

**Regular City Council Meeting
January 15, 2025 @ 7:00pm
Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B
Minutes**

A. Call to order – **Mayor David Allison** called the regular Council Meeting to order at 7:06 pm on January 15, 2025, in the Corodva Center Community Rooms.

B. Invocation, 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 **Kasey Kinsman**, **Wendy Ranney**, **Dave Zastrow**, and **Cathy Sherman**. Council members **Tom Bailer** and **Kristin Smith** were present via zoom video conference. Council member **Ken Jones** was absent. Also present were City Comptroller, **Sheryl Glasen** and City Deputy Clerk, **Colette Gilmour**.

D. Approval of Regular Agenda

Hearing no objection to approval of the agenda, **Mayor Allison** declared it approved.

E. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest and Ex Parte Communication – none

F. Communications by and Petitions from Visitors

1. Guest Speakers - none

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items - none

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

Hospital Board: Dr. Sanders from the CCMC reported that they are struggling with staffing and cost increases but are planning for a big year in 2025. They are also working on a plan to address the \$9 million in structural and infrastructure repairs identified in a 2019 condition report. Council also mentioned the need for support from the community to maintain the hospital's services. Emergency Ambulance response team needs volunteers.

4. Student Council Report - none

G. Approval of Consent Calendar

5. Minutes: **a.** Dec. 4, 2024, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes; **b.** Dec. 18, 2024, City Council Public Hearing Minutes

6. Council concurrence of Mayor's appointments to Historic Preservation Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission

Vote on the Consent Calendar: 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent. Zastrow-yes; Smith-yes; Kinsman-yes; Ranney-yes; Bailer-yes and Sherman-yes. Consent Calendar was approved

H. Approval of Minutes – in consent calendar

I. Consideration of Bids/Proposals/Contracts – none

J. Reports of Officers

7. Mayor's Report

8. City Manager's Report - Sam Greenwood was absent. Instead, **Kevin Johnson**, Public Works Director, provided updates on the land disposal request for the lot on Lefevre, the windstorm damage, and the avalanche and landslide hazard mapping project. He also mentioned the hiring of a new city planner and the ongoing negotiations for the purchase agreement for the lot on Center Drive. The Fire Marshal has resigned, and the position has been posted.

9. City Clerk's Report - Deputy Clerk, Colette Gilmour's report included 1) reminders about the upcoming regular city election on March 4th and the need for candidates. Declaration of candidacy closes Feb 4th. 2) City Clerk will be out on vacation until January 27th.

10. Staff Reports – 4Q, 2024 Quarterlies:

a. Cordova Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director **Cathy Renfeldt**

b. City Investments, Alaska Permanent Capital Management, **Blake Phillips**.

Tom Bailer expressed appreciation for city investment updates.

K. Correspondence

11. 12-18-24 Email from ADF&G Division of Subsistence asking for letter of support for NPRB funding to update comprehensive household harvest surveys

12. 12-18-24 Email from J. Burton with suggestions for harbor disaster funds

Tom Bailer noted council did put away the disaster funds in the permanent fund

13. 12-18-24 Email from J. Olsen with suggestions for harbor disaster funds

14. 12-19-24 Letter of support from Mayor to NPRB for ADF&G Division of Subsistence proposal to update comprehensive household harvest surveys

L. Ordinances and Resolutions

15. Ordinance 1226 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending Cordova municipal code section 11.08.020 – Harbor Commission, to reduce the Harbor Commission from seven to five voting members – 1st reading

M/Bailer S/Sherman to adopt Ordinance 1226 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending Cordova municipal code section 11.08.020 – Harbor Commission, to reduce the Harbor Commission from seven to five voting members.

Bailer supported going back to 5 members. **Sherman** wanted to hear from the harbor commission, which they did provide input. **Kinsman** is in support, **Zastrow** is in support and mentioned it was only raised because of south harbor project. **Ranney** defers to the commission; is in support. **Smith** supports it.

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

16. Resolution 01-25-01 A resolution of the council of the city of Cordova, Alaska, amending the finance department section of the 2025 fee schedule as had been approved in resolution 12-24-36 on December 4, 2024

M/Kinsman S/Zastrow to approve Resolution 01-25-01 A resolution of the council of the city of Cordova, Alaska, amending the finance department section of the 2025 fee schedule as had been approved in resolution 12-24-36 on December 4, 2024

Kinsman states it is nothing but a clerical fix and nothing else to discuss on it. **Zastrow** agrees, it is a clean up.

