

**Regular City Council Meeting
February 19, 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 February 19, 2025, in the Cordova 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 **Cathy Sherman**, **Kasey Kinsman**, **Wendy Ranney**, **Dave Zastrow**, and **Ken Jones**. Council members **Tom Bailer** and **Kristin Smith** were present via zoom video conference. Also present were City Manager **Samantha Greenwood** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

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

Clay Koplin CEO of Cordova Electric, and residence address of 100 Jensen Dr., spoke in support of agenda item 19.

Jillian Gold of PO Box 231 Cordova commented on agenda item 24. She stated the Collective Bargaining Agreement is written in a way that favors management. She urged Council to revisit Title 4 of the City Code and reinstate the personnel board.

Jeremiah Beckett of 317 First St in Cordova had a few comments: 1) the infrastructure work session was insightful; 2) agenda item K.12 relating to the Mayor's email – he was concerned about the abuse of power and the clear violation of the City technology policy; 3) agenda item C.19 he stated he fully supports community organizations seeking grant funding but he wants council to ensure it is fully communicated to you what is being asked for before you sign on.

Cathy Renfeldt representing the chamber of commerce, residence address is 308 Railroad Row, spoke in support of agenda item 20.

James Kacsh of 824 Woodland Drive spoke in support of agenda item 20.

Brooke Mallory on behalf of the Native Village of Eyak as the Tribal Council Chair, her residence address is 1027 Whitshed Rd. She spoke in support of Council choosing direct negotiation with NVE on agenda item 21. She mentioned that NVE does pay property tax – she sees this as an overall benefit to the community. Going straight to negotiation vs. out for proposals would be a better timeline since the blasters for Shepard point road are at their disposal now and this property will need significant blasting work done.

Cale Herschleb of 400 Council Avenue was asked to read comments for **Mike Mickelson** who couldn't be in attendance tonight. **Mickelson** is in support of item 1, Ordinance 1227.

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions

a. PWSRCAC Highlights from Board Meeting January 2025, City rep **Dave Janka** reported: 1) there was a particularly high attendance of ex officio members this time – from all the federal and state agencies; 2) Hinchinbrook entrance buoys, and Cape Suckling and Cape Cleare buoys issue – being worked on – these are not always working properly – down so much of the time; 3) increased production on North Slope leading to more foreign flag tankers getting oil in Valdez; 4) he attended a zoom conference on GRS' (geographic response strategies) – like the Copper River Delta and Flats – would be important for us; 5) RCAC was recertified by the USCG this week; 6) next to meet May 1-2 in Valdez and then September 18-19 in Cordova, 20-member board, 17 staff and 12 ex-officio members

4. Student Council Report - none

G. Approval of Consent Calendar

4a. Council concurrence of Mayor's appointment of 2025 Election Board

5. Minutes: a. Dec 18, 2024, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes; b. Jan 15, 2025, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes; c. Feb 5, 2025, City Council Public Hearing Minutes

Vote on the Consent Calendar: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Zastrow-yes; Sherman-yes; Jones-yes; Bailer-yes; Kinsman-yes; Ranney-yes; and Smith-yes. Consent Calendar was approved

H. Approval of Minutes – in consent calendar

I. Consideration of Bids/Proposals/Contracts – none

J. Reports of Officers

6. Mayor's Report – **Mayor Allison** reported: 1) he asked Council if it was ok to send a letter in support of **Tom Carpenter** to be reappointed to the Board of Fish – Council did support; 2) he will send packets to council to get the clerk and manager evaluations done. **Smith** asked the Mayor to consider a letter to our delegation about the EAS program which is in the crosshairs of Project 2025.

7. City Manager's Report - **Greenwood** reported: 1) we were invited to apply for a match grant of up to \$1 million to the Denali Commission for the Second Street project; 2) communications and meetings continue between Hospital Services Board and NVE Health Board concerning hospital; 3) she's been working with Murkowski staffers on funding for the Bear Fence at the landfill; 4) will get all of the Cordova CIP list projects entered into state CAPSIS system; 5) 2 interviews upcoming for fire marshal, also been working with volunteers and the roles and responsibilities of each entity, city/volunteers.

