yes; Schaefer-yes and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

#### 19. Pending Agenda, Calendar and Elected & Appointed Officials lists

**Mayor Koplín** suggested there could be upcoming need for Special Meetings to pass resolutions, etc. during the emergency. **Meyer** wondered if Council needed to act at all regarding deferral of any payments for citizens during this tough time. **Howarth** said she is looking into such allowances; she will let Council know what she comes up with and ask for guidance accordingly. **Howarth** said one action she is taking immediately is not laying people off – she is finding work for all City employees – she agrees we have to be aware of the economic impacts as well as the health impacts of the Coronavirus. Council opted to delay the scheduled joint work session with the School Board that had been planned for April 1.

#### O. Audience Participation - none

#### P. Council Comments

**Bailer** welcomed Cathy Sherman. He thanked the **Mayor** and **Heather Brannon** – nice job on the briefing to Council. He also thanked Melina Meyer for stepping up as Vice mayor, she did a great job last year and he knows she will again.

**Guard** thanked City staff for stepping up during this difficult time. He thanked outgoing Council member **Ken Jones** for his service, he also welcomed **Cathy Sherman**.

**Sherman** said she liked the Clerk's report, liked reading that the High School classes came in to vote. She praised the chamber report – she thinks the chamber is doing some exciting things, she's seen spotlights on local businesses, a really unique and inventive idea. She also thanked everyone here for the hard work on the emergency, she was in Anchorage had a small surgery and was so thankful to come home to this community where she doesn't see the panic and craziness like what is going on in Anchorage. She said it is nice to be home.

**Meyer** thanked City staff, **Mayor, Heather** and all working on Cordova prepared. Welcomed **Cathy** and thanked **Ken Jones** for his service.

**Schaefer** echoed the welcome and the thanks. She appreciates the community for its effort in this too, said to keep looking out for one another and complete the 2020 census while you are at home.

**Mayor Koplín** thanked **Robert Beedle** for his willingness to continue on PWSRCAC.

#### Q. Adjournment

**M/Schaefer S/Meyer** to adjourn the meeting.

Hearing no objection **Mayor Koplín** adjourned the meeting at 8:57 pm.

Approved: April 1, 2020

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk