

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
DECEMBER 15, 2010 @ 6:45 PM
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM
MINUTES**

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor James Kallander called the Council Work Session to order at 6:45 pm on December 15, 2010, in the Library Meeting Room.

B. ROLL CALL

Present for roll call were *Mayor James Kallander*, Council members *Jim Kaesh*, *EJ Cheshier* and *David Reggiani*. Council members *Keith van den Broek*, *David Allison*, *Bret Bradford* and *Robert Beedle* were absent. Also present were City Manager *Mark Lynch* and City Clerk *Susan Bourgeois*.

C. WORK SESSION TOPIC

1. Meet and greet with Prospective City Lobbyist, John Bitney

The Council and community members mingled with *John Bitney* over snacks while introductions were made all around.

Council Members *Keith van den Broek*, *Bret Bradford* and *Robert Beedle* arrived at 6:50 pm

Mayor Kallander interrupted the mingling and asked *John Bitney* to tell the group a little about himself. *Bitney* thanked everyone for meeting with him. He informed the group that his family moved to Alaska in 1968. His dad was a teacher and they moved around, mostly to small villages, all over Alaska. He got interested in politics when he was helping one of his Dads friends work their campaign for Mayor of the Mat-Su Borough. He then started working for a Legislator in Palmer named Ron Larson, as a legislator's aide. He worked summers as a fishing guide. He discovered that being in Juneau was fun and he liked the legislature. He worked for the Knowles Administration as a legislative liaison. He went into lobbying with some clients, such as, The Home Builders Association, The State Nurses Association, Pioneers of Alaska, and several Health and Social Service Clients. A childhood friend asked him to help her run for Governor in 2006. He went on to work for her, Sarah Palin, in the governor's office for a year. He has spent the last three years working for John Harris. He worked last summer as a Campaign Manager for Lisa Murkowski. He really enjoyed lobbying when he did it before and is looking to make a commitment to doing it again for a while. The building trust and relationships that lobbying requires appeals to him. He thinks of being a lobbyist as being an advocate for his clients. He has trusted relationships with the people he will need to be advocating his clients to, and thinks he can represent his friends well in that manner.

Bitney opened the floor up for questions. He mentioned that he likes the small fishing communities and will be back in Cordova this summer. He also stated that he was surprised at how big and busy the community is. He has mostly lived in the Valley but for the next couple of years he and his wife plan to make Juneau their home. The question was asked what he does in the off-season. He replied that this year he did home repairs and does not have another job. Cordova is his only client currently, he will be acquiring more clients, but Cordova is his focus. *Bitney* was asked what he sees in the long-term for himself. He responded that lobbying is his long-term focus. He did it for five years before and very much enjoyed it.

A note was made that the Governor's budget came out today and Cordova was not included in the list.

Bitney was questioned whether he would lobby just at the state level or if he would also go to the federal level. He stated that he would be very willing but will be honest that he does not know D.C. as he knows Alaska. It was suggested to him that he cultivate relationships with other similar community lobbyists in order to facilitate similar requests in the future at the state or federal level.

Mayor Kallander ended the discussion time and thanked *John Bitney* for sharing with them.

D. COUNCIL COMMENTS - none

E. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Approved: January 19, 2010

Attest:


Robyn Kincaid, Deputy City Clerk