8. City Clerk's Report – **Bourgeois** reported: 1) early voting – 70 so far, new locally-designed, "I Voted" stickers came in; 2) 4 applications in so far for the Cordova Fisheries Committee; 3) chamber and other organizations will be putting on a candidate forum, and there is a separate one for School Board candidates.

a. notice of election-offices-props-how to vote; b. Cordova Fisheries Committee public notice seeking applicants

K. Correspondence

9. 01-22-25 Marine Transportation Information Bulletin-Cybersecurity Final Rule

10. 01-30-25 Email from **A. Schaefer** regarding Mayor's email to School Board

11. 02-02-25 Anchorage Daily News remembrance of **Helen Marie Howarth**

12. 02-07-25 Email from **J. Beckett** including city telecommunications policy

the next 2 letters are drafts – Council should concur to approve the content then they will be sent

13. 02-xx-25 Draft letter from AK Mayors to AK Congressional delegation regarding Secure Rural Schools Program

14. 02-xx-25 Draft letter from Mayor to Sen Murkowski regarding healthcare costs
Council gave direction to send letters as in the drafts for 13 & 14 above.

L. Ordinances and Resolutions

15. Ordinance 1227 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending Cordova municipal code section 5.10.080 "Maximum tax per transaction-the tax cap" to apply the tax cap to single invoices rather than single items or single transactions of service except as otherwise provided in the Cordova municipal code for service contracts, rentals, and bundled transactions, and to amend CMC 5.10.085 to remove reference to single service tax cap and single item tax cap – 2nd reading

M/Bailer S/Zastrow to adopt Ordinance 1227 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending Cordova municipal code section 5.10.080 "Maximum tax per transaction-the tax cap" to apply the tax cap to single invoices rather than single items or single transactions of service except as otherwise provided in the Cordova municipal code for service contracts, rentals, and bundled transactions, and to amend CMC 5.10.085 to remove reference to single service tax cap and single item tax cap

Bailer and **Zastrow** agreed this has been discussed at length and they support it. All others said they would support.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Kinsman-yes; Zastrow-yes; Jones-yes; Ranney-yes; Bailer-yes; Smith-yes and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

16. Ordinance 1228 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending CMC 5.10.100 "Product based exemptions", CMC 5.10.210 "Exemption application and exemption authorization card", CMC 5.10.230 "Refunds", and repealing CMC 5.10.240 "Construction materials and services exemption and refund" to replace the reimbursement application process that applies to eligible construction materials and services and adopt an exemption card application process for such materials and services and amending CMC 5.10.100 to remove income reporting requirements for nonprofit organizations regarding sales by nonprofit organizations, which are not exempt from sales tax – 2nd reading

M/Bailer S/Kinsman to approve Ordinance 1228 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, amending CMC 5.10.100 "Product based exemptions", CMC 5.10.210 "Exemption application and exemption authorization card", CMC 5.10.230 "Refunds", and repealing CMC 5.10.240 "Construction materials and services exemption and refund" to replace the reimbursement application process that applies to eligible construction materials and services and adopt an exemption card application process for such materials and services and amending CMC 5.10.100 to remove income reporting requirements for nonprofit organizations regarding sales by nonprofit organizations, which are not exempt from sales tax **Bailer** said he supports this. **Kinsman** agreed, said both of these ordinances are a good reflection of what council can do when we partner with the citizens. All others spoke in support.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Bailer-yes; Kinsman-yes; Zastrow-yes; Smith-yes; Jones-yes; Ranney-yes; and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

17. Ordinance 1229 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the City Manager to enter into a ten-year lease with option to purchase with Emily Anderson and Skyler Newman, for Lot 15A, Block 5 of Odiak Park Subdivision – 1st reading

M/Jones S/Kinsman to adopt Ordinance 1229 An ordinance of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the City Manager to enter into a ten-year lease with option to purchase with Emily Anderson and Skyler Newman, for Lot 15A, Block 5 of Odiak Park Subdivision

Jones said he supported direct negotiation on this, and he still supports the disposal now. **Kinsman** said he looks forward to seeing this development happening in our community; he thanked Emily and Skylar for investing in Cordova. **Ranney, Zastrow** said they support. **Bailer** said he will not support – he wanted this to go out for proposals. **Sherman** said she will support this. **Smith** said she understands **Bailer's** point of view but because we are so far along in this process it wouldn't be fair to turn around and do something different now.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 1 nay (Bailer). Motion was approved.

