



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, MAY 11, 2020  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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The City Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting of the Fairbanks City Council at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor Jim Matherly presiding (telephonically) and with the following Council Members in attendance:

Council Members Present: Shoshana Kun, Seat A (telephonic)  
June Rogers, Seat B (telephonic)  
Valerie Therrien, Seat C (telephonic)  
Aaron Gibson, Seat D (telephonic)  
Jerry Cleworth, Seat E  
David Pruhs, Seat F

Absent: None

Also Present: Paul Ewers, City Attorney  
D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk  
Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Director (telephonic)  
Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff  
Bob Pristash, City Engineer  
Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director (telephonic)  
Nancy Reeder, Police Chief (telephonic)  
Tod Chambers, Interim Fire Chief (telephonic)

City Clerk Snider read the Mission Statement of the City of Fairbanks.

### **INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Snider.

### **FLAG SALUTATION**

**Mayor Matherly** asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

James Durrett, 518 Front Street, Fairbanks – Mr. Durrett complained about a neighboring property at 520 Front Street. He stated the main structure caught fire and has been condemned, but people are still living on the property. He stated he believes the owner has nothing to do with the property, and there is a lot of activity at the site. He stated he has filed police reports. He stated there is a large amount of what he would consider hazardous material on the property. He stated water and electric has been cut off at the property, but people are still living there.

**Ms. Therrien** asked Mr. Durrett if he has been involved with the nuisance property ordinance the City has been looking at. Mr. Durrett stated he has only made a couple of police reports.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked Mr. Durrett if he said the water had been turned off. Mr. Durrett stated he understands there is no water, sewer, or electric service at the property. **Mr. Cleworth** asked Mr. Durrett if he would stay for Council Member Comments; Mr. Durrett stated he would.

David van den Berg, 332 Slater Drive, Fairbanks – Mr. van den Berg stated the 2020 Midnight Sun Festival has been canceled. He stated the City works in partnership with non-profits in the community. He mentioned three specifically: The Downtown Association (DTA), Festival Fairbanks, and the Fairbanks Parking Authority, and he spoke to different agreements between the City and those organizations. He stated there is a lot of latitude in how the City levers the non-profits.

Hearing no more requests for comment, **Mayor Matherly** declared Citizens' Comments closed.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

**Ms. Kun**, seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda and Consent Agenda.

**Mayor Matherly** called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

City Clerk Snider read the Consent Agenda into the record.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 30, 2020.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

b) Regular Meeting Minutes of April 13, 2020.

APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

### **MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT**

a) Special Reports

Helen Renfrew, Explore Fairbanks Director of Meetings and Conventions – Ms. Renfrew stated that 23 meetings have been either canceled or postponed within the past two months, totaling over \$11.1 million in lost revenue to the local economy. She spoke to the new way economic impacts are being calculated, which is region-specific. She stated Explore Fairbanks recently received information about Economic Adjustment Assistance Program grants through the Federal Economic Development Administration. She stated it looks like there could be funds in the program for destination marketing, and she stated Explore Fairbanks is interested in collaborating with the City of Fairbanks on those opportunities.

**Ms. Therrien** asked Ms. Renfrew how much money might be available through the federal grant. Ms. Renfrew stated she does not have that information yet.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked Ms. Renfrew for the information and shared that she is grateful for such a fine organization.

**Mayor Matherly** asked Acting Fire Chief Tod Chambers to provide a staff report. Mr. Chambers reported there is a burn ban in affect across the State. He stated the only allowable open burning is for cooking and warming and must be contained. He stated that burn permits are still required. He stated there have been multiple reports of people violating the open burn suspension, and he asked everyone to be safe and not to burn until it is safe to do so.

**Mayor Matherly** asked Chief of Staff Mike Meeks to provide a staff report on the reopening of City Hall. Mr. Meeks reported that department heads have been asked to create a departmental plan for reopening. He reported windows and counters have been fitted with plexiglass to serve as a barrier and that masks and social distancing procedures are part of the plan. He stated the Mayor may decide on a return to work date as early as Friday, and there are multiple exemptions for returning to work, and safety is being taken seriously.

**Mayor Matherly** stated he has spoken with Building Official Clem Clooten who posted a notice at the Front Street property referenced earlier by Mr. Durrett, but the owner has not responded to the notice yet. **Mayor Matherly** stated Mr. Clooten has also noticed a property on South Cushman, so problem properties are being addressed. He offered his condolences to the family of former Lieutenant Governor Bryon Mallott who recently and unexpectedly passed away.

