

Special City Council Meeting  
July 20, 2021 @ 12:15 pm  
Cordova Center Community Rooms  
Minutes

**A. Call to order**

**Mayor Clay Koplín** called the Council Special Meeting to order at 12:15 pm on July 20, 2021 in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

**B. Roll call**

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

**C. Approval of agenda**

**M/Allison S/Guard** to approve the agenda

Hearing no objection, **Mayor Koplín** declared the agenda approved.

**D. Disclosures of conflicts of interest and Ex Parte Communications - none**

**E. Communications by and petitions from visitors**

**1. Guest Speakers**

**a. Dr. Anne Zink,** Chief Medical Officer, State of Alaska DHSS reported that there has recently been a 70% increase in Covid-19 cases across the country and a 36% increase in hospitalizations. The delta variant is in Alaska – 80% of the most recent cases in Alaska are the delta variant. Vaccines are appearing to hold up well against the delta variant – somewhere between 80 - 85 – 88% effectiveness against the symptomatic disease delta variant and in the mid 90% against asymptomatic disease. Unvaccinated individuals continue to make up the majority of our hospitalizations (96%) and deaths (98%). Primarily the group that is not vaccinated is the under 40-year-old group and 44% of hospitalizations are in that under 40-year-old group as well. She continues to provide communities with real time data, especially on the efficacy of vaccines – they are always willing to meet with people, answer questions, relay what is known about this variant. High risk individuals might consider reinstating some of the mitigation practices such as masking even if they are vaccinated. She really encourages anyone with symptoms to get tested – knowledge is power – wants to ensure people don't spread it to others especially with a variant that is 2 to 3 times more transmissible.

Questions: **Mayor Koplín** asked if they are seeing re-infection cases with the delta variant of those who have already had and recovered from Covid? **Dr. Zink** said that she is seeing re-infection; there is some degree of protection from natural antibodies, but it varies depending on age, severity of symptoms. Studies show that the effectiveness of previous infection antibodies is in the 30% effectiveness range against delta whereas vaccines are in the 85% range.

**Guard** asked her thoughts on other variants that may be coming due to the infection rates going up. **Dr. Zink** said we are watching evolution in progress; each of us is acting as an incubator. This virus cannot replicate without human hosts. There is a very high likelihood that with all the people in the world, this virus is likely to change; it becomes so important to slow the spread; stop it in its tracks.

**Schaefer** asked **Dr. Zink** what we can say to encourage those who are not vaccinated to feel safer getting vaccinated. **Dr. Zink** said she and her staff are happy to answer questions and meet with groups to help get answers to questions those have about the vaccine.

**Dr. Sanders** gave a local Cordova update. Currently there are 70 active cases, over half are in congregate housing in the seafood industry. Fourteen of the cases are vaccinated individuals. We are doing a lot of surveillance screening because of the congregate settings and so those with very mild or no symptoms are positive and that is why we are getting so many breakthrough cases. **Dr. Sanders** said that the medical team has been meeting and for this outbreak they feel it is very important to ask for universal masking in indoor spaces. There are those who are vaccinated and would like to abide by the CDC directives and not feel required to wear a mask in these settings, but the medical team feels like for this outbreak they are comfortable asking the community to mask up. They are not asking for a mandate, but they are asking people to help us flatten the curve in Cordova. **Howarth** added that we are still also strongly encouraging vaccinations and suggesting universal masking but hoping for voluntary compliance not asking Council to mandate it at this time.

**Mayor Koplín** left the meeting at approximately 12:50 and **Vice Mayor Sherman** took the gavel.

Council member **Bailer** joined the meeting at 12:55 pm.

Emergency Management lead **Heather Brannon** updated Council on what the seafood industry is doing to mitigate this outbreak.

**2. Audience Comments regarding agenda items - none**

## F. New Business

3. Emergency Ordinance 1199 An Emergency Ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending the City Covid-19 Health Advisory Plan to update the Community Outbreak Rules in Appendix C of the Plan to provide the City flexibility in mitigating Covid-19 local outbreaks in light of vaccine accessibility and medical advancements

*M/Guard S/Meyer* to adopt Emergency Ordinance 1199 An Emergency Ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending the City Covid-19 Health Advisory Plan to update the Community Outbreak Rules in Appendix C of the Plan to provide the City flexibility in mitigating Covid-19 local outbreaks in light of vaccine accessibility and medical advancements

*Guard* said he is in favor; he thinks this makes it easier to move more quickly. *Meyer, Schaefer* and *Glaser* also said they were in favor. *Allison* said he like that this is less restrictive than where we are now, he'll support.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Schaefer-yes; Sherman-yes; Glaser-yes; Bailer-yes; Guard-yes; Meyer-yes and Allison-yes.

Motion was approved.

4. Resolution 07-21-35 A Resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska extending the City's declaration of a local emergency arising from Covid-19 and approving Emergency Order 2021-02, which revises the City's Covid-19 Emergency Rules to reflect changes in the City Health Advisory Plan to permit less restrictive measures in the event a "Local Health Alert" is issued by the City Manager

*M/Meyer S/Guard* to approve Resolution 07-21-35 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska extending the City's declaration of a local emergency arising from Covid-19 and approving Emergency Order 2021-02, which revises the City's Covid-19 Emergency Rules to reflect changes in the City Health Advisory Plan to permit less restrictive measures in the event a "Local Health Alert" is issued by the City Manager

*Meyer* asked *Howarth* to give a short summary of what this does for our community. *Howarth* said this extension acknowledges that we are still dealing with Covid and likely still will be into the fall. She said there is no harm keeping this onboard, yet it could be harmful to get rid of it. This also gives us the flexibility to deviate from the state; make a local determination that suits us better. *Meyer, Guard, Bailer* and *Schaefer* all spoke in support. *Allison* said he appreciates that the City Manager brings this stuff forward to Council to make the determinations on these things before these emergency orders are put in place. He said he would support. *Sherman* also said she supports this.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Sherman-yes; Glaser-yes; Guard-yes; Allison-yes; Bailer-yes; Meyer-yes and Schaefer-yes.

Motion was approved.

## G. Audience participation - none

## H. Council comments

*Schaefer* thanked *Dr. Zink, Dr. Sanders,* and *Heather* for calling in and answering all questions.

*Bailer* echoed the thanks.

*Meyer* said she appreciated the experts answering questions and hopes that some people listened in and their questions were answered too.

*Allison* also thanked the guest speakers and thanked everyone else for the extra effort and work that this requires.

*Guard* echoed the comments.

*Glaser* also thanked everyone. He opined that the most important information was regarding vaccines and he thinks people should have heard the facts around that and should feel safe going to get vaccinated.

*Sherman* echoed the comments about vaccines. She thanked *Helen* along with all the others for contributions to today's discussions.

## I. Executive Session - none

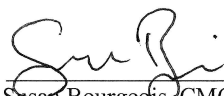
## J. Adjournment

*M/Allison S/Glaser* to adjourn.

Hearing no objection, Vice Mayor Sherman adjourned the meeting at 1:30 pm.

Approved: August 4, 2021

Attest:



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

