

**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**September 2, 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 September 2, 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 members *Tom Bailer* and *David Allison*. Council members *Cathy Sherman*, *Jeff Guard*, *Melina Meyer*, and *David Glasen* were present via teleconference. Council member *Anne Schaefer* was absent. Also present were City Manager *Helen Howarth* and City Clerk *Susan Bourgeois*.

**D. Approval of Regular Agenda**

*M/Allison S/Bailer* to approve the agenda with item 13 removed.

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

**E. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest and ex parte communications**

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

1. Guest speaker

a. Incident Management Team, Covid-19 update - *Dr. Hannah Sanders*, Medical Team lead for the IMT emergency response reported: 1) City continues to do well, one active case and we are navigating fall weather now as we continue to screen airport passengers; 2) hospital and clinic readiness-wise, we continue to conduct testing and things are going very well.

Council questions: *Bailer* asked how our supply of tests is doing. *Dr. Sanders* said that our supply is intact, the supply chain is essentially not intact. *Meyer* asked what the plan at the school district is for re-starting. She said they do have a plan in place for when they would need to close, either due to a large community outbreak or an outbreak at one of the schools. They are using state and CDC guidance to determine these. No screening with tests will be occurring, that has actually been discouraged by the State Dept of Health and the CDC. People tend to change behaviors and get a false sense of security with screening tests. Better to monitor symptoms and the schools have good protocols in place for symptoms, PPE use, etc. *Meyer* also asked *Dr. Sanders* to weigh in on the safety of in-person meetings, as Council will have that discussion later on the agenda. *Dr. Sanders* said how we congregate is a personal risk decision. She said in a community with a very low disease burden having a meeting with people wearing masks, socially distancing, washing hands is probably a safe activity.

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items - none

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

*Dr. Hannah Sanders*, CCMCA CEO was present via teleconference and reported: 1) continue to work on being COVID ready, applying CARES funds, grants - receiving equipment and will continue to receive (respiratory, etc.); 2) 2019 audit will be finalized in next week or so - cost report will be finalized then too, and things looking good that our reimbursement rate will improve; 3) CARES funds should be able to offset historical expenses and we should be in good shape through year end. She also mentioned a new doctor, *Dr. Gloe*, he and his family are very excited to make Cordova their home.

*Barb Jewell* School Board President reported: 1) school has started in a safe way - last week has been online, next week students in small cohorts will be in the building, if all goes well by third week of in person all students will be in the building for at least part of the day; 2) focus has been on safety of students and teachers, following state Dept of Ed guidelines and have been getting help from *Dr. Sanders*.

4. Student Council representative - vacant

**G. Approval of Consent Calendar**

5. Minutes of the 08-05-2020 Regular Council Meeting

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

## H. Approval of Minutes - in Consent Calendar

## I. Consideration of Bids - none

## J. Reports of Officers

6. Mayor's Report - **Mayor Koplín** reported: 1) re-emphasized the importance of voting to the community; 2) he and **Bitney** have been working on getting the raw fish revenue numbers much earlier from the state; 3) **Congressman Don Young** visited last week - good community representation at the meet and greet - he anticipates a lame duck session which sometimes leads to a productive session, his ferry input was that the State has to run them to get federal assistance, might be worth trying to accomplish something regionally; 4) he encouraged Council to get face time especially when Congressional delegation members are in town - **Senator Dan Sullivan** will be here Oct 10-11.

7. Manager's Report - City Manager **Helen Howarth** reported: 1) 3 applicant interviews have been conducted for the public communications/special projects position - should have a new employee soon; 2) City Hall is re-opening September 8(10am-4pm) - everything is in place for safety - restrooms, public facing sneeze guards, hand sanitizer, socially distanced chairs, etc. - an ambassador will be at the front door for screening and assistance; library and museum will be by appointment only - City Hall will allow people to walk in and pay bills; 3) our audit is happening too - not too distant future we will have a report, now that CCMC's is almost completed; 4) public safety survey - over 200 responses - will be compiled and then we will report to Council.

8. City Clerk's Report - **Bourgeois** reported that Title 2 re-write of Election Code should be coming at the next Council meeting or soon after; also, she setup a training session via zoom for Council and Boards and Commissions, September 30 from 5:30pm - 8:30pm. **Allison** asked if the training could be recorded. **Bourgeois** said she would find out.

## K. Correspondence

9. 10-15-2019 Friends of the AMHS letter requesting membership in group

10. 08-14-20 PWSRCAC letter to federal delegation regarding increased oil spill risk

**Mayor Koplín** asked for concurrence of council to agree to be included as a member of the Friends of the AMHS - Council concurred. On the second letter he asked the Clerk to get in touch with **Robert Beedle**, the City rep to PWSRCAC and ask him for a report.

