

Regular City Council Meeting
August 4, 2021 @ 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 August 4, 2021, 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 *Cathy Sherman, Jeff Guard, David Allison,* and *David Glasen.* Council member *Melina Meyer* was present via teleconference. Council members *Tom Bailer* (arrived at 7:03 pm) and *Anne Schaefer* were absent. Also present were City Manager *Helen Howarth* and City Clerk *Susan Bourgeois.*

D. Approval of Regular Agenda

Hearing no objection *Mayor Koplín* declared the agenda approved as presented.

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

F. Communications by and Petitions from Visitors

1. Guest speaker

a. ***Representative Louise Stutes*** - Juneau legislative update - the guest speaker was not yet available and would call in later in the meeting.

b. Incident Management Team, COVID-19 Update: *Dr. Sanders* was unavailable, so *Mayor Koplín* read a report from her into the record.

We continue to offer weekly open testing Tuesday mornings as well as daily scheduled testing to help contain the current outbreak. The MRT has done their best to reconcile the vaccines given locally with state records. Our best estimate for percent fully vaccinated of individuals that live in the 99574 zip code is between 42-48%. This percentage does include children under 12 that are ineligible. I have personally seen first-hand evidence of severe illness occurring almost exclusively in unvaccinated individuals and strongly encourage the community to get vaccinated. Throughout Alaska our healthcare workers and system are under a large amount of stress. We need everyone to help.

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items - none

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

School Board - *Barb Jewell*, Board Chair reported the school administration office is back open, superintendent is planning mitigation strategies and how we will handle the case count going up and down throughout the school year - he's working closely with *Dr. Sanders* on that and using best practices as recommended by State Department of Education.

CCMC Board - no report.

4. Student Council representative - no report

G. Approval of Consent Calendar

5. Minutes of the July 7, 2021 Regular Council Meeting

6. Minutes of the July 20, 2021 Council Public Hearing

7. Minutes of the July 20, 2021 Special Council Meeting

8. Per Charter Section 2-8 and Cordova Municipal Code 3.12.022, recordation of unexcused absence of Council member Cathy Sherman and excused absence of Council members David Glasen and David Allison from the July 7, 2021 Regular Meeting

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

H. Approval of Minutes - in consent calendar

I. Consideration of Bids - none

J. Reports of Officers

9. Mayor's Report - *Mayor Koplín* reported: 1) he likes to report feedback he gets from citizens and recently he heard from citizens who informed him that regrettably they will be pulling children from the school if there is a mask mandate at the schools this year; he also heard from citizens happy about the masking and vaccination requirements for City employees, others he heard from didn't agree with that policy; 2) USCG Admiral will be coming to Cordova next week - he and *Helen*

and **Bert Adams** from NVE will meet with him; 3) there is an open house tomorrow from 5-7 pm in the Cordova Center for the airport improvement plan; 4) BBC is coming to Cordova to film, week of August 23 - renewable energy.

Questions: **Glaser** had a question about the citizen's comment about the schools. He thought the School District had no choice; they are being told to begin with masks. **Barb Jewell** was able to answer the question: She said the state is leaving the decision up to individual districts. She said the Cordova school district is following CDC guidelines which are currently strongly encouraging indoor masks if not always, certainly when there is community spread or any cases in the school. She said they are getting guidance from **Dr. Sanders** who speaks with **Dr. Zink** and with the low vaccination rate in Cordova and the community spread and rising case counts in Cordova, they cannot justify not having students wearing masks at this time. She said they are heartbroken; they were hours away from making the decision that maybe the kids wouldn't have to wear masks at schools, but under the current circumstances we'd be going against every recommendation that's been made for schools and students.

Representative Louise Stutes called in to the meeting and so **Mayor Koplín** reverted to Guest Speaker. **Stutes** reported that the legislature made great strides as far as the AMHS this last session. They will be entering a special session later in August to address PFD, PCE and AK Performance scholarships among other things.

10. Manager's Report - City Manager **Helen Howarth** reported: 1) she introduces the DoT representatives in town who are conducting the public meeting tomorrow night. **Jennifer Keller** and team are here to get public input into the planning for the Mudhole Smith Airport for the next 20 years. 2) she explained that City employees are now required to show proof of vaccination or test weekly, she said high case counts, low vaccination rate has led her to that decision; also masking if less than six feet is now required in City buildings - which is CDC best practice; examples of issues being cause by this outbreak: dispatch was shorthanded 2 weeks ago, Reluctant has had to close because of staff outbreak, daycare had an outbreak which led to 2 week closure, which then impacts all businesses with employees - it is not just impacting people individually in their homes, it's impacting the workplace - mitigation practices she's putting in place are to stick with best practices, to do our part to protect the community; 3) good news, fishing is going well, fish tax should be up next year.