18. Resolution 02-25-02 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the city to issue general obligation refunding bonds to refund certain outstanding general obligation bonds of the city, fixing certain details of such bonds, and authorizing their sale

M/Smith S/Zastrow to approve Resolution 02-25-02 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, authorizing the city to issue general obligation refunding bonds to refund certain outstanding general obligation bonds of the city, fixing certain details of such bonds, and authorizing their sale

Smith this is a money-saving measure she is in support. A way to save money on our borrowing costs. **Zastrow** agrees with all of that – a money saving measure. **Sherman** said she appreciates that it is also being very closely tracked. **Kinsman** said it seems like a no-brainer. **Jones** and **Ranney** said they support.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Smith-yes; Sherman-yes; Bailer-yes; Ranney-yes; Zastrow-yes; Kinsman-yes; and Jones-yes. Motion was approved.

19. Resolution 02-25-03 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, supporting funding applications for the development of the Crater Lake Water and Power Project

M/Jones S/Sherman to approve Resolution 02-25-03 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, supporting funding applications for the development of the Crater Lake Water and Power Project

Jones said he thinks this is something the city needs to be moving forward with. We just had a work session on infrastructure – we have an aging water tank – this is a slam dunk opportunity; we could bring a \$30-\$40 million project to the community. **Sherman** had questions and asked if **Koplin** could come to

the table to answer them. **Koplin** said CEC could apply on their own for the energy side of this opportunity but co-application with the city would have better chances because there will be fewer applicants. **Zastrow** asked if this resolution is asking the city to be a co-applicant. **Koplin** said it is just a resolution of support. **Zastrow** asked the city manager what the city would get out of this. **Greenwood** said we did just talk about infrastructure, and we need a new water tank and new catchments, this could solve those problems. She does not completely understand if this would be a fully funded grant or not – if so that would be amazing. **Smith** asked what we are committing ourselves to financial with approval of this resolution. **Ranney** had concerns about a hazard mitigation plan and also about whether the water supply would have priority on low water year. **Koplin** replied to the concerns. **Ranney** wants these things in writing for the city – verbal assurances, handshake agreements are not enough in her opinion. She thought a letter of support would suffice for what he needs; would've preferred that tonight instead of this resolution. **Kinsman** asked if he was asking us to fund anything at this time. **Koplin** said not at this time. **Kinsman** said – if funding is sought after this, it will have to come back to us for action; **Koplin** said yes. **Bailer** said some of what has been said is misleading – the City has spent \$50K on this so far – on a feasibility study that came back and said not feasible. The CEC board may have authorized a \$1 million to date – but that is not taxpayer money – he wanted citizens to understand that. He would have preferred a letter of support also. He won't stand in the way of CEC going out to seek this funding.

M/Smith S/Bailer to amend the resolution as follows: in the 2nd and 4th whereas clauses replace “derive lower costs” with “minimize cost increases”, in the 3rd whereas clause replace “Cannery Row water tank” with “Morpac water tank”, and in the now, therefore, be it resolved clause add “on the condition that a thorough public involvement process be conducted” at the end of the sentence.

Vote on the amendment: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion to amend was approved.

Jones said he is in support – we need to enhance our water supply – for shoulder season fisheries for low snow or rain years and this will accomplish that.

Vote on the motion as amended: 6 yeas, 1 nay. Kinsman-yes; Jones-yes; Smith-yes; Zastrow-yes; Bailer-yes; Sherman-yes; and Ranney-no. Motion was approved.

