

**Regular City Council Meeting  
May 20, 2026 @ 7:00 pm  
Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B  
Minutes**

**A. Call to order** – Mayor **Kristin Smith** called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on May 20, 2026, in the Cordova Center Community Rooms.

**B. Pledge of allegiance** – **Mayor Smith** led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. Roll call** – Present for roll call were **Mayor Kristin Smith** and Council members **Debra Adams, Lee Collins, Aaron Hansen, Kasey Kinsman, Wendy Ranney**, and **Dave Zastrow**. Council member **Mike Mickelson** was present via zoom videoconference. Also present were City Manager **Sam Greenwood** and City Clerk **Susan Bourgeois**.

**D. Approval of Regular Agenda**

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

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

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

1. Guest speakers – none

2. Audience comments regarding agenda items

**Chris Moreno** commented on agenda item 9, the discussion about the mill rate. He opined that the city should not raise the mill rate.

3. Chairpersons and Representatives of Boards and Commissions - none

**G. Approval of Consent Calendar** - none

**H. Approval of Minutes** – none

**I. Consideration of Bids/Proposals/Contracts** - none

**J. Reports of Officers**

**4. Mayor's Report** – **Mayor Smith** reported: 1) she has been tracking developments in Juneau with the state operating budget – still unknown what the Governor may do because he has line-item veto power; 2) she urged people listening to not oversimplify what is happening with our discussion tonight of the City budget and the setting of the mill rate, it is not just about a funding gap and we may raise property taxes to fund it – school funding has seen less federally and from the state and the City is having to make up for those shortfalls, City fuel & utility costs are up – there are so many factors feeding into that the City has a lot less money to work with (to do chip sealing, to pay maintenance staff, to maintain our vehicles, to maintain our recreation facilities, to pay our staff, and to support the schools); 3) secure rural schools program is about to open up seats on a committee (RAC – resource advisory committee) that helps to allocate those funds and if anyone locally is interested – notice for application should be coming out in the next few weeks.

**5. City Manager's Report** – **Greenwood** reported: 1) the audit team is leaving early because they were able to get all questions answered more quickly than expected – great news and great job by the finance team, **Sheryl, Brenda, Pam** and **Tami**; 2) she and Acting Chief **Hayden** have been finalizing all the paperwork for the new police truck, should be here mid-June; 3) she has been working with brokers on liability insurance renewal and on health insurance.

6. City Clerk's Report – **Bourgeois** reported: a. City Representative on PWSAC Board of Director vacancy announcement.

**K. Correspondence** - none

7. City Council correspondence primer: correspondence policies & procedures

**L. Ordinances and Resolutions**

8. Resolution 05-26-21 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting the City of Cordova 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

**M/Zastrow S/Ranney** to approve Resolution 05-26-21 A resolution of the Council of the City of Cordova, Alaska, adopting the City of Cordova 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

**Zastrow** said it seems like we needed to do this, the last update was in 2018 – City staff has been working on this, soliciting public comments and the like since 2024 and we need this in place, as long as we have one that is adopted within five years it allows us the ability to collect federal dollars from FEMA when disaster strikes. He said it seems comprehensive and he will support the adoption. **Ranney** said she has been involved in this process, made comments in 2025 when it went through the planning commission and her comments were addressed in this final draft.

