

**Regular City Council Meeting
December 7, 2022 @ 7:00 pm
Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B
Minutes**

A. Call to order – Mayor David Allison called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on December 7, 2022, in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

B. Invocation and pledge of allegiance – Mayor Allison led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll call - Present for roll call were **Mayor David Allison** and Council members **Kristin Carpenter**, and **Ken Jones**. Council members **Tom Bailer**, **Cathy Sherman**, **Jeff Guard** and **Anne Schaefer**, were present via zoom teleconference. Council member **Melina Meyer** was absent. Also present were City Manager **Helen Howarth** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

D. Approval of Regular Agenda – M/Jones S/ Carpenter to approve the agenda.
With no objection, Mayor Allison declared the agenda approved as presented.

E. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest and ex parte communications – Jones said he didn't think it a conflict, but he won't vote on the Harbor Commission appointments since he is one of the possible appointees. **Bourgeois** explained that to be recused it had to be for a financial conflict as defined in City Code. If he chooses not to vote (abstains) his vote will be a vote in the affirmative unless the Council concurs that he is financially conflicted. **Mayor Allison** ruled that it was not a conflict of interest and Council did not disagree.

F. Communications by and Petitions from Visitors

1. Guest speakers – **Arne Erickson** and **Martins Onskulis**, City Assessors, from Appraisal Company of Alaska, gave Council a short synopsis of how assessing will work now with the new program that they are using; MARS software. They are in town these next few days, and they will be visiting and photographing at least 200 of the properties in town; will photograph the rest over summer. **Arne** said with a low sales ratio, he anticipates there will be increased assessed values in 2023. He said of course there will be the customary appeal period; when assessors assess properties it is only from an external view and measurements of the property, they do not have the luxury of entering every home/building – which is what the appeal process is all about. He thanked the Council for allowing the City to move forward with this electronic means of assessing – it increases the efficiency. With Cordova now onboard, 10 of the 12 municipalities where they assess are now using this system. **Martins** compared the paper cards to a flip phone and MARS is like the newest iPhone; the automation makes for fewer errors in calculations and reporting. This past summer the Clerks mailed up boxes of old property record cards and all of them have been photocopied and the pdfs are attached to each property in MARS and all the details from the cards have been entered. This benefits property owners, City employees and the Assessors – accuracy is enhanced.

Carpenter asked if the whole thing is on the iPad he was holding. **Martins** said that the 15 boxes of property record cards are now right on his iPad, he can take pictures with it link it to GPS mapping, all very handy and much more streamlined and efficient, takes the iPad out in the field to do the work.

Howarth said that down the road there will be the ability for someone to get online and see this data like other communities have now.

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items:

Kasey Kinsman of 211 Council Ave spoke about the budget and about the Capital Priorities list specifically; he opined that he'd like to see a new Public Safety Building prioritized - at a higher level than where it is now. He'd like to see it more on the five-year plan vs. the 10-year plan – it's an essential service for the community; he thinks we are doing a disservice to the community by having the people on the front line in an antiquated and dilapidated building.

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

Alex Russin, Superintendent of Schools, said that 2nd quarter is wrapping up and there are upcoming music programs at the elementary and HS next week. Valdez will bring teams over for basketball on Dec 16 & 17. School maintenance personnel will be in touch with city staff on a recent quote for a new boiler because the primary HS boiler had gone out recently but the waste oil one kicked un and there was assistance from the City and Shoreside over the weekend which was appreciated. He said they are anxiously awaiting results of the City buildings assessments as the school buildings were included in that. He thanked Council for the budget request – they will work on their 2024 budget starting in January and will be back to talk about their needs by May 2023.

a. Parks and Recreation Commission Resolution 2022-01

4. Student Council Report – no report

G. Approval of Consent Calendar

5. Minutes of the November 16, 2022 Regular Council Meeting

6. Per Charter Section 2-8 and Cordova Municipal Code 3.12.022, recordation of excused absence of Mayor **David Allison** from the Nov 16, 2022 Regular Meeting

