



FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 28, 2020
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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

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

Absent: None

Also Present: Paul Ewers, City Attorney
 D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk
 Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff
 Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director
 Tod Chambers, Fire Chief
 Tish Gonzales, Deputy City Attorney
 Carrie Peterson, Grants Administrator
 Kristi Merideth, FECC Manager (remotely)
 Richard Sweet, Acting Police Chief (remotely)
 Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer (remotely)

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

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by City Clerk Danyielle Snider.

FLAG SALUTATION

Mayor Matherly led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Montean Jackson, 1018 27th Avenue, Fairbanks – Ms. Jackson stated she is a candidate for City Council. She stated she has heard some conflicting information about the recruitment process for a new Chief of Police, and she asked for some clarification on when and how the City plans to fill the position. She asked whether the City would pursue a direct hire from within, seek

reinstatement of a qualified officer who may no longer be employed by the City, or initiate an in state or national search. She asked whether an interview committee would be selected to assist in the process.

Arleigh Hitchcock, Fairbanks – Mx. Hitchcock complained about how the City conducted the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public presentation and vote on September 17 at noon. They stated the time of the meeting was a barrier for working folks, there was no virtual option to hear the proposals, and a virtual voting option was only given at the last minute with a 5 p.m. deadline. They stated that the City was prepared for only 20-30 people to attend the meeting despite this being a community vote. Mx. Hitchcock stated that people were packed in a line in the hallway. They stated that one proposal was a new kitchen for the Senior Center and the other was a warming hut for the No Limits homeless shelter. They stated that the elderly, social workers, and those experiencing homelessness – all high-risk groups for COVID – were crowded in line with no way to maintain social distancing. They stated they have not seen an announcement for the winning proposal, but they heard it was the Senior Center. Mx. Hitchcock stated they were both necessary proposals that should not have had to compete. They asked the Council what it plans to do to protect those experiencing homelessness in the community with winter approaching, and they listed several suggestions.

Ms. Therrien asked Mx. Hitchcock if they were an applicant for the CDBG. Mx. Hitchcock replied that they were not – they were only a concerned citizen. They also stated that they are non-binary, meaning they go by the gender-neutral term, “Mx.”

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

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

Mr. Pruhs, seconded by **Mr. Gibson**, moved to AMEND the Agenda by adding Hand-Carried Resolution No. 4936 under New Business.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA BY ADDING HAND-CARRIED RESOLUTION NO. 4936 UNDER NEW BUSINESS AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Matherly requested that the PSEA Fairbanks Police Command Unit (FPCU) Labor Negotiation Strategy Executive Session be removed from the Agenda; no members objected to removing the Executive Session.

Mayor Matherly called for objection to APPROVING the Agenda, as Amended, and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

City Clerk Snider read the Consent Agenda into the record.

SPECIAL ORDERS

- a) The Fairbanks City Council held a public hearing for the following Marijuana License Applications for Renewal:

Lic. #	DBA	License Type	Licensee	Address
20827	Good Titrations	Retail Marijuana Store	FSE, Inc.	506 Merhar Avenue
15124	Fairbanks Analytical Testing, LLC	Marijuana Testing Facility	Fairbanks Analytical Testing, LLC	1521 Stacia Street, Suite A
11053	True Dank	Retail Marijuana Store	True Dank, LLC	1550 Cushman Street, Suite A
11051	Northlink, LLC	Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility	Northlink, LLC	1550 Cushman Street, Suite B
17250	Pipe and Leaf	Retail Marijuana Store	Haley Essig	3546 Airport Way
16006	Arctic Bakery, LLC	Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility	Arctic Bakery, LLC	1409 Well Street

Ms. Therrien, seconded by **Ms. Kun**, moved to WAIVE PROTEST on the Marijuana License Applications for Renewal.

Mayor Matherly called for comment and, hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

Mr. Pruhs noted that many other types of marijuana businesses are in place besides retail, and there are few complaints with the industry overall.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO WAIVE PROTEST ON THE MARIJUANA LICENSE APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Matherly stated that the Administration will pursue recruitment for the next Chief of Police in the same manner as the last Police Chief recruitment. He stated that they will likely begin receiving applications in October, and there will be a community forum similar to the last time. **Mayor Matherly**, in response to Mx. Hitchcock's earlier comments stated that there are enough available beds in Fairbanks to accommodate all the homeless, but some do not want to use those resources. He stated that he will ask Housing and Homeless Coordinator Mike Sanders to get in touch with Mx. Hitchcock. **Mayor Matherly** stated that he was unaware of the CDBG public meeting, but as soon as he was made aware, he arrived at City Hall. He stated that staff

was overwhelmed with the number of attendees, and Mike Sanders and Chief Chambers were onsite to help mitigate the crowd. He stated the City did not anticipate that large a crowd. **Mayor Matherly** stated that Lathrop High School defeated North Pole High School in the recent Mayor's Bowl 43-6, and he is proudly donning a Lathrop High School mask. He stated out of the 16 years the Mayor's Bowl has been around, each team has won eight times. **Mayor Matherly** challenged everyone to vote in the upcoming Municipal Election, and he commended those running for local office. He stated there is no excuse for not voting, and he also spoke to the importance of volunteering. He commended staff for their efforts with the absentee voting site outside City Hall. **Mayor Matherly** stated that the City kept very little of the CARES funding and distributed most of the funds into the community; he thanked staff for their hard work in that regard. He thanked all those who are masking up in the community, and he encouraged everyone to wear a mask and be safe.