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

**M. Unfinished Business** - none

**N. New & Miscellaneous Business**

9. Council discussion of CSD funding, other revenue shortfalls, and setting of 2026 mill rate

**Mayor Smith** said the Manager's memo is a follow up to the memo last meeting when we established the local funding level for the school district. The significant change from then to now is that we have since received a second payment of Secure Rural Schools funding (~ \$600K) both chunks being booked in 2026. City Manager **Greenwood** encouraged Council to consider putting the mill rate to where property tax revenue would cover the increase of \$181,000 that we gave the School District in 2026. **Hansen** opined that there are too many things going against us as far as the 2026 budget, he did not believe a land sale would have bailed us out (per the public comment tonight). We have completely stripped maintenance budgets for all departments, facilities and equipment are all aging – requiring more attention and more money. Schools are important – it is why young families are coming back. His opinion, to maintain school funding, maintain all the other things we have and fund, we may have to raise taxes. **Ranney** opined that sustainability should apply to the mill rate. She said we have reached the limit of what we can tax people without them leaving town. She thinks we will see higher sales tax revenues, higher than maybe even budgeted based on the increased cost of goods across the board, fuel, online purchases, etc. **Ranney** said she thought the extra that came in for Secure Rural Schools in 2026 can take care of the extra \$181,000 we gave the schools. **Adams** was hopeful that things might change in Juneau after the November election. The attitude around funding education may change from the somewhat hostile-toward-education administration in there now. **Zastrow** agrees we are in a strange time right now; gas prices are skyrocketing because of geopolitical events. He reiterated the Mayor's comments about how this is so much more complicated than just the school funding, it is a million little things we have been dealing with for several years. **Mickelson** said that fuel prices are really going to affect fishermen; he imagines they will do a lot more camping out to avoid burning so much – which could hamper sales for local businesses. If there was ever a year to throw the community a bone and keep the mill rate static, this would be that year. **Mickelson** agrees with our policy of not budgeting the Forest Receipts but thinks this year we should pull that extra school request out of the Forest Receipts we did receive. **Kinsman** said we need to get a handle on where we want our mills/our property tax revenue to go do we want it to go to schools, roads, bidarki, etc. As a community, no one wants to pay more taxes; then what do you want to give up. He'd like to hear from people on that question, and also the question of which one(s) of their neighbors do they think should lose their jobs. **Mickelson** said we are likely to have a much better year, as far as fishing, in 2027.

10. Pending Agenda, CIP List, Calendar, Elected & Appointed Officials lists – nothing significant added or removed

## O. Audience Participation - none

## P. Council Comments

**Kinsman** thanked and congratulated finance staff for doing so well that audit team was confident enough to leave early. He would love to hear from citizens about mill rate, budget, suggestions as far as revenue gap.

**Ranney** echoed the congrats to finance team. She appreciates all the comments tonight from audience and council members. Asked citizens to bring comments and suggestions, be part of the solution.

**Adams** echoed the congrats to finance team. Offered a hopeful wish for the fleet to have good and safe fishing. She read into the record some recent comments that Dave Janka made about the privilege of living in Cordova and all the great things we have here.

**Mickelson** offered congrats to the graduating seniors. Nice to hear good news on the audit. He is glad we are starting budgetary talks early and he hopes it brings the community out to give their input.

**Zastrow** echoed the fantastic work of the finance team. He appreciates the approach this year, letting us have this hard discussion tonight and then setting the mill rate next time. He appreciates Council member **Adams'** comments about **Dave Janka's** words about our community.

**Hansen** said he appreciates this early discussion of budgeting; he never again wants to be in the position they were in last year when a terminated employee, with her children, came in to address Council. He apologized to the City Manager for Council putting her in the position to have to make that decision last year. That still sits with him today. He's grown up in commercial fishing, you live high, you live low, this community is amazing and will ebb and flow with the fisheries. Thanked his fellow Council members.

**Collins** said he really appreciated all the thoughtful discussion he heard from all of the council tonight, and from staff – as he is still in the learning process – he feels like he has a better understanding going into this next meeting.

**Mayor Smith** read excerpts from a thank you note she received from the Alaska Democratic Party who held a conference in Cordova in April, at the Cordova Center. "Cordova reminded me of home and I'll never forget it", "your City is stunning, warm, and friendly and such a great community", "all the people of Cordova were warm and welcoming".

## Q. Executive Session - none

## R. Adjournment

Hearing no objection **Mayor Smith** adjourned the meeting at 8:31 pm.

Approved: July 1, 2026

Attest:



Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk