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Mr. Pruhs** encouraged Mr. Durrett to look at the Borough property database online to find out if the taxes are current for the property. **Mr. Pruhs** provided his phone number and offered to assist Mr. Durrett if he would like.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated if the utilities have been turned off at the Front Street property it triggers City's Abatement Code. He stated that if there is hazardous material on the property, Public Works should look into it.

**Mr. Gibson** thanked Mr. Durrett for bringing the property issue to the Council.

**Ms. Kun** thanked Mr. van den Berg for the information he brought to the meeting.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked both gentlemen for testifying and stated she hopes they can help with the circumstances. **Ms. Rogers** thanked Mr. van den Berg for the information he brought forward regarding the Parking Authority and the for the renewed interest that has been brought to the issue.

**Ms. Therrien** stated the comments by Mr. Durrett illustrate that work needs to be done to take care of nuisance properties. She thanked both gentlemen for attending.

**Mayor Matherly** stressed the current danger of the Chena River at high levels and advised everyone to use extreme caution.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Ordinance No. 6130 – An Ordinance Amending FGC Sec. 2-201 Regarding the Fairbanks Parking Authority. Introduced by Council Member Cleworth. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING.

**Mr. Cleworth**, seconded by **Mr. Pruhs**, moved to ADOPT Ordinance No. 6130.

David van den Berg – Mr. van den Berg referenced an email he recently sent to the Council, and he asked for the ordinance to be postponed due to a lack of urgency. He stated he is concerned about some of the ordinance language, and he listed several instances where he believed changes or additions should be made. He stated that on-street parking enforcement is an important City service, and he does not believe it makes sense to say the City cannot spend money on that service.

Tim Staton, 541 2nd Avenue, Fairbanks – Mr. Staton stated he is the President of the Golden Heart Parking Service (GHPS) Board of Directors. He clarified some of the issues Mr. van den Berg spoke about, and he read portion of one of Mr. van den Berg's letters. He stated that the DTA has not responded to the GHPS Board's invitation to hold a joint meeting to address issues. Mr. Staton read a portion of the GHPS Board minutes from their last meeting which stated that Mr. van den Berg's behavior and comments were so out of control that he was asked to leave. Mr. Staton stated he considered writing a letter to the DTA.

**Ms. Therrien** asked Mr. Staton if he would attend a Council Work Session on the issue. Mr. Staton stated he would, and he would like the whole GHPS Board to attend.

Jodi Blakely, 2000 Patricia Court, Fairbanks – Ms. Blakely stated she is the Vice President of the GHPS Board. She thanked the staff at the parking garage and stated they have done a great job. She thanked Mr. Cleworth and Mr. Jacobson for providing a historical timeline for the organization and for showing how well it works.

Kristie Dickerson, Fairbanks – Ms. Dickerson stated has been a member of the GHPS Board for a couple years, and she acknowledged the contention between Board and the DTA. She stated that since she began serving, there has been one joint meeting with the DTA, but she does not feel that much was resolved. She expressed hope for clarity and understanding in future discussions where everyone can be heard, and problems can be resolved.

Hearing no more requests for comment, **Mayor Matherly** declared Public Testimony closed.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked everyone for attending and for the work that went into drafting the ordinance. He stated he has been surprised that the ordinance has been so contentious, and he thought of it as a basic housekeeping ordinance. He read from the original Fairbanks Parking Authority ordinance in 1988 where it stated the Council's intent for the Parking Authority to be a self-supporting enterprise. He stated that it was only a City Commission at that time, not a non-profit organization. **Mr. Cleworth** stated the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) did not want to

deal with parking enforcement in the downtown area and were happy to give that responsibility away. He spoke to the history of the Parking Authority and its relationship with the DTA. He agreed with Ms. Blakely, that the organization is in the best shape it has been in years. He stated the relationship with the City is good, and he is frustrated that the ordinance has become such a hot button issue. **Mr. Cleworth** encouraged the Council to adopt Ordinance No. 6130 and stated that it can be amended later if need be.

**Mr. Gibson** thanked everyone for coming to testify and share opinions on the issues. He stated that this is an issue that could need more discussion.

**Ms. Kun** echoed Mr. Gibson's comments and stated everyone should work together to resolve issues.

**Ms. Rogers** stated it was difficult to hear the testimony because it was so charged with contention; she stated another work session on the issue may be needed. She agreed with Ms. Dickerson that people need to be clear and unemotional when working together on issues. **Ms. Rogers** stated she is ready to vote to adopt the ordinance, but it may be an issue that work continues on. She stated the reason for bringing the ordinance forward was logical, but she would work to keep parking issues in the forefront.