a) Special Reports

Mayor Matherly asked City Grants Administrator Carrie Peterson to come forward and provide a staff report on the CDBG. Ms. Peterson stated that community support factors into which CDBG projects are selected, and both projects had a great deal of support. She stated that the Senior Center had a little more support than the No Limits warming center, but the main reason that the Senior Center project was selected is that the project fit within the guidelines of the grant. She stated that the grant cannot be used to cover operating costs. She explained that they can only apply for one project at a time, and the Senior Center project was fully fundable. **Mayor Matherly** commented that, in prior years, CDBG community meetings were not well-attended, but there were social media posts prior to the recent meeting inviting community members to "pack the house." He stated that was a large part of the reason why so many people showed up to the meeting. Ms. Peterson stated that in future years, they will review the proposals and only move forward the projects that fit under the grant guidelines; then, they will solicit public support. She stated the most they have ever had attend a CDBG meeting is about 20 people, and while it was exciting, it was overwhelming.

Mr. Cleworth stated that a few years ago the CDBG was used for The Door, a local youth homeless shelter. He stated that in years prior the grant was used only internally for City projects. He stated that shortly after the year the grant was used for The Door, City code was amended due to potential liability to the City. He questioned whether there would be liability to the City if one of the other projects was selected. Ms. Peterson stated that the warming center project may have presented a liability to the City for years to come, and she believes that is why it was being presented as a lease. She stated that the project was ultimately not right for the CDBG grant.

Ms. Therrien asked whether a list of CARES funds recipients would be published, excluding individual recipients. Chief of Staff Mike Meeks replied that a list was published for phase one, and they are working on completing the list for phase two.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Rogers thanked the Mayor for his regular comments and activities encouraging masking. She thanked Mr. Sanders and Ms. Peterson for their work and professionalism in working through the CDBG meeting. She stated it is difficult to hear some of the comments regarding the CDBG meeting. She suggested that there be some discussion about how the CDBG will be handled in the future and how the information will be presented to the public.

Mr. Gibson thanked Ms. Jackson and Mx. Hitchcock for coming to the meeting, and he agreed with Mx. Hitchcock that both projects are worthwhile. He thanked Ms. Peterson for the information she presented to the Council.

Mr. Cleworth stated that the last time the City recruited for the Police Chief position, he did not know much about the final applicants. He stated that the Council was not really a part of the process until the point of confirmation. He stated it is important that the Council be more involved so they may make a confirmation with confidence, and he encouraged the Mayor to bring the Council into the process a little more.

Mayor Matherly stated he thought that some Council Members attended the public forum that was held during the last selection process. Some members confirmed that they attended the forum.

Mr. Cleworth stated he deals with a lot of street people through his job, and he stated that many do not choose to use the resources available to them. He stated the City's job is to make sure that people are aware of the community resources at their disposal, and those resources are much more expanded than they used to be.

Mr. Pruhs thanked the four candidates who attended the meeting. He highlighted the Administration and City staff for its handling of the CARES funding and commented that the City used less than 2% of the funding for administrative purposes.

Ms. Therrien expressed concern about the confusion surrounding the CDBG. She stated she is happy to hear that Ms. Peterson has made note of some things that could be done differently in the future, but she suggested that a Council Work Session be held prior to the next CDBG project; she stated it will help the Council to be aware of what is happening and it will keep the public informed about what to expect.

Ms. Kun echoed comments of other Council Members; she thanked Ms. Peterson and Mr. Sanders for their work. She thanked Ms. Jackson and Mx. Hitchcock for coming forward and asking good questions. She thanked those who are running for local office.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Resolution No. 4935 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Accept Funds from the University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College for Paramedic Training. Introduced by Mayor Matherly.

PASSED and APPROVED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- b) Ordinance No. 6141 – An Ordinance to Amend Fairbanks General Code Chapter 14, Article X. Towing Vehicles. Introduced by Mayor Matherly.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- c) Ordinance No. 6142 – An Ordinance to Amend Fairbanks General Code Chapter 14, Article V. Alcoholic Beverages to Remove Fees for Inspections. Introduced by Mayor Matherly.

ADVANCED on the CONSENT AGENDA.

- d) Hand-Carried Resolution No. 4936 – A Resolution Authorizing the City of Fairbanks to Nominate the Polaris Building Demolition Project to the United States Department of Defense (DoD) through the FFY2022 Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) Program. Introduced by Mayor Matherly.

Ms. Kun, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to APPROVE Resolution No. 4936.

Mayor Matherly called for comment, and, hearing none, declared Public Testimony closed.