7. Per Charter Section 2-8 and Cordova Municipal Code 3.12.022, recordation of unexcused absence of Council member **Cathy Sherman** from the Nov 16, 2022 Regular Meeting

8. Resolution 12-22-34 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Sole Source contract with ProComm alaska LLC to provide consultation and communication equipment installation for Cordova Police 911 Communications Center

9. Council action to waive protest for the transfer of Beverage Dispensary License #919 to Robin Traxinger (Powder House Bar & Grill), including Restaurant Designation

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

H. Approval of Minutes - in consent calendar

I. Consideration of Bids/Proposals/Contracts - none

J. Reports of Officers

10. Mayor's Report – **Mayor Allison** reported: 1) he sent out a report late to Council and he wanted Council and the public to be aware of the budgetary concerns he has about some of the revenue in the 2023 budget being one-time money, not continuing sources of revenue. He hopes citizens will give opinions on whether these services are what they want and are willing to pay for or if not, what are they willing to cut; 2) **Robert Beedle** is resigning his role as the City rep on PWSRCAC to take that same role as the CDFU rep. Therefore, at Pending Agenda we should discuss advertising that position. 3) He made his picks for names/people to fill the vacant seats on boards and commissions, when we get to that agenda item, we can discuss. 4) State and federal election was certified last week, we will have all the same we've had, **Peltola, Murkowski, Stutes, Dunleavy, Stevens** all won re-election.

11. Manager's Report – City Manager **Helen Howarth** reported: 1) been focused last few weeks on budget but one new other important happening is we will be switching our health insurance from self-insured Professional Benefit Services to Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska – better service, more comprehensive product and less expensive, current health plan is going south; 2) well on our way to negotiating the contract for harbor project per approval at the special meeting – good communication to harbor users underway – excited to get that project going

a. South Harbor Rebuild update – no further report.

12. City Clerk's Report – **Bourgeois** reported: 1) glad the assessors were here to speak tonight – glad to have this team still on board, very easy for staff to continue with them and the community recognizes **Arne** when he is out and about; 2) election advertising will begin this month – March 7, 2023 regular city election, 2 Council seats, 1 school board and 2 CCMC board seats; declaration of candidacy runs Dec 23 through Feb 6; 3) will be out of the office Dec 13 through Jan 10 – **Tina Hammer** will be here and in charge can do everything the Clerk does.

K. Correspondence

13. 11-14-22 Email from K. Hayden re Meetings and Budget

L. Ordinances and Resolutions

14. Resolution 12-22-32 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska adopting an operating budget for fiscal year 2023 and appropriating the amount of \$17,569,066

M/Carpenter S/Jones to approve Resolution 12-22-32 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska adopting an operating budget for fiscal year 2023 and appropriating the amount of \$17,569,066

Carpenter said we have been working on this for a while, not more than staff though. Has been a topic at many public meetings and she sees the expenses as investments in work that will be getting done – will gain us grants that are needed. She is in support of this budget. **Howarth** corrected the record – this budget does not include any ARPA or Covid money as revenue – those were pulled out of operating and set aside for a capital budget. **Bailer** said he had not been in favor of increasing funding to chamber but he appreciates that the manager will tie that increase to the chamber’s marketing of Cordova Center. He will support this budget as it is, he hopes we can continue to do all that the people want. **Sherman** said she is optimistic like **Carpenter** – we worked hard through this budget, she is happy to see extra for chamber and there will be deliverables, sometimes we must spend money to make money – she sees things happening, put money out to get grants that pay for projects. **Guard** said he is in support, he’s nervous about the size of it overall, he’d like us to sit down and determine with depreciation what it costs to offer the services we offer, not bare bones, not overly bloated but what it actually costs to run the City. Then he’d like to know as a community what we can afford – hopefully it is all of it. **Schaefer** is also in support – staff has put a ton of work in, we’ve seen many iterations, she is content, agrees with what has been said before her.