**Ms. Therrien**, seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, moved to POSTPONE Ordinance No. 6130 to the August 10, 2020 meeting so a Council Work Session could be held with the DTA and the GHPS Board.

**Ms. Therrien** stated she would support a work session and shared her concern with the name-calling and the negativity that was aired between the two organizations. She stated she would like to see the Council help the two entities work together.

**Mr. Pruhs** stated the Parking Authority is a wonderful organization with a great Board of Directors and employees. He stated he has received parking citations, and he has paid for them. He stated the organization is run better now than it has been in years past, and he agrees with Mr. Cleworth that the Council should pass the ordinance presently.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated he is puzzled by the motion to postpone the ordinance for three months.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO POSTPONE ORDINANCE NO. 6130 TO THE AUGUST 10, 2020 MEETING SO A COUNCIL WORK SESSION COULD BE HELD WITH THE DTA AND THE GHPS BOARD AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Rogers, Kun, Therrien  
NAYS: Cleworth, Pruhs, Gibson, Matherly  
**Mayor Matherly** declared the motion FAILED.

**Mr. Cleworth** stated the City does not want to get into the subsidy business, and he asked Public Works Director Jacobson and City Engineer Pristash to come forward to speak.

Mr. Jacobson stated he has been the Director of Public Works since 2016. He stated what started as a challenging relationship with the Parking Authority has become a very cooperative one.

Mr. Pristash stated he is the newest member of the GHPS Board, and he serves as a technical advisor. He stated that citations are often reduced in the appeals process.

**Ms. Rogers** stated she voted to postpone the ordinance because she wants to encourage discussion and communication. She stated she would be sure to address the other issues in the future.

**Ms. Therrien** stated she will support the ordinance, and she would like to see a better working relationship moving forward.

**Mr. Cleworth** thanked GHPS Board and staff of the Parking Authority for the work that they do. He encouraged working together in the future.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 6130 AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Kun, Gibson, Therrien, Pruhs, Cleworth, Rogers

NAYS: None

**Mayor Matherly** declared the MOTION CARRIED and Ordinance No. 6130 ADOPTED.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Committee Reports

Polaris Building Work Group – **Mr. Pruhs** stated the group has been meeting with various government entities in search of funding for demolition and discussing ideas on what the space could be used for. He stated it is a slow-moving process, but work continues.

Legislative Information Group – **Ms. Therrien** announced that the legislature approved distribution of the CARES Act funding.

### COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

**Mr. Gibson** thanked Mr. Jacobson for the prompt response to recent graffiti complaints.

**Mr. Cleworth** reminded everyone that there is an early morning meeting the following morning. He spoke of the late Karen Lavery and all she did for Downtown Fairbanks and the community. He asked Council Members to consider naming the Downtown Transportation Center the Lavery Transportation Center.

**Mr. Pruhs** stated he gave honor to the mothers who serve on the Council and thanked them for being good mothers.

**Ms. Therrien** wished everyone a happy Mother's Day.

**Ms. Rogers** thanked Ms. Therrien for bringing the importance of the nuisance property ordinance back to the forefront. She thanked Mr. Cleworth for his comments about Karen Lavery, and she spoke well of Ms. Lavery.

**Ms. Kun** gave a land acknowledgement and reminded everyone to be safe when they are near the river. She thanked Mr. Pruhs for the Polaris Building update and wished everyone a happy Mother's Day.

**Mr. Gibson**, seconded by **Mr. Pruhs**, moved to ENTER Executive Session for the purpose of discussing IBEW/FMATS Arbitration – Settlement Negotiations.

**Mayor Matherly** called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

**Mayor Matherly** called for a brief recess.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) IBEW/FMATS Arbitration – Settlement Negotiations

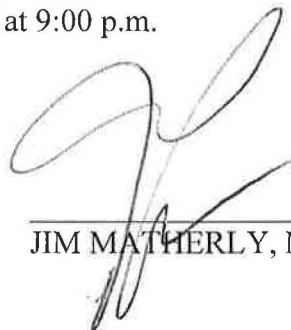
The City Council met in Executive Session to discuss IBEW/FMATS Arbitration – Settlement Negotiations. Direction was given to legal counsel, and no action was taken.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr. Pruhs**, seconded by **Mr. Cleworth**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

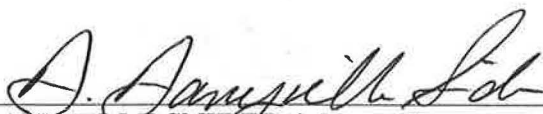
**Mayor Matherly** called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

**Mayor Matherly** declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



JIM MATHERLY, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: EB