## L. Ordinances and Resolutions

11. Emergency Ordinance 1191 An emergency ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, continuing the City's declaration of a local emergency and acknowledgement of a state-wide emergency resulting from COVID-19 and amending the City of Cordova Health Advisory Plan to supplement Appendix A with an updated alert matrix

**M/Sherman S/Meyer** to adopt emergency ordinance 1191 an emergency ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, continuing the City's declaration of a local emergency and acknowledgement of a state-wide emergency resulting from COVID-19 and amending the City of Cordova Health Advisory Plan to supplement Appendix A with an updated alert matrix

**Sherman** said she is in support of this. The medical team seems to want this in place, so she is in favor. **Meyer** agrees with **Sherman** and is supportive. **Bailer** said he would prefer to get rid of the rainbow and just stay with the state's red, yellow, and green - so he does not support this. **Allison** said he does not see this as an emergency - he is not in support. **Guard** said he is in support, this action is needed so as not to jeopardize our funding - this gives us as a small community, our own matrix, a legal off-ramp, he is in favor. **Glaser** said he agrees with **Guard**, he is in favor.

Vote on the motion: 4 yeas, 2 nays, 1 absent. Allison-no; Meyer-yes; Bailer-no; Schaefer-absent; Guard-yes; Glaser-yes and Sherman-yes. Motion failed - emergency ordinances need 5 yeas to pass.

**This ordinance was reconsidered later in the meeting during agenda item 15.**

12. Resolution 09-20-34 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, supporting the continuation of a strong United States Postal Service and encouraging full funding of the service that is vitally important to rural Alaskans and all the people of the United States

**M/Meyer S/Sherman** to approve Resolution 09-20-34 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, supporting the continuation of a strong United States Postal Service and encouraging full funding of the service that is vitally important to rural Alaskans and all the people of the United States

**Meyer** said she is in favor - no harm passing this, things may have changed since we first thought of this but it is still important to support full funding of the USPS. **Sherman** agrees with **Meyer** and it is important for a rural community like us to take the lead and hope that others across the state do the same. **Allison** said he does not think we should approve this because he doesn't like our saying we support fully funding a USPS - he doesn't want us to put the USPS in our budget.

He will not support it as written. *Glaser* said he supports this. *Bailer* said it's a new shiny thing that is in the news media so we are going to chase it; he will not support it.

Vote on the motion: 4 yeas, 2 nays, 1 absent. Guard-yes; Schaefer-absent; Meyer-yes; Allison-no; Sherman-yes; Glaser-yes and Bailer-no. Motion was approved.

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

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

~~13. Rescission of disposal and method of disposal for East half of Lot 3, Block 17 Original Townsite~~

this was removed from the agenda at the approval of the agenda

14. Council action regarding in-person Council meeting attendance

*M/Allison S/Bailer* to direct staff to plan for the next council meeting to be held in person but also have a method for public call-in comments.

*Allison* said we have always had the call-in ability for Council members and now we do for the public too. *Bailer* said he supports this. *Glaser* also agrees and is glad people will still have the choice of whether to call-in or come in person. *Meyer* asked about a capacity limit and how would that be handled. *Howarth* said we will have an ambassador at the front door and if we exceed capacity we will ask people to call-in instead. *Howarth* said the capacity can be expanded to 30+ people if we open the back wall and use the atrium too. *Meyer* asked what staff's feelings are, do they feel comfortable opening for the next meeting. *Howarth* said yes, we are ready, we will adapt, we can back track if anything feels unsafe. *Meyer* said all of her questions have been answered and she is in favor. *Guard* wondered about the affect of the failed ordinance extending the emergency on our rules. Is our mask rule gone, for instance? *Howarth* said she is very unclear at this time; she is awaiting answers from the City Attorney on that very issue. *Guard* asked if we did, in fact undo our rules with that previous action, then will we enforce a mask rule at open City Council meetings? *Mayor Koplin* and *Howarth* said yes, the rules as they exist now would be in place for Council meetings. *Sherman* asked if teleconference Council attendance was still considered present for recording council attendance. The answer was yes, council attendance via teleconference is allowed and counts as present at the meeting.

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

15. Discussion of Covid-19 Emergency Response

*Howarth* reported: Emergency Management as an entire body has stood down but what is still in place is the Unified Command, smaller group composed of the medical team, the PIO team, NVE representatives and a few others. We do need a declared emergency. *Howarth* will discuss with the attorney to determine how to do so.

*M/Guard S/Sherman* to reconsider Emergency Ordinance 1191.

*Sherman* said we need to approve this and keep the emergency declaration in place to ensure the funding we are receiving stays in place. *Allison* said he is happy to talk about it again. *Bailer* agreed he is happy to reconsider. *Meyer* and *Glaser* both agreed to reconsider.

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

The effect of this vote was that the approval of Emergency Ordinance 1191 was back on the floor for discussion.

