

**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**September 1, 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 September 1, 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 Council members *Melina Meyer, Anne Schaefer, David Allison,* and *David Glasen*. Council members *Tom Bailer* and *Cathy Sherman* were present via teleconference. Council member *Jeff Guard* was absent. Also present were City Manager *Helen Howarth* and City Clerk *Susan Bourgeois*.

**D. Approval of Regular Agenda - M/Allison S/Schaefer** to approve the agenda with one small edit, in item 6, **Mayor Koplín** was *excused* from the August 18 meeting.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent (Guard). Motion was approved.

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

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

1. Guest speaker

a. Incident Management Team, COVID-19 Update: *Dr. Hannah Sanders* reported: we currently show 3 active cases on the dashboard but after today's testing results it will increase to 5. We have some community spread and some cases can be attributed to travel. The med team is now recommending testing after travel whether vaccinated or not. She said that the hospital capacity in Anchorage is very stressed, ICU beds are limited, and we are considered in a crisis standard of care for Alaska. Locally we continue to do ok, but it is a very concerning place to be for us.

Council questions: *Glasen* asked about a September booster rollout. *Sanders* said yes, 8 months after your second dose a booster shot of the vaccine you were immunized with - we'll be looking at those closer to October. *Glasen* asked if she's been following Mat-Su school district that started unmasked but now has a lot of cases and may be going back to masks. *Sanders* said that is a scenario that's played out across the country and Alaska. They've continued to recommend a conservative approach to the schools here and recommend masking requirements while there is still community spread. *Meyer* asked when people should test regarding travel. *Sanders* said mask and distance after arrival back to town then test 3-7 days later.

*Heather Brannon* also gave an update - *Brannon* said the state has extended the contract for the airport ambassadors. They are also requesting we test at the airport - Ilanka has offered their 'clinic in a can' and we will train the ambassadors to do antigen testing at the airport. The idea is this will serve as a pre-test. The recommendation will still be a PCR test 3-5 days later. *Brannon* also confirmed that next week, Wednesday, September 8 *Dr. Sanders, Dr. Anne Zink,* and *Cole Cutchins* (state testing lead for DHSS) will be on a community zoom call with Cordova. They will answer questions about vaccinations.

*Bailer* had one last question for *Dr. Sanders*: Should people who have had Covid still get vaccinated? *Dr. Sanders* said yes, vaccines are the #1 way to decrease hospitalizations and mortality from Covid, especially the delta variant.

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items - none

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

**CCMCA Board - Dr. Sanders** reported: 1) CCMC just finishing up their 2020 audit and also the Medicare cost report - we should receive a settlement out of that of just over \$600K; 2) budget-wise we are running close to \$500K in the red which impacts our ability to catch up on deferred maintenance; 3) what's very challenging currently is that we have no behavioral health therapists at Sound Alternatives, we've been trying very hard to recruit, there is a nationwide shortage, it is a high priority for us.

**School Board** - no report

4. Student Council representative - no report

**G. Approval of Consent Calendar**

5. Minutes of the August 18, 2021 Regular Council Meeting

6. Per Charter Section 2-8 and Cordova Municipal Code 3.12.022, recordation of *excused* absence of **Mayor Koplín** and unexcused absence of Council member **Melina Meyer** from the August 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

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

**H. Approval of Minutes** - in consent calendar

**I. Consideration of Bids** - none

**J. Reports of Officers**

7. Mayor's Report - **Mayor Koplín** reported: 1) there was a legal challenge regarding PCE (power cost equalization) and that funding has been reinstated without challenge by the governor, which is good news to City of Cordova and residential rate class; 2) first week of October he'll be in DC along with NVE reps and he'll be supporting coordinated healthcare, port upgrades, harbor RAISE grant and he'll schedule meetings with the Congressional delegation

8. Manager's Report - City Manager **Helen Howarth** reported: 1) hiring a contract firm to get our Finance team up to speed and so we can get an accurate financial report by October; audit is underway and should be finalized about that time too; 2) raw fish tax - state doesn't expect numbers until end of September; 3) Whitshed - she has worked with the state - long term solution is years out, but they have committed to signage for speed restrictions and dangerous road before winter and darker months get here; 4) September 8 - community forum regarding Covid/vaccines with **Drs. Zink** and **Sanders**; 5) September 14 community forum on substance abuse, law enforcement, mental health providers, and first responders.

