

Special City Council Meeting
November 29, 2023 immediately following the 7:00pm Public Hearing
Cordova Center Community Rooms
Minutes

A. Call to order - Mayor Allison called the Special Council Meeting to order at 7:15 pm on November 29, 2023 in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

B. Roll call - Present for roll call were **Mayor David Allison** and Council members **Kasey Kinsman**, **Wendy Ranney**, and **Anne Schaefer**. Council members **Tom Bailer**, **Cathy Sherman**, and **Ken Jones** were present via zoom videoconference. Council member **Kristin Carpenter** was absent. Also present were Acting City Manager **Sam Greenwood** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

C. Approval of agenda

Hearing no objection, Mayor Allison declared the agenda approved as submitted.

D. Disclosures of conflicts of interest and Ex Parte Communications – none

E. Communications by and petitions from visitors

1. Audience Comments regarding agenda items:

Barb Jewell mile 2.2 Whitshed Rd, encouraged Council to put the cap in Ordinance 1212 at \$10,000 and in reference to Ordinance 1210 she thought a seasonal sales tax increase would be better than 7% all year. She appreciates the work Ms. Greenwood has done already and she appreciates that City Council is ensuring the City has an Interim Manager.

Ezekiel Brown of Saddle Point Drive echoed the previous speaker's opinion that a seasonal sales tax would be better, but he would not agree about the cap being raised to \$10,000. He also spoke in support of the extra funding for the EMTs; a very valuable service for the community.

F. New Business

3. Ordinance 1210 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska amending Cordova Municipal Code Section 5.40.010 to increase the sales tax rate from 6% to 7% and revising language to clarify the scope and application of Cordova's sales tax

M/Schaefer S/Sherman to adopt Ordinance 1210 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska amending Cordova Municipal Code Section 5.40.010 to increase the sales tax rate from 6% to 7% and revising language to clarify the scope and application of Cordova's sales tax

Schaefer said she hears the comments about a seasonal sales tax and it did not just come down to the businesses saying it would be difficult to implement at their cash registers, more that if there was a service and it was scheduled in June for work in October, which rate do you charge, etc. She said even outside of business owners, most people she talked to were more in support of the flat rate. **Schaefer** also said she would be interested in exploring an exemption for long-term rentals when we finish the clean-up of Title 5. **Sherman** said she is looking forward to finishing reviewing all of Title 5. She is in favor of this ordinance. She is travelling outside right now and paid over 20% in sales tax in a community. **Bailer** said he is in favor and as far as long term rentals, what an owner of a rental is really saying is it will cut into his profits; it will be their choice as to whether or not they raise rents or keep them the same and just make a little less. **Kinsman** wondered if we could explore different sales tax rates for goods and services and maybe less for food. He also would like to explore a sales tax break for local year-round residents, if that is possible. He said as it is he will support this. **Jones** had no comment. **Ranney** said she supports the 7% sales tax.

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

4. Ordinance 1212 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska amending Cordova Municipal Code Section 5.40.030 to increase the cap on taxable sales and services from \$3,000 to \$5,000

M/Ranney S/Kinsman to adopt Ordinance 1212 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska amending Cordova Municipal Code Section 5.40.030 to increase the cap on taxable sales and services from \$3,000 to \$5,000

Ranney said she supports the increase to \$5,000 – she would not support \$10,000, that would price out some businesses. **Kinsman** agrees and looks forward to the continued exemption discussion to clarify what does and does not qualify and to look into the enforcement of this exemption as well. **Jones** said he does not support this; he thinks it should stay at \$3,000. **Bailer** and **Sherman** expressed support.

Vote on the motion: 5 yeas, 1 nay, 1 absent. Sherman-yes; Ranney-yes; Bailer-yes; Jones-no; Schaefer-yes; Kinsman-yes; and Carpenter-absent. Motion was approved.

5. Resolution 11-23-33 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska authorizing KeyBank National Association as custodian of investment accounts for the City of Cordova

M/Schaefer S/Kinsman to approve Resolution 11-23-33 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska authorizing KeyBank National Association as custodian of investment accounts for the City of Cordova
Schaefer said we approved APCM as our new firm to manage City investments and this is the next step, giving them permission. **Kinsman** is in support and hoped they would come address us soon. **Greenwood** said she is in touch and hopes they will present to Council before the end of the year – we will solidify a date in the next couple of weeks. **Bailer** said he is delighted to see this moving forward – and he said whatever works for timing for staff and for them, a short meeting with them, we can hear their philosophy, that would be helpful. **Sherman** said she supports this, long time coming, and she is glad we are making headway.

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

6. Council Approval of Contract with Samantha Greenwood as Interim City Manager

M/Schaefer S/Ranney to approve the contract with an annualized salary of \$145,000 with Samantha Greenwood for services as Interim City Manager for the community of Cordova, Alaska.

Schaefer said she is in support; she appreciates **Sam** stepping up and filling this important role for us. **Ranney** also supports and thanks **Sam** for doing this hard work on top of her already hard work. **Kinsman** said he is grateful she is doing this at a really difficult time of year, we are right in the thick of it, extra thank you for that.

Bailer said he appreciates the work **Sam** is doing, he thanked her for stepping in. **Sherman** said she is happy to see us compensating **Sam** appropriately and it is not an easy job – she thanked **Sam** for taking it on.

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

G. Audience participation - none

H. Council comments

Ranney thanked staff for the work on the budget, for taking Council's suggestions and she appreciates audience participation.

Bailer thanked staff – he has heard the comment, wish there was another way – he said we looked at lots of options, no one likes to raise taxes. He said until the public comes in and starts naming things to cut, there is no way we are going to reduce this budget much more.

Sherman thanked everyone for good conversation tonight – budget work sessions have been informative. We really did look hard at expenses and revenue and tried to be as fair as we could. Kudos to **Sam** and **Susan** and all staff involved in putting this all together.

Kinsman said this was quite an accomplishment for us to come up with a balanced budget – he appreciates all of our work; he has learned a lot. He thanked staff for coming back with the information when we've asked questions.

Schaefer appreciates the hard work of Sam and staff and was glad to hear public comment tonight.

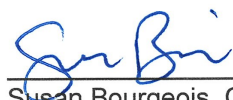
I. Executive Session – none needed

J. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, **Mayor Allison** adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.

Approved: December 20, 2023

Attest: _____



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