*Sherman* reiterated that we should pass this and then the door will open for more discussion in the future - let's ask the med team, we have relied on them let's hear their take on this matrix. *Dr. Sanders* called in to comment. She said this is a continuation of the plan Council put in place - it has been used as a working document to align our medical matrix using small community epidemiology to mesh with our five-level plan and the state's. The schools for their re-opening really needed a color-coded plan and we had to then work that into our plan too; they needed to work with the State Department of Ed smart-start plan. *Guard* said this does not really deviate from the state's position: green, yellow, red is a world without Covid, he does not have an issue with us using more gradation. *Glaser* said he is in favor, he agrees simpler is better but whatever the doctor recommends, and those who need it are in agreement. *Allison* said his policy has not changed at all, he thinks this is a scare tactic that we will no longer qualify for the state funding, he doesn't believe in scare tactics he will still vote no. *Meyer* is still in favor - she thinks the levels and the colors for our community are appropriate.

Vote on the motion: 5 yeas, 1 nay, 1 absent. Glaser-yes; Meyer-yes; Sherman-yes; Schaefer-absent; Bailer-yes; Allison-no and Guard-yes. Motion was approved.

*Mayor Koplin* reverted to the Covid-19 discussion item 15. *Bailer* said he would like to see a more permanent structure at the airport for the ambassadors. *Guard* asked about whether the state has any intention of enforcement on the testing rules.

**Howarth** said they have not given any instruction to State Troopers or others. As far as City when we hear a complaint – we are investigating and calling/educating people, business owners, etc. It’s about communication. There are no teeth as far as enforcement from the state. **Guard** appreciated that – his concern was the inaction on the State’s part.

**16. Pending Agenda, Calendar and Elected & Appointed Officials lists**

**Bourgeois** said Council might need a Special meeting on September 11, Friday at noon – there was no objection from Council. **Bourgeois** decided she would start putting the CIP resolution in the packet for constant review by Council/public. **Allison** asked about the \$5 million for the Harbor project, if any council action is needed for that – to help get it in the Governor’s budget. **Mayor Koplín** said he would strategize with **Bitney** to see what would be helpful. **Allison** said he would like to discuss the impound lot and the impound lot situation – is there a better place for it. **Mayor Koplín** said there is an effort to relocate the EVOSTC funds and he is a little worried that it has not been brought to Council and the manager is on that luckily. **Meyer** mentioned the investment committee and maybe that should come before us if necessary. **Mayor Koplín** said he and Manager would get heads together and maybe put a letter out to powers that be to advocate for our local post office (maintenance/cleanliness, etc.).

**O. Audience Participation - none**

**P. Council Comments**

**Sherman** she wanted the public to understand why we pulled item 13 from the agenda, it is because the City Planner let Council know that the proposer who had been interested, then said he wasn’t interested has now changed his mind and is interested in pursuing the land purchase. Therefore, the rescission was no longer necessary. She thanked the Finance Director, **Ken** for the informative work session. Kudos to Parks and Rec for maintaining the airport testing tent and for cleaning the Bidarki building, looking great. Also, thanks to **Bill Howard** for his long-time service to the City upon his retirement.

**Glaser** thanks to staff.

**Meyer** said the mandate that she has been saying again and again to people is that even though they have the first negative test, they still are required to do strict social distancing – which means no stores/restaurants until a second negative in Alaska 7-14 days later. She encouraged citizens to prepare to vote coming up in November and also to ensure they are counted in the census.

**Allison** said if all of our property taxes were paid with a credit card it would cost us \$75,000 – which is a lot. He had a citizen call recently and they have difficulty using electronics and they prefer being in person. He appreciates all the work of IMT – he thinks an emergency doesn’t last 6 months or 12 months.

**Bailer** said the City needs to set the standard as far as the junk cars out in front of the old City Hall; he commented that PWSAC – he has been on the board and doing work for them, he just excused himself from voting that item so he thinks maybe he didn’t even have a conflict on the Covid work he did for the City, we should ask the attorney about that. As far as land sales – there is another one coming up and he thinks staff executes this process very well, they couldn’t do it any better. It is incumbent on the requesters to do the legwork – it is not staff’s job to hold their hand through the process. He thinks there should be a non-refundable fee because you have created a bunch of work for staff, if you back out they still did the work. He thinks **Leif** does a great job and he thinks the process we have in place does work and is the best process we could have.

**Guard** offered a heartfelt apology to **Dr. Sanders** for dropping the enforcement bomb on her, he did not mean to do that. He appreciates Council reconsidering the Emergency Ordinance – he thinks that was a really important thing to do.

**Q. Executive Session - none**

**R. Adjournment**

**M/Bailer S/Allison** to adjourn the meeting.

Hearing no objection **Mayor Koplín** adjourned the meeting at 9:17 pm.

Approved: September 16, 2020

Attest:   
Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