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

M. Unfinished Business – none

N. New & Miscellaneous Business

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

Pending Agenda items addressed: #10 Land Disposal Maps and Status Changes – **Johnson** said the Planner would update and bring forward revised local maps in the annual update (March/April). Ensure changes to land disposal maps are included.

Fisheries Committee – council asked for an update from the City Clerk. The status of dissolved commissions and finalize the composition of the new combined commission. Coordinate with CDFU for input on proposals to the Board of Fish.

Council scheduled a work session, Feb 19th, to outline planning and goals before potential council and mayoral turnover. Plan a follow-up session with the new council for alignment.

Bonding and Budget Planning – Provide current bond expiration schedules and a list of potential future bonding items. Align the discussion with the strategic planning session. Prepare relevant spreadsheets and reports for the second meeting, Feb 19th.

Update on reissuing bonds as per the resolution passed in December.

Revisit and evaluate property tax exemption policies to support economic growth.

O. Audience Participation

Mark Frohnafel emphasizes their business's significant role in supporting the community through sales tax contributions and their commitment to being a community partner. They express concerns about the single-item sales tax cap, which discourages local spending on high-cost necessities and drives residents to shop elsewhere. They highlight confusion around the bundling policy and call for a fair, practical system that aligns with voter intent, ensuring equitable revenue while supporting local businesses. They offer to collaborate with the city to address these issues effectively.

Dorothy Widman asked what to do in the interim period while council is making a decision regarding building materials sales tax. Should she get a building permit and start saving receipts or wait? Council advised getting the building permit now and saving receipts. Refer to staff on discussing where the city goes in the interim and will reach out directly.

P. Council Comments

David Zastrow expressed gratitude for the participation of local retailers in the work session, emphasizing the importance of their continued involvement and input. They highlighted the need for clarity in explaining proposed tax measures, both among council members and to the public. He is optimistic about the direction being taken, eager to analyze the potential revenue implications of the proposals, and believes the current approach is a significant improvement. They also thanked the staff for their efforts and support.

Cathy Sherman expressed gratitude for participation in the meeting and acknowledged the challenges of understanding complex topics, emphasizing the importance of clear communication. They shared personal experiences highlighting the value of supporting local businesses and services in the community, including heartfelt praise for CCMC for providing life-saving care and local businesses like The Net Loft and Cordova Gear for their unique offerings and excellent service. They encouraged others to invest in the community with both their hearts and dollars, noting the benefits and importance of supporting local resources, even when costs might seem higher. She concluded with a passionate call to appreciate and sustain the community through everyday actions.

Tom Bailer emphasized the importance of simplifying the building process to support local construction and business development. They advocated for reinstating a tax exemption program that allows builders to pay taxes upfront and receive a tax-exempt card for construction materials. This approach ensures builders have the necessary cash flow during critical stages of construction, helping to fund materials and labor. He highlighted the economic benefits of such a program, including job creation, increased tax revenue, and business growth, citing personal experience and success with similar initiatives. They thanked participants for their input and engagement in the meeting.

Kasey Kinsman acknowledged their accountability for contributing to rework and confusion that caused delays in construction, offering a sincere apology for their role. They admitted to not being well-informed or asking the right questions and emphasized their commitment to improving. Looking forward, they expressed a desire to refocus, engage more deeply, and better fulfill their responsibilities to the community.

Wendy Ranney supported and agreed with everyone was saying.

Kristen Smith clarified a statement made in a previous meeting about property tax increases, noting that inflation-adjusted figures show tax revenues in 2024 were not double those of 2012 but \$712,000

higher. They emphasized the importance of using accurate data when discussing tax policy. Additionally, they expressed gratitude for Dr. Sanders' leadership at CCMC, which has stabilized the organization financially, improved its reputation, and provided consistent care. Lastly, they acknowledged and appreciated Council Member Bailer's insights from his construction industry experience, particularly regarding sales tax discussions.

Q. Executive Session - none

R. Adjournment - Hearing no objection *Mayor Allison* adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

Approved: February 19, 2025



Attest: _____
Colette Gilmour, Deputy City Clerk