Mayor Matherly asked Ms. Peterson for a staff report. Ms. Peterson reported that the Polaris Work Group has been exploring various options for demolishing the Polaris Building. She stated that they reached out to Senator Murkowski's office who pointed them in the direction of the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training program. She stated the IRT uses community projects that both benefit communities and provide training for military personnel. She stated that, unfortunately, the application deadline is in two days, and they just learned about the program late in the prior week. Ms. Peterson stated the plan is to apply for assistance with the entire project, but the project will be broken out into smaller pieces. She stated the City would apply and would gather support from other local organizations and agencies; she stated that Senator Murkowski has agreed to write a letter of support for the request for assistance. She reported that there is no match required from the City.

Mr. Pruhs thanked the Mayor, City staff, and the Polaris Work Group for their rapid response to the news about the opportunity. He stated there are many facets to the project, but he believes the entire project can be completed bit by bit.

Ms. Kun thanked all those involved and stated she is ecstatic about the opportunity.

Ms. Rogers also thanked all those involved and stated that this is a big step forward. She stated that much groundwork has been done to bring it to this point. She thanked Mr. Pruhs for his steadfastness in his commitment to the project and for all Ms. Peterson's work.

Mr. Cleworth asked whether they have looked at opportunities for grant funding to demolish the Polaris Building through the EPA. Ms. Peterson stated they are currently working on an EPA multipurpose grant that is due in October and, if approved, would provide up to \$850,000 toward testing, abatement, remediation, and cleanup. She stated they are pursuing other grants as well. She stated there is a great deal of support for the project, and they are not putting all their eggs in one basket.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 4936 AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYS: None

Mayor Matherly declared the MOTION CARRIED and Resolution No. 4936 APPROVED.

DISCUSSION ITEMS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mayor Matherly requested that the Council provide committee reports and comments together.

Mr. Gibson stated he had no comments.

Mr. Cleworth asked when Deputy Clerk Braniff's last day would be. Clerk Snider replied it would be Friday, October 2. **Mr. Cleworth** asked the Clerk to pass on appreciation from the Council to Ms. Braniff for her years of service. He echoed Mr. Pruhs' earlier comments on the CARES funds, and he commented on how well the City has done in administering the funds.

Mr. Pruhs shared that NeighborWorks is looking at funding a grant writer to work on identifying funds for demolition of the Polaris Building. He stated that the Polaris Work Group will continue to meet with HUD, the EPA and other federal and state agencies in regard to the demolition of the Polaris Building. He stated he will continue working on the project after his term on the Council ends.

Ms. Therrien thanked Mr. Pruhs for all his work in regard to the Polaris Building. She stated that she missed the last Finance Committee meeting, but she would like to see a survey of space available at City Hall before paying for a new space or taking the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) evidence room offsite. **Mayor Matherly** stated that they will not have the evidence room offsite.

Ms. Kun stated she will meet with the Explore Fairbanks Board of Directors soon and will bring a report back to the Council. She gave a land acknowledgement, and she encouraged anyone struggling to contact the help line.

Ms. Rogers reported on the Housing and Homeless Committee and spoke about how hands-on Coordinator Mike Sanders is. She stated he is very effective in reducing the number of homeless people in Fairbanks. She encouraged anyone with concerns about those in the community that appear to go unnoticed to contact Mr. Sanders before taking matters into their own hands or

making assumptions. She stated that people throughout the state contact Mr. Sanders to see how things are being done in Fairbanks, because he is doing an exceptional job. **Ms. Rogers** thanked all those who attended the meeting and encouraged citizen participation at Council meetings. She encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming election.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

City Clerk Snider thanked Ms. Braniff for her five years of service as the Deputy Clerk. She shared specific information about early and absentee voting locations and hours, and she reminded the public that the deadline for by-mail absentee ballot applications is the following day. She shared that newly elected Council members will be sworn into office on October 26.

Mr. Pruhs, seconded by **Ms. Kun**, moved to ENTER Executive Session for the purpose of discussing IBEW Labor Negotiation Strategy.

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

Mayor Matherly called for a brief recess. The Council reconvened in Executive Session following the brief recess.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) IBEW Labor Negotiation Strategy

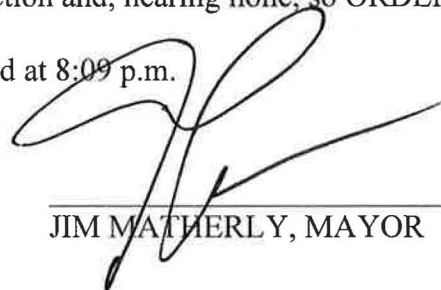
The City Council met in Executive Session to discuss IBEW Labor Negotiation Strategy. Direction was given to the negotiating team, and no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Kun, seconded by **Ms. Therrien**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

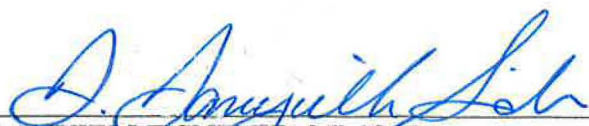
Mayor Matherly called for objection and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

Mayor Matherly declared the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.



JIM MATHERLY, MAYOR

ATTEST:



D. DANYIELLE SNIDER, MMC, CITY CLERK

Transcribed by: DS