Council questions/comments: **Bailer** said he has received several phone calls supporting her mitigation strategies, he supports it as well and he thanked her for doing it. **Mayor Koplín** asked if we have vaccinations available. **Howarth** said we absolutely do; people can get on the CCMC website or call CCMC or Ilanka. **Meyer** said there was one positive case at the reluctant, they are doing some in-house contact tracing - this is affecting all of her employees, other businesses in town.

11. City Clerk's Report - **Bourgeois** had a written report detailing the goings on in the Clerk's office. **Sherman** commented that she appreciated the report - she hadn't realized all the behind the scenes work in the Clerk's office.

Howarth added to her report that the City team had just put together 2 major grant applications for the Harbor; \$25 million through DoT and then another \$40 million request is in. She thanked the City team for putting that together it was a huge amount of work.

12. Staff Reports - Second Quarter 2021

- a. Cordova Volunteer Fire Department, City Fire Marshal **Paul Trumblee**
- b. Cordova Police Department, Chief of Police **Nate Taylor**
- c. Cordova Public Library, Library Director **Debbie Carlson**
- d. Cordova Historical Museum & Cordova Center, Museum Director **Mimi Briggs**
- e. Cordova Harbor & Port, Harbormaster **Tony Schinella**

K. Correspondence

13. 07-14-21 Letter from Sheridan's to Planning Commission re CUP

14. 07-29-21 Email from PWSRCAC - Notice of Public Comment Period for proposed updates to the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan

L. Ordinances and Resolutions

15. Resolution 08-21-36 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing amendment to the FY21 budget in the amount of \$206,998.

M/Allison S/Guard to approve Resolution 08-21-36 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing amendment to the FY21 budget in the amount of \$206,998.

Allison asked if this was simply appropriating grant funds, no new money is being added to the budget. **Howarth** said yes, this is cleanup, housekeeping, moving things in to 2021 that were in 2020 and not spent.

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

M. Unfinished Business - none

N. New & Miscellaneous Business

16. PWS Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – Discussion McKinley Research Group and PWSEDD presentation

Kristin Carpenter of the PWSEDD presented a PowerPoint with 2 representatives of the McKinley Research Group. The goal was to get some Council input on what they have come up with so far because more feedback helps them get a better product. What they are putting together is a 5-year strategic action plan for economic development in our region. Council input was that commercial fishing seemed to be missing from the lists of economic drivers in the region. Council concurred that commercial fishing should be an economic development priority into the future. *Mayor Koplín* mentioned that healthcare was left off as well.

17. Discussion of COVID-19 Emergency Response – no discussion

18. Pending Agenda, Calendar, CIP List and Elected & Appointed Officials lists

It was determined there would be need for the August 18 regular meeting. *Glaser* reiterated concern for the gillnet fleet and for the entire City concerning the upriver competition of personal use/sport fish. He wondered if there is something Council and the *Mayor* could do about that. Perhaps discuss with *Representative Stutes*. The sport/personal use group has so few mandates/rules placed on it, the reporting they do is so far after the season it has no impact on commercial guys and it should be reported much more quickly.

O. Audience Participation

Kristin Carpenter mentioned the idea of Cordova trying to field a local candidate for Board of Fish membership.

P. Council Comments

Meyer thanked everyone for a good meeting. Was great to hear from *Representative Stutes*.

Glaser thanked staff for the Department reports.

Guard said that regarding school budget – City contribution to the schools for 2020 was \$1.75 million. 2021 it is \$1.7 million. 2020 City overall budget was \$11.4 million and in 2021 it is \$10.6 million. So as far as percentage of decrease, schools got 3% less, the City overall budget was 7% less. He just wants everyone to understand we are supporting the schools to the best of our ability.

Bailer thanked *Guard* for those comments, he'd agree with that. He went on to say how upset he is that less than 50% of the community is vaccinated. He thinks that is ridiculous. He equated Covid and vaccinations to tobacco usage and second hand smoke and he just cannot see the logic in not getting vaccinated; he said people need to stop reading voodoo stories on the internet and talk to real doctors and get the shots and stop risking the health of everyone in our community. This is a health risk, but it is also causing financial harm to community members and business owners. Hat's off to our response team and the doctors here – vaccinations are available, we are lucky in that regard.

Allison also thanked *Stutes*, staff reports and *Carpenter* and her presentation.

Q. Executive Session - none

R. Adjournment

M/Allison S/Glaser to adjourn the meeting.

Hearing no objection *Mayor Koplín* adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm.

Approved: August 18, 2021

Attest: 
Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