M. Unfinished Business

20. Council action on disposal and method of disposal of Lots 3 & 4 Block 8 Original Townsite (Chamber of Commerce Lease)

M/Jones S/Zastrow to dispose of Lots 3 and 4, Block 8, Original Townsite, as outlined in Cordova Municipal Code 7.40.060 B by negotiating an agreement with Cordova Chamber of Commerce to lease or purchase the property.

Jones said he supports the chamber – appreciates what they do for the business community in Cordova. **Zastrow** agreed – he supports the chamber and thinks this is the right location for them to do what they do. **Bailer** said he supports. **Sherman** said it is more than appropriate for this to be renewed. **Kinsman** – we did cut funding for the chamber in the 25 budget – appropriate for us to offset that by at least allowing them to maintain this location. **Smith** said this was a purpose-built piece of property, chamber is an important city partner – feels direct negotiation is appropriate for this. **Ranney** wants to ensure we are charging the appropriate rent for this space as costs have gone up everywhere. She'd ask the chamber to look seriously at their future for funding sources because next 5-year lease renewal we may not be in same situation. She will support the lease today. **Kinsman** hoped this could be more accurately assigned as our in-kind contribution to the chamber.

Vote on the motion: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion was approved.

N. New & Miscellaneous Business

21. Council action on disposal and method of disposal of a Portion of Tract B Terminal Ground B Subdivision

M/Smith S/Bailer to dispose of the requested portion of Tract B, Terminal Ground B Subdivision, approximately eight (8) acres in size, as outlined in Cordova Municipal Code 7.40.060 (B) by requesting sealed proposals to lease or purchase the property.

Smith said that for consistency we should put this out for proposals – she likes the idea of NVE developing this land, thinks it is unlikely that anyone else will put in a proposal for such a large piece of land. **Bailer**

said he agrees. **Ranney** asked why the cemetery lot shows as “available”. Staff explained that there is a stipulation on that lot – it is available but must be subdivided – ie the cemetery divided out. **Kinsman** said we have someone ready to develop this – has the infrastructure in place – ready to blast the mountain, this is time-sensitive, they may lose their window if we go out to RFP. He would disagree with going out to RFP; he’d prefer direct negotiation. **Sherman** for the most part like RFPs but she thinks this one is appropriate for direct negotiation. **Jones** said he could support direct negotiation. After more discussion and a few questions asked and answered there was an amendment.

M/Jones S/Zastrow to amend the motion to change the disposal to be by direct negotiation with NVE to lease or purchase the property.

Jones and **Zastrow** spoke in support of the amendment. **Kinsman** said this is in no way breaking with code – code absolutely gives council this option – there may be council members who are not in favor, but it is an allowable action. **Smith, Sherman** both said they support the amendment. **Bailer** said he would not support the amendment.

Vote on the amendment: 6 yeas, 1 nay (Bailer). Motion to amend was approved.

Discussion was back to the main motion. **Jones** asked **Mallory** about her assertion earlier that NVE pays property tax, and he said that there had been another entity in town that used to pay property tax and then they built a new building and sought and receive the exemption on that now. He wondered if there was any kind of assurance the City could get on that. He just is very appreciative that they pay property tax, and he wonders if that will be the case as new and expensive properties are being sold and then built upon. **Mallory** said if Council wants some kind of an assurance then we should talk about that – she doesn’t find that unreasonable, she doesn’t know of any conversations within the village that say we want to no longer pay property tax, we do support the city. She opined that something like that could be negotiated in place. **Jones** says he looks forward to seeing more about the project when it comes back to Council for approval. He is very appreciative that the village is taking on these projects that are outside the ability of an individual developer to do. Vote on the motion as amended – for direct negotiation:

Vote on the motion as amended: 7 yeas, 0 nays. Zastrow-yes; Smith-yes; Jones-yes; Kinsman-yes; Ranney-yes; Bailer-yes; and Sherman-yes. Motion was approved.