9. City Clerk's Report - **Bourgeois** reported: 1) the only action item tonight is hers and she had rewritten the memo to hopefully be more clear and explain things better; 2) property tax 1<sup>st</sup> half deadline was yesterday and Finance Department and Deputy Clerk handled lots of payments.

**K. Correspondence**

10. 08-12-21 Letter from **W. Deaton** regarding vaccines

11. 08-12-21 Letter from **Collins'** regarding Whitshed Road condition

**Glaser** said he is vaccinated but is ok sitting next to an unvaccinated individual. **Bailer** said he supports Arts and Pageants and their decision.

**L. Ordinances and Resolutions**

12. Resolution 08-21-38 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Appraisal Company of Alaska for assessment services for tax year 2022 in the amount of eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000)

**M/Schaefer S/Sherman** to approve Resolution 08-21-38 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Appraisal Company of Alaska for assessment services for tax year 2022 in the amount of eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000)

**Schaefer** said the expanded memo made it clear; she is in favor; it makes the most sense at this point. **Sherman** said it makes sense to do this; she didn't realize there were so few companies that did this in Alaska. **Allison** said he is not in favor. He said it seems like every year we talk about this and staff just does things their way and does not do what Council has directed. He said the end result probably would be the same, but he'd rather see a formal RFP. **Howarth** explained that to commit to software, there will be an investment - she did not feel we were prepared for that, she asked for a pause. We have other things happening, we are in a transition - there are other parts and pieces that need to be weighed. **Bailer** agrees with **Allison** and also understands the Manager's point of view. He doesn't respond to informal RFPs; he doesn't waste his time. **Glaser** said the least expensive option is the one we've been using. **Meyer** is in favor of automated instead of paper, but she understands and is ok with keeping it the way it is for now; she's in support.

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

**M. Unfinished Business** - none

**N. New & Miscellaneous Business**

13. Discussion of COVID-19 Emergency Response

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

**Bourgeois** said there is a joint work session with the Planning Commission scheduled for Oct 6 at 6pm. **Allison** asked if RFPs for both Assessor and Attorney be put on a work list for staff to be done early next year.

**O. Audience Participation**

**P. Council Comments**

**Sherman** thanked the manager for working on Whitshed issue. She commented that she appreciates what Arts and Pageants is doing - they are doing their utmost to protect the community. She is vaccinated, she will be attending, and she will be masked.

**Bailer** thanked the medical staff here and elsewhere – they are tired and so worn out and it is hard for them. As far as assessing, he asked the manager to audit that process, how much staff time, automating it could have a significant effect on staff time.

**Schaefer** thanked **Helen** and **Heather** for organizing the forum with **Dr. Sanders** and **Dr. Zink**. She thanked the audience for their attendance, and she encouraged everyone to get vaccinated and continue to wear masks.

**Glaser** thanked all (**Dr. Sanders**, med team) who are trying to keep the town as safe as possible.

**Allison** said he is termed out and has a lot of history on Council and he gets frustrated when Council requests an RFP for auditors and it just doesn't get done. He said without someone shepherding it, we'll come to this time next year and it will come before us to approve with Appraisal Company and it will be too late to go to RFP. He feels the same is true for any contract we do annually. We should let those people know that they don't have the contract automatically, they have to perform, and they have to keep the contract reasonable. He wants to keep the pressure on, so they know we are looking at other options. As far as vaccinated and unvaccinated, are we trying to prevent the spread – he thinks vaccinated people can catch it and spread it as well as anybody. He opined that the health system maybe needs to reevaluate their protocols for how they are treating this, everything he's heard and studied and knows is that the treatments are more effective if given as soon as you know you have it. He disputed some of the information being given about number of hospital beds and ICU beds available across the state, at least according to the news. He knows for a fact that patients aren't being treated until it's too late and they are on ventilators.

**Meyer** thanked everyone for the hard work being done. She appreciates the Whitshed follow up. She really appreciates health care workers – we need to be kind to one another. She appreciates Arts and Pageants and maybe they are catering to a crowd that hasn't felt comfortable being out in the general public but will if vaccinated or negative recent test and masking are the rules.

**Q. Executive Session** - none

**R. Adjournment**

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

Hearing no objection **Mayor Koplín** adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.

Approved: September 15, 2021

Attest:



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