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

15. Resolution 12-22-33 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska adopting City service fees, rates, and charges for the 2023 calendar budget

M/Carpenter S/Sherman to approve Resolution 12-22-33 a resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska adopting City service fees, rates, and charges for the 2023 calendar budget

Carpenter said this is another package of financial information we’ve been talking about for weeks; it lines up with current standard fees and fitting into the budget. **Sherman** agrees, she commends all departments especially Parks and Rec, Planning, Cordova Center – some of these rates and fees saw increases but they were thoughtful and comprehensive in determining how/where to adjust them – they were justified.

Jones – nothing to add. **Bailer** and **Guard** agreed and stated they were in support. **Schaefer** concurred.

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

M. Unfinished Business – none

N. New & Miscellaneous Business

16. Council concurrence of Mayor’s appointments to various City Boards and Commissions

M/Sherman S/Bailer to approve the recommendation for the appointments as presented by **Mayor Allison** of the following: Ken Jones and Andy Craig to Harbor Commission, Nancy Bird to Historic Preservation Commission, Mary Ann Bishop to Library Board, Henk Kruithof, Marv Vandenbroek and Karen Hallquist to Parks and Rec Commission and Mark Hall and Kris Ranney to Planning Commission.

M/Carpenter to amend the motion by changing the Harbor Commission appointments to Kate Laird and Ryan Schuetze for the sake of diversity – her point being that we expanded the Harbor Commission and saw lots of interested people come forward and now we have seen great interest again and yet we’ve kept the same people. This motion failed for lack of a second.

Vote on the motion: 5 yeas, 1 nay (Carpenter), 1 absent. Motion was approved.

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

Advertise for the PWSRCAC – Clerk said she would do so – PWSRCAC has asked for us to appoint before the end of January. **Carpenter** asked and others concurred to have the CIP list resolution on the next meeting agenda. Schedules for holiday travel were discussed and Council determined it best to cancel the December 21 regular meeting and it was decided that there would not be a quorum available for the January 4, 2023, meeting. Therefore, the next regular meeting will be January 18, 2023. Staff would be prepared to hold a special meeting if the need arose before then.

O. Audience Participation

Kasey Kinsman of 211 Council Ave supported Council member **Carpenter’s** philosophy in filling the board and commission seats. He also brought up the housing issue in Cordova – he thinks it is an untapped form of revenue in a way. Maybe incentivizing large development – low-income housing seems available, there is also opportunity to spend \$500k or more – we need to bridge the gap for the housing that is unavailable between \$150k and \$350k in town. He personally knows 5 families that are trying to move here that is 20-25 people that would contribute to the tax base – would have professional employment in healthcare, with the Native Village or Native Corporation or the like who want to move here but for lack of housing haven’t been able to do so.

P. Council Comments

Sherman thanked the Clerk for having the Assessors explain the new program, she appreciated audience comments tonight, she thanked the Manager for the switch back to Premera Blue Cross – sounds like a win: win, cost savings and a better benefit to employees.

Guard thanked staff for hard work getting us through the budget, harbor project, and mundane day-to-day stuff.

Jones looks forward to housing discussions, appreciates Mayor’s appointments tonight, glad for discussions on CIP list too come January.

Schaefer huge thanks to staff for work on budget, and thanks to council members and for public comments tonight.

Carpenter thanked Kelsey Hayden for staying so closely involved in budget work – appreciated the correspondence. Thanked staff for work on budget – it’s easier for Council because staff does the hard work behind the scenes and streamlines the process. Thanks to all who serve on boards and commissions.

Bailer echoed all the staff thanks – as far as housing affordable housing starts with land – maybe once the lots around town are assessed accurately, then people would be more incentivized to build on it.

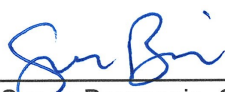
Q. Executive Session – none

R. Adjournment

M/Jones S/Carpenter to adjourn the meeting.

Hearing no objection **Mayor Allison** adjourned the meeting at 8:06 pm.

Approved February 15, 2023

Attest: 
Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