22. Council action to match Friends of Valdez animal shelter donation toward ARVO spay & neuter clinic in Cordova June 2025

M/Jones S/Ranney to contribute up to \$3,000 toward the cost of the spay and neuter clinic to be put on by ARVO in Cordova in June 2025.

Jones says he supports it. **Ranney** said Valdez is supporting this with \$3,000 and we send a lot of our creatures over there. She thinks \$3,000 is minimal for the benefit it can serve. **Sherman** said she is also in support. **Bailer** said he will not support – we have enough City infrastructure to maintain, if people want to have pets they need to take care of them themselves. **Zastrow** supports it. **Smith** has said that she asked the Cordova Community Foundation to contribute toward this. **Kinsman** agrees with **Bailer** that pet owners should be responsible – however that is in a perfect world and that is not the world we live in – this problem is a public nuisance, and he is glad to support this effort.

Vote on the motion: 6 yeas, 1 nay (Bailer). Motion was approved.

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

Executive sessions next time for Clerk & Manager evaluations. Council agreed to an agenda item on March 5 to weigh in on putting the breakwater fill lot out for RFP. Council agreed to an agenda item next time on saying yes or no to directing staff to apply for the PIDP grant in 2025.

O. Audience Participation

Clay Koplín thanked Council for their decision on the resolution tonight.

Steve Ranney of 2500 Orca Rd came mostly to comment on the sales tax cap issue – more important than Council might even realize. He appreciates when people come to Council meetings to give input, and they are passionate about their projects or their organization, but he wished they’d reign it in a bit and just stick to the facts.

Mathias Reid of PO Box 1234 in Cordova mentioned the recent action taken by the school board on their anti-discrimination policy and the comments that ensued when the Cordova Times posted an article about that on social media.

P. Council Comments

Kasey Kinsman appreciates the public input tonight.

Cathy Sherman good meeting, good audience participation.

David Zastrow echoed the comments about audience participation before him. Thanked staff for all the information provided. He was happy to hear about how well the coordination between Hospital Services Board and Ilanka Health Board.

Kristen Smith echoed comments before her. She attended part of the AML Conference yesterday and they did a review of the PERS/TRS issue – basically there was an actuarial error made in 2006 by the state and they have shifted that burden onto the municipalities. The costs associated with that have been huge to the city, along with healthcare costs. AML leadership is working on that issue.

Wendy Ranney thanked those who presented tonight, appreciated **Mathias Reid's** comments tonight. Her comments tonight on the Crater Lake project are concerns specifically for the City – she has kept her personal and business concerns removed from that – those can be expressed elsewhere. She thanked **Clay Koplín** for working hard on the project – said if he can get the money for this project that benefits the City water, more power to him, she hopes he can.

Ken Jones some new faces in the audience, he welcomed the participation. Looking forward to another record election turnout this year.

Tom Bailer thanked the manager – so far doing a good job – I know she is working through staffing issues; he supports her there. As far as the Breakwater Fill lot – he thinks a community recreational area with the food trucks and covered cement pad and picnic tables is probably the best use – he doesn't want to see it be contentious.

Q. Executive Session

24. An evaluation of the City Manager regarding personnel matters related to Library operations, matters of which may tend to prejudice the reputation and character of the City Manager provided that she may request a public discussion – she has not requested a public discussion

M/Kinsman S/Smith to enter an executive session for an evaluation of the City Manager regarding personnel matters related to Library operations, matters of which may tend to prejudice the reputation and character of the City Manager provided that she may request a public discussion – she has not requested a public discussion

Hearing no objection, **Mayor Allison** said we would enter the executive session.

At 9:48 pm, Mayor Allison recessed the meeting to clear the room. Council entered the executive session at 9:53 pm.

At 10:14pm Council reconvened the regular meeting. **Mayor Allison** said they received an update from the City Manager on the library and no action was taken and the council appreciates the manager and the work she does for us.

R. Adjournment - Hearing no objection **Mayor Allison** adjourned the meeting at 10:14 pm.

Approved: May 7, 2025

Attest:



